TENURE EXPERIENCES OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN WOMEN FACULTY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION

MAY 2013

By

Heipua Kaʻōpua

Dissertation Committee:

Joanne Cooper, Chair
Patricia Halagao
Lori Ideta
Kathleen Kane
Hannah Tavares
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Ke Akua–First and foremost, I express my love and gratitude to my Heavenly Father for His unconditional love and guidance. Through Him, all things are possible.

ʻOhana–I thank my loving family for their unwavering love and support throughout this long journey. To my husband, Ike, you are the captain and steersmen of our waʻa. You are my Hōkū Hoʻokele Waʻa–my canoe-guiding star and the zenith star in my life. You have always had faith in me and provided me with constant love and guidance. To my beautiful daughters, Tehani and Tiare, thank you for your patience while mom was away so many nights and weekends taking graduate classes and working on this dissertation. Tehani, you are my Hōkūpaʻa, or fixed star. Similar to the North Star, you keep me focused and provide constant love and encouragement. Tiare, my youngest, you are my Hōkūleʻa, or star of gladness. With your happy, fun-loving attitude, you bring such love and joy into our ʻohana. Finally, to my adorable grandson, Malakai, you are my Hōkūkomohana, the morning star and light of my life. As the future hōkū of our ʻohana, you will ensure that our moʻokūʻauhau continues.

Dissertation Committee Members–Dr. Joanne Cooper, Dr. Patricia Halagao. Dr. Lori Ideta, Dr. Kathleen Kane, and Dr. Hannah Tavares–Thank you for your enthusiastic support and guidance throughout this study. You have each served an important role as fellow canoe paddlers on this voyage providing motivation, support, encouragement, leadership, direction, and feedback. Your individual and collective influence is reflected on every page of this dissertation. Thank you for opening my eyes to a poststructural feminist framework and for supporting my Indigenous methods. Dr. Joanne Cooper,
your vision, encouragement, inspiration, and unwavering support and guidance as my advisor and mentor made this journey to the PhD possible.

Nā Wahine—This is your story. Mahalo nui loa for welcoming me into your homes and offices and for giving me such a priceless gift—your moʻolelo and hōʻailona. I am humbled and honored at the privilege I have had to meet you and to write your inspiring moʻolelo. Your stories have now been told; your voices will live on. Each of you have touched my heart, rekindled my intellect, restored my energy, and renewed my spirit. You will serve as an inspiration to all those who read your amazing stories.

Lori Ideta and Walter Kahumoku—Thank you for challenging and encouraging me to embark on this journey and for believing that I could do it.

Anne Freese—Your class on dissertation writing gave me the confidence, knowledge, and skills to launch my study. Thank you for such an informative class and for your guidance in crafting my dissertation proposal.

Dave Evans—To my friend and study buddy, thank you for your continuous support, guidance, inspiration, and encouragement. Mahalo for serving as my alakaʻi, or guide, paving the way for the next step in my journey. I don’t know how I could have done this without you. Every doctoral student should have a friend like you. I will always remember our many luncheons—eating and “dissertating”—with our research spread out all over the table. After such a long journey, we are finally PhinisheD!

Punihei Lipe—A brilliant and talented scholar, you represent the next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars and leaders. I hope you will find this study meaningful in your own research and scholarly endeavors.
ABSTRACT

This study examines the status of women of color in academe with a particular focus on Native Hawaiian women faculty. Using a qualitative narrative design, this research examined the experiences of tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty (Nā Wahine) at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Two research questions guided this inquiry: 1) How do tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty describe their experiences leading up to tenure? 2) What, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process? This project employed two theoretical lenses—Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory; two methodologies—Narrative Inquiry and Arts-Informed Research; and two Indigenous methods—moʻolelo (storytelling) and hōʻailona (symbolic reflection on artifacts).

A key finding in this study is that Nā Wahine experienced multiple barriers on their journey through academe to achieve tenure, including institutional racism and sexism; patriarchy; residual issues of colonialism; oppressive university politics and power; an androcentric tenure process; tokenism; Western and Native Hawaiian cultural tensions; and issues regarding Indigenous research. Personal barriers identified by Nā Wahine include issues pertaining to death and loss, Native Hawaiian identity, class, gender, and family care.

The three major themes in this study: Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power), and Pono (Indigenous Authenticity) contribute to the literature regarding multiple barriers that Nā Wahine encountered in academe, the innate strength and power they exercised in overcoming these obstacles, and the Indigenous authenticity they displayed in remaining true to Native Hawaiian culture and values.
Implications for theory include establishing how two disparate theories worked powerfully together to examine the experiences of Nā Wahine, demonstrating the effective use of moʻolelo and hōʻailona as forms of data collection and analysis, and proposing a new feminist Indigenous theory, Native Women’s Theory, that aims to promote research about, by, and for Indigenous women. Implications for practice include developing mentoring networks for women similar to a hula hālau and creating a welcoming environment for Native Hawaiian women. Future researchers might focus on the tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian male faculty, ways to support Native Hawaiians in leadership positions, and using Indigenous research methods.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... ii  
Abstract ............................................................................................................................ iv  
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................... x  
List of Figures ................................................................................................................... xi  

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY ................................................................ 1  
Introduction ...................................................................................................................... 2  
Overview of Chapters ....................................................................................................... 2  
Context ............................................................................................................................... 3  
Statement of the Problem ................................................................................................. 4  
Purpose of the Study ......................................................................................................... 5  
Research Questions ......................................................................................................... 6  
Importance of the Topic .................................................................................................... 7  
Theoretical Framework ...................................................................................................... 9  
Definition of Key Terms ................................................................................................. 11  
Issues of Hawaiian Language .......................................................................................... 12  
Chapter Summary ......................................................................................................... 13  

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .................................................................. 15  
Chapter Overview ............................................................................................................ 15  
Moenahā model ................................................................................................................. 16  
Hoʻolohe ......................................................................................................................... 18  
Hoʻopili ............................................................................................................................ 21  
Poststructural Feminist (PSF) Theory ............................................................................. 21  
Indigenous Theory .......................................................................................................... 27  
PSF and Indigenous Theoretical Models ......................................................................... 33  
Native Hawaiian Women’s Power: Akua and Aliʻi ....................................................... 39  
Women in Higher Education ............................................................................................ 41  
Women in Senior-Level Administrative Positions ...................................................... 44  
Barriers to Women in Higher Education ....................................................................... 46  
Women of Color in Higher Education ........................................................................... 52  
Women of Color in Senior-Level Administrative Positions ....................................... 55  
Barriers to Women of Color in Higher Education ....................................................... 55  
Indigenous Women in Higher Education ...................................................................... 62  
Barriers to Indigenous Women in Higher Education .................................................. 64  
Native Hawaiian Women in Higher Education ............................................................ 65  
Native Hawaiian Women in Senior-Level Administrative Positions ......................... 67  
Barriers to Native Hawaiian Women in Higher Education ......................................... 67  
Hoʻohano ......................................................................................................................... 70  
Hoʻopuka ......................................................................................................................... 73  
Chapter Summary ......................................................................................................... 74  

CHAPTER 3: METHODS ................................................................................................. 77  
Chapter Overview ............................................................................................................ 77  
Research Questions ......................................................................................................... 77  
Research Paradigm .......................................................................................................... 78  
Qualitative Paradigm ...................................................................................................... 78  
Indigenous Knowledge Systems ..................................................................................... 79
APPENDIX A: Invitation Letter to Participants ......................................................... 364
APPENDIX B: Email to Participants ........................................................................ 365
APPENDIX C: Agreement to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study .................... 366
APPENDIX D: Written Consent Form ....................................................................... 368
APPENDIX E: Prospectus .......................................................................................... 369
APPENDIX F: Interview Protocol ............................................................................. 372
APPENDIX G: Crosswalk Table ............................................................................... 373
APPENDIX H: IRB Approval Letter .......................................................................... 375
APPENDIX G: Nā Wahine Meeting Schedule ............................................................ 376

GLOSSARY ..................................................................................................................... 377

REFERENCES ............................................................................................................... 378
# List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>UH Mānoa Faculty, Fall 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>UH Mānoa Tenured and Tenure-Track Native Hawaiian Faculty, Fall 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Faculty Gender Equity by Appointment and Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Percent of Faculty in Non-Tenure Track, Tenure-Track, and Tenured Appointments by Academic Rank and Sex, 2010-2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Central Tenets of Poststructural Feminist Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Moenahā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Native American Medicine Wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Hōnū Hō‘ailona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Atea’s Woman Warrior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Metallic Padded Bra Postcard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Nāhiku’s Shark Cloud Painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Nā Wahine Collective Hō‘ailona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Composite Hō‘ailona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Kalo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

“Pupukahi i holomua.”
“Unite to move forward.”
By working together, the canoe moves forward quickly.
‘Olelo Noe‘au, No. 2758, p. 302

This is a story about women, in particular, Native Hawaiian women. It is a story about their journey through academe. In essence, this is my story as a tenured Polynesian woman in the University of Hawai‘i System. During my voyage to achieve tenure, I have been guided and encouraged by wonderful mentors and a supportive, loving family. The journey, however, was fraught with challenges and cultural tensions. Throughout much of my career, I have felt marginalized and invisible, having no voice. Writing a dossier about the “I” rather than the “We” was particularly problematic, as it created a cultural tension between my Polynesian values and those of the academy. As I contemplated this cultural tension, I began to wonder how other Polynesian women experienced the tenure process. I am passionate about this topic because my husband and children are Native Hawaiian and I live and work in a Hawaiian community. I am particularly interested in the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women and wonder in what ways Native Hawaiian values might influence the tenure process as they navigate through the murky waters of academe. It is my humble privilege to tell their stories.

The experiences that define our life’s narratives, as well as our way of thinking, are shaped largely by culture. Native Hawaiian culture centers on the group, or ‘ohana (family) in which collective experiences of sharing and collaborating are highly valued (Meyer, 2006). Metaphorically, the wa‘a (outrigger canoe) illustrates this collective spirit as each paddler works in perfect unison to accomplish the team goal. As described in the Hawaiian proverb above, the wa‘a moves faster when everyone works together in perfect
unison. Western culture, by contrast, lauds individualism and can be illustrated by a lone kayak paddler striving for personal glory. The contrast in these fundamental value systems intrigued me.

Since this study centered on the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty, I selected Moenahā as an epistemological framework for organizing and presenting the review of literature. Moenahā is a Native Hawaiian cultural model that integrates traditional Hawaiian approaches through a natural learning cycle. Figuratively, Moenahā is a mat that weaves together the four Hawaiian learning processes: hoʻolohe (to listen/reflect), hoʻopili (to bring together/connect), hoʻohana (to practice/apply), and hoʻopuka (to produce/refine)—while stimulating inquiry of why, what, how, and what if or what now. Moenahā is based on the “4MAT Model of Teaching and Learning” founded by Bernice McCarthy (McCarthy, 2000). The 4Mat model offers a concept-based framework for learning that focuses on meaning, concepts, skills, and adaptations that parallel the Hawaiian way of thinking and knowing. I have selected the Moenahā cultural model to organize and present issues pertaining to women faculty in higher education.

**Overview of Chapters**

The first chapter introduces the study by describing the context and problem, presenting the purpose of the study, identifying the research questions, explaining the importance of the topic, describing the theoretical framework, defining key research terms, and discussing issues of Hawaiian language. The second chapter presents a review of the literature organized by a Native Hawaiian epistemological model. This chapter begins with a brief description of Poststructural Feminist Theory (St. Pierre & Pillow,
Included is a discussion of Indigenous Theory (Kana‘iaupuni & Kawaiʻae‘a, 2008; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) that challenges traditional Western epistemologies and calls for the decolonization of methodologies. This chapter considers how Poststructural Feminist Theory and Indigenous Theory might intersect, co-exist, merge, or sit next to one another in this study. The third chapter explains my research paradigm, methodology, research design, and methods used to collect, organize, and analyze data. In chapter four, I present each woman’s moʻolelo (story) and in chapter five, I describe their hōʻailona (symbolic artifacts). I share my findings and the overarching themes of the study in chapter six. Finally, in chapter seven, I present a discussion of the study along with implications for theory, practice, and future research.

**Context**

Historically, women in this country were denied the same rights and privileges as men. Women could not vote, own property, establish credit, earn a college degree, join unions, or enter a skilled trade or profession (Carriuolo, 2003). Since the founders of this country first declared the rights of all persons to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (more than 200 years ago), women have made significant progress.

Women’s status has improved considerably since they first began enrolling in male-dominated universities and colleges in the middle of the nineteenth century (Cooper, Eddy, Hart, Lester, Lukas, Eudey et al., 2007). In the last three decades, the percentage of females enrolled in college has surpassed the percentage of males enrolled at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Gappa, 2008). The number of females receiving all types of college degrees has increased at a faster rate than the number for males. In academic year 2009-10, women earned 62% of all associate’s degrees, 57% of all
bachelor’s degrees, and 61% of all master’s degrees (Aud et al., 2012). Between the two fields awarding the most master's degrees, education and business, women earned 77 and 46 percent respectively, of all master's degrees awarded (Aud et al., 2012). Women also earned the majority of all doctorate degrees awarded, earning the greatest percentages of doctorate degrees relative to men in psychology (73 percent) and education (67 percent). Yet, few women enter such prestigious and lucrative disciplines as science, technology, engineering, and math (Cooper et al., 2007; Gappa, 2008). For example, in 2009-10, women earned only 22% of doctoral degrees in engineering and 22% in computer and information sciences (NCES, 2010). While women are a dominant force among degree holders, they encounter numerous barriers that thwart their progress as faculty members.

**Statement of the Problem**

Women now earn the majority of all advanced degrees, yet relatively few women become tenured faculty members and fewer still move through the academic pipeline to become full professors (Gappa, 2008). As more women, including women of color, are finding their way into the academy, they continue to feel unwelcomed, alienated, and marginalized. For women faculty of color, the road through the tenure process toward a successful academic career, and to positions of leadership, remains a difficult and painful path. Despite the rhetoric within academe to embrace and encourage diversity, colleges and universities have been reluctant to welcome women scholars of color. In addition to challenges experienced by all women faculty, women of color continue to face institutional, socio-cultural, and personal barriers (ASHE, 2011). Native Hawaiian women faculty members encounter residual issues of colonialism and oppression along with gender, race, and class discrimination (Wright, 2003). These societal forces
negatively affect the lives of Native Hawaiians as evidenced by their having among the lowest social, economic, and health indicators in the State of Hawai‘i (Boyd & Braun, 2007; Mokuau & Tauili‘ili, 2004). One might assume that these same forces exist within the halls of academe, since few Native Hawaiian women faculty attain tenure. Despite the articulated mission of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) to actively support Native Hawaiians at the university (Regents, 2009), only four percent of full-time instructional faculty positions at UH Mānoa are held by Native Hawaiians (UHM IRO, 2009). Furthermore, Native Hawaiians comprise only 2% of faculty at the rank of full professor at UH Mānoa (UHM IRO, 2009). It appears that the specific and individual needs of Native Hawaiian women in academe go largely unnoticed and remain unaddressed and may contribute to the low numbers of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty. This study examined the specific obstacles Native Hawaiian women faculty encountered as they navigated through academe to achieve promotion, tenure, and positions of leadership, as well as the strategies and supports they found useful in the process.

**Purpose of the Study**

In this section, I describe for whom and for what purpose I conducted this research. I describe my original intention first, followed by a deeper reflection in italics. My first purpose in conducting this study was to understand the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women as they journey through academe so that more Native Hawaiian women (and men) can experience a successful voyage through the academy and be situated in social discourses that empower them to effect social change. My second purpose was to understand the role of Native Hawaiian values and culture on the tenure
experience to center Indigenous culture and ways of knowing in the production of knowledge. My third purpose was to explore the tenure phenomena (a self-serving practice that is innately antithetical to Indigenous culture) to show that Indigenous peoples can achieve this level of academic success and still be “pono,” or in harmony with Indigenous ways of knowing and being - spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally. My purpose statements informed my data collection and analysis and the hōʻailona (symbols) I created to represent the collective experiences of Nā Wahine.

In a sense, this study is a form of an autoethnography, a term used by Ellis and Bochner (2000) to describe “studies and procedures that connect the personal to the cultural” (p. 740). Certainly, a reflexive ethnography can be useful for Indigenous researchers who study, write about, and interpret their own cultures for others (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). In my case, being that I am not Hawaiian, I hope that my interpretation of the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women will open an alternate world of experience for my readers that will inspire critical reflection upon their own worldview. This research took place at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and contributes to the literature addressing the contextual experiences of women of color, particularly Native Hawaiian women, in higher education.

**Research Questions**

Given the dearth of research available on Native Hawaiian faculty and my compelling interest in how Native Hawaiian women navigate through the tenure process, two questions guide this inquiry:

**QUESTION 1:** How do tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty describe their experiences leading up to tenure?
Sub-questions include the following: What barriers did Native Hawaiian women face in the tenure process? Where did Native Hawaiian women find support in applying for tenure? How can university administration, faculty, and staff support Native Hawaiian women in the tenure process? What strategies do these women recommend for future Native Hawaiian faculty pursuing tenure?

QUESTION 2: What, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process?

Sub-questions include: How do Native Hawaiian women faculty define those values, and which, if any, came into conflict with Western values? Do Native Hawaiian women faculty assimilate to Western culture, or do they remain true to Native Hawaiian culture?

Unlike studies that center on the deficits in the cultures and behaviors of disadvantaged groups, this study focused on the strengths of Native Hawaiians and reflected the views and lived experiences of exemplary Native Hawaiian women faculty.

**Importance of the Topic**

Why study the experiences of Nā Wahine (tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty)? Moreover, who really cares? I selected this population to study because they represent stellar examples of success among Native Hawaiians who have largely been dispossessed from ancestral lands, disconnected from their language and culture, and disenchanted with Western educational systems. Native Hawaiians constitute 20% of the State population, 24% of students in the University of Hawai‘i System, and 15% of students at the UH Mānoa campus; but only 4% of the faculty (UHM Employee Profile, 2011). With so few Native Hawaiian faculty available, Native Hawaiian students do not see themselves mirrored in the faces of faculty. Freire (1993)
informs us that the education process is critically important to the psychological “liberation” of colonized peoples. Guardia and Evans (2008) add that for Native American students enrolled in tribal college, the impact of a college education extends far beyond the content knowledge and degree earned. For group-centered communities such as Native Hawaiians, earning a college degree and pursuing a career in higher education can transform the entire community. If Native Hawaiians are to succeed in academe, more information is needed on the barriers experienced and strategies and supports utilized by Nā Wahine to navigate their way through academe. This information may prove useful for future generations of Native Hawaiian students and scholars and may likely contribute to a growing critical mass of Native Hawaiian faculty and leaders in the UH System.

Sadly, a paucity of data exists on Native Hawaiian women in higher education. Often, existing data regarding Native Hawaiians are aggregated with other faculty of color. The need for disaggregated data on Native Hawaiians is particularly acute in light of the “University of Hawai‘i Strategic Plan 2011-2019” which sets forth the success of all Native Hawaiians as its primary objective. This study contributes to higher education research in several ways. First, it contributes to the limited amount of available research on Native Hawaiians in higher education. Second, it adds to the scarce amount of research on Native Hawaiian women in higher education. In fact, at the time of this study, no research was located specifically related to tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty. This study will help to fill this gap in the literature. Finally, this study may provide Native Hawaiian doctoral students and Native Hawaiian tenure-track faculty with strategies and supports needed to successfully navigate through the academy.
In terms of my own axiology, I clearly value higher education as a vehicle for social mobility and social action. As Native Hawaiian women climb the socioeconomic ladder, they are in a position of choice, capable of constructing their own realities and defining their destiny. However, does this Western-oriented education come at a price? Native Hawaiian women who have climbed the echelons of higher education to obtain advanced degrees have been indoctrinated with a Eurocentric perspective and epistemology that may cause them to acculturate into the dominant ideology. Western culture undermines group interdependence and instead advocates individualism, while Native Hawaiian culture is concerned with connecting to other people, emphasizing the family, or ‘ohana, being of service to the community, and developing meaningful relationships (Meyer, 2006). This conflict raises questions about how Native Hawaiian women navigate through the deep waters of Western academe while remaining on course with Native Hawaiian values.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theory provides an explanatory framework, based on extant research that can guide us in understanding our experiences and the world in which we live. Theory frames the experiences of the participants in this study and guides both the questions I asked and the manner in which I analyzed the answers to those questions. Serving as a lens through which to view the world, theory serves as a powerful analytical process with implications for social change (Allan, 2011).

Feminist theory is particularly well suited to the examination of women’s status in higher education because it encompasses multiple perspectives to the overarching problems of power, discrimination, and oppression. Applying a feminist theoretical lens
to this study allowed me to consider the intersections of race, culture, age, social class, gender, sexual identity, and disability as I examined social structures that have reproduced patterns of domination and subordination for women faculty of color. Institutions of higher education are particularly complicit in reproducing the “politics of domination” among students and faculty (hooks, 1994, p. 39). Feminist theory allows for multiple truths acknowledging that there is no universal experience for women of color despite their marginality and isolation. I do not presuppose to know what is in the interest of all women. My intention in using a feminist approach to inquiry is to address issues of marginality, voice, resistance, and social transformation (hooks, 1994). The feminist approach is also appropriate for examining discriminatory practices, while embracing multiple perspectives, and seeking social change for women of color in higher education.

Indigenous Theory centralizes Indigenous knowledge systems through oral traditions of storytelling, chants, songs, and teachings by which Indigenous culture and history have been transmitted for centuries. Indigenous Theory celebrates the right for Indigenous Peoples to tell their own stories and write their version of the story for their own purposes. The Indigenous theoretical lens focuses on native ways of knowing and being by incorporating Indigenous perspectives of body, heart, mind, and spirit while acknowledging the interconnectedness of all living things in the universe. Concepts of power, culture, and knowledge take on new meaning when viewed through an Indigenous lens (Brayboy, 2005).
Definition of Key Terms

Colonialism is any foreign domination, subjugation, and exploitation of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people undermining the oppressed people’s national identity, language, and culture.

Exemplary Native Hawaiian women faculty are Native Hawaiian women faculty, from any discipline, who have achieved tenure.

Hōʻailona means “symbolic reflection.” As used in this study, hōʻailona refers to the symbolic reflection of artifacts, signs, or symbols.

Indigenous women (and men) are those that, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their lands, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those lands, or parts of them. They represent non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral lands and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system (United Nations, 2004).

Moʻolelo refers to a story, storytelling, or a succession of stories (i.e., history). In ancient Hawaiʻi, moʻolelo was the traditional means for transmitting language, history, culture, and traditions from one generation to the next.

Native Hawaiian is defined as any person who is a descendant of the aboriginal people, who prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawaiʻi (Ah Nee-Benham & Heck, 1998). Native is capitalized to distinguish between the first aboriginal people to inhabit the Hawaiian Islands and those who reside or were otherwise born in the State of Hawaiʻi.
Nā Wahine literally means “women.” In the context of this study, I respectfully use this term to describe “tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty.”

Tenure is “an arrangement whereby faculty members, after successful completion of a period of probationary service, can be dismissed only for adequate cause or other possible circumstances and only after a hearing before a faculty committee” (AAUP, 2002).

Values, as defined in this study, include the ideas, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, characteristics, and principles long cherished by Native Hawaiians (Lee, 2005) that drive their decisions, influence their actions, and filter their view of the world (Rue, 2001). I considered several contemporary Hawaiian values as defined by Native Hawaiian scholars (Meyer, 2006; Serna, 2005, & Young, 2006). These values include aloha (love), ‘ohana (family), ha‘aha’a (humility), laulima (cooperation), na‘auao (intelligence), kōkua (helpfulness), lōkahi (harmony), and alaka‘i (leadership).

Women of color is a term that transcends shades of color and unites women with the following shared global experiences with relationship to Western and European-based cultures: All intersections of race, class, and gender-based oppression; cultural/racial appropriation and genocide; economic and political disenfranchisement; displacement and loss of autonomy; and all forms of violence and militarism (WOCN, 2009).

Issues of Hawaiian Language

Two issues regarding Hawaiian language warrant clarification. The first is the use of the term Native Hawaiian as a means of ethnic identification. Several terms are commonly used to describe this group including Hawaiian, native Hawaiian, Kanaka ʻŌiwi, and Kanaka Maoli. The federal government first defined “native Hawaiian” in the...
Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, which provided for the rehabilitation of Indigenous Hawaiian people through a government-sponsored homesteading program. This particular Act stipulated that applicants for homestead lots have a blood quantum of at least 50 percent Hawaiian ancestry to pre-contact Hawaiians—those who lived on the islands prior to Captain Cook’s arrival in 1778 (Kauanui, 2008). This definition is antithetical and offensive to Native Hawaiians who maintain their identity by connecting to spiritual and physical energy inherited through blood and bones—the DNA of their ancestors (Kelly, 2003)—hence, the term for Native Hawaiians—“Kanaka ʻOiwi” meaning people of the bone. With the revitalization of Hawaiian culture over the last few decades, the term “Kanaka Maoli,” meaning real people is commonly used to identify Native Hawaiians (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992). In this study, I use the term Native Hawaiian to signify any blood relationship to pre-contact Hawaiians.

A second issue is the use of Hawaiian words in this document. To center Hawaiian language in this study as the Indigenous language of Native Hawaiians and an officially recognized language in the State of Hawai‘i, Hawaiian words are not italicized. I provide a definition when the word is first used. Thereafter, the reader is directed to the glossary. It is also important to note the use of two diacritical markings in the Hawaiian language. The ‘okina (‘) is a glottal stop, designated by a single open quote mark resembling the number 6. The kahakō (−) is a macron, which lengthens and adds stress to the marked vowel.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I described the importance of examining the experiences of Nā Wahine (tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty). Placing the study in a
historical context, I discussed the problem for women faculty and my purposes for conducting this study. I described the research questions guiding this inquiry and the two theoretical lenses that framed this project. Lastly, I defined key terms used throughout the study and included issues of Hawaiian language.
“E ʻike ka hōkū o ka nalu, o hōkū ʻula, o hōkū lei.”

“Behold the stars of the waves, the red star, the wreath of stars. When the rising and setting stars are near the ocean horizon, they provide clues to direction”

(From a chant in the story of Paka’a and Kuapaka’a) (Pukui, 1983).

This ʻolelo noʻeau (Hawaiian proverb) illustrates how Native Hawaiian hoʻokele (sailing masters) depended on their experience observing the ocean and sky to guide their double-hulled canoes across the vast Pacific Ocean. Using the rising and setting points of the stars for directions, these ancient navigators travelled great distances. Faced with fierce winds and swelling seas, these seafaring experts endured numerous physical and mental challenges. Similar to these ancient Hawaiian navigators, women faculty face many barriers in the White androcentric world of academe. Even more, women faculty of color, including Native Hawaiian women faculty, face multiple challenges as they chart a course through the perilous waters of the academic world. Since metaphors are highly regarded in Hawaiian culture as a means for conceptualization, I have purposefully selected a voyaging metaphor in this literature review to describe women’s voyage through academe.

Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with an introduction to Moenahā, an Indigenous epistemological framework that provides a native lens for examining the experiences of women faculty of color in higher education. The four quadrants of this framework guided my inquiry into issues for women of color and Native Hawaiian women. In the first quadrant, Hoʻolohe, I establish why this topic is important in the academic
community and identify the key stakeholders. In the second segment, Ho‘opili, I analyze the findings of prominent theorists and scholars regarding poststructural feminist and Indigenous theory and examine several theoretical models. I explore the status and barriers to women in academe, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty. In the third sector, Ho‘ohana, I explore ways to address tenure issues and promote social change for women faculty of color. The final section, Ho‘opuka, suggests the need for further inquiry with “what if” prompts. This section reveals the lacuna in extant literature and illustrates how my study contributes to the literature on Native Hawaiian women.

**Moenahā Model**

Navigating through the halls of the academy requires an understanding of the importance of culture. Native Hawaiian scholar, Manu Meyer (2004), states that culture is not about race, ethnicity, or blood quantum but instead is “a way of being unique to place and people” (p. x). Meyer affirms that culture is ancient and timeless. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), culture is central to learning and plays a key role in communicating and receiving knowledge and in shaping our thinking process. Irvine (2009) posits that culture is an important survival strategy passed down from one generation to the next that guides and shapes behavior. Describing education as a process of cultural negotiation, Stairs (1994) argues that education advances from meaning to meaning-making, and finally to culture-making.

Underpinned by poststructural feminism and Indigenous theory, I have organized this review of the literature around a culture based Indigenous model known as Moenahā (Kawaiʻaeʻa, 2010), with the understanding that culture shapes our experiences and our
way of thinking. It is culturally appropriate to use such an Indigenous approach when representing the literature about an Indigenous population. Moenahā is based on the “4MAT Model of Teaching and Learning” founded by Bernice McCarthy (McCarthy, 2000). The 4Mat model is conceptualized by four quadrants representing a natural cycle of learning that begins with meaning and ends with integrating new learning (McCarthy, 2000). In essence, the 4Mat model describes how humans find meaning in their lives. Moenahā is a Native Hawaiian adaptation of the 4Mat model and literally means “four mats” in the Hawaiian language. Grounded in Hawaiian epistemology, Moenahā compliments many of the theories posited by academic scholars regarding optimal learning conditions.

The four Indigenous learning processes of Moenahā can be illustrated by four interlocking strips forming a mat, with each of the four quadrants representing one of the learning processes. The four quadrants are 1) Hoʻolohe, to listen, observe, and reflect upon this topic and why it is worthy of study; 2) Hoʻopili, to bring together and connect existing knowledge from key theorists and academic scholars; 3) Hoʻohana, to practice, use, or apply strategies that facilitate social change; and 4) Hoʻopuka, to produce or refine ideas and explore new possibilities. It is important to note, that while Moenahā is represented by a flat two-dimensional mat, I conceptualize Indigenous learning more as a three-dimensional, circular, and cyclical process.

In applying this model to the review of literature, the first section, Hoʻolohe, will establish why this topic is important in the academic community and identify the key stakeholders. The second segment, Hoʻopili, will describe what we already know from major theorists and academic scholars about poststructural feminism and Indigenous
theory, women in academe, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty. In this section, I acknowledge that we must learn from those who came before us. The third section, Hoʻohana, explores how we can resolve tenure issues for women and women of color, strategies to employ for raising consciousness regarding women’s issues, and how to promote social change. The final segment, Hoʻopuka, promotes “what if” inquiries, reveals the gap in extant literature, and illustrates how my study contributes to the literature on Native Hawaiians.

Hoʻolohe

The first quadrant in the Moenahā model, Hoʻolohe, describes why this topic is important and worthy of further study, and identifies the key stakeholders. Increasing numbers of women and persons of color are attaining advanced degrees, yet relatively few become faculty members and fewer still navigate through the academy to become tenured full professors (Gappa, 2008). Not only do tenured male faculty members outnumber women, they also earn more than women do (Gappa, 2008). In 2010–2011, women comprised 41% of full-time instructional faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM Employee Profile, 2011), which is disproportional to the percentage of female students (56%) enrolled at the University. Table 2.1 describes the relatively small proportion of Native Hawaiian faculty (4%) at UH Mānoa.

Table 2.1
UH Mānoa Faculty, Fall 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Faculty</th>
<th>NH Faculty</th>
<th>% of Faculty</th>
<th>NH Women</th>
<th>% of Faculty</th>
<th>NH Men</th>
<th>% of Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UH Mānoa Instructional Faculty Profile, 2011
Of these 51 Native Hawaiians, 71% are women and 29% are men. In other words, less than three percent of UH Mānoa faculty are Native Hawaiian women, while less than 1% are Native Hawaiian men. Table 2.2 reveals the proportion of tenured and non-tenured Native Hawaiian faculty.

Table 2.2.  
**UH Mānoa Tenured and Tenure-Track Native Hawaiian Faculty, Fall 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NH</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>NH</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenured Faculty</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure Track Faculty</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Native Hawaiian women lag behind women faculty nationally, the latter of which 43% have tenure (AAUP, 2010). While Native Hawaiian women show a gender advantage, the percentage of Native Hawaiian faculty remains disproportional to the percentage of Native Hawaiian students (24%) enrolled at UH Mānoa (UHM IRO, 2009). The data indicate that Native Hawaiians (women and men) have a significant challenge in attaining promotion, tenure, and positions of leadership.

Why am interested in this topic?  First, as a part-Tahitian woman married to a Native Hawaiian, I am incensed over the devastating effects of colonialism on Native Hawaiians. The coercive assimilation of U.S. colonial policy has resulted in the depopulation and minority status of Native Hawaiians in their own land; dispossession and degradation of native lands and water rights; the highest risk factors related to heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and chronic lung disease; the loss of language and culture; low rates of education attainment; and higher rates of family violence and prison incarceration as compared with non-Native Hawaiians (Blaisdell, 2005). Second, I am
weary of deficit research on Indigenous peoples that focuses on deficiencies and limitations rather than strengths and strategies. Third, I chose to study tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty because they represent the upper echelon in academe. These women have overcome numerous obstacles, including the shackles of colonialism, to become tenured faculty and esteemed scholars. I wanted to learn their success strategies to help other Native Hawaiians become successful in their chosen endeavors.

Understanding the experiences of Native Hawaiian faculty is particularly relevant given the University of Hawai‘i’s commitment to Native Hawaiians throughout its ten campuses. To fulfill its unique responsibilities to the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i and to Hawai‘i’s Indigenous language and culture, the University of Hawai‘i commits to actively promote the participation of Native Hawaiians at the university and supports vigorous programs of study and support for the Hawaiian language, history, and culture (Regents, 2009). Virginia Hinshaw, former Chancellor of the University of Hawai‘i, announced a strategic hiring initiative in 2011 to seek faculty in teaching and research directly related to identified priorities for the campus. She selected two campus priorities, one of which was Native Hawaiian scholars. Chancellor Hinshaw stated, “We must provide more opportunities for Native Hawaiian scholars across all disciplines, including mentors and role models for Native Hawaiian students to nurture their educational success which strengthens Hawai‘i’s future” (V. Hinshaw, personal communication, February 22, 2011). The success of Native Hawaiians is important to key stakeholders including Native Hawaiians, university administrators, teachers, students, business leaders, and members of the community who are concerned with an educated citizenry
and a strong workforce for Hawai‘i. In essence, the success of Native Hawaiians benefits everyone.

**Ho‘opili**

The second quadrant of Moenahā, Ho‘opili, explores the literature regarding poststructural feminist and Indigenous theories that frame this study. I conceptualized how these theories might intersect, co-exist, or merge and considered the implications to my study if these two theoretical frames “sat next to one another.” Finally, I explored how poststructural feminist theory and Indigenous epistemology might manifest themselves as unlikely alliances in the co-creation of a new feminist Indigenous understanding. This section describes what we know about women in academe, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty from major theorists and academic scholars in extant literature. Included is a discussion of the barriers that women faculty face in their pursuit of tenure and leadership in academe, with a particular focus on the case of Native Hawaiian women.

**Poststructural Feminist Theory**

The poststructural feminist theory reviewed in this dissertation is situated largely within the field of higher education. Poststructural feminism constitutes an unlikely meld between poststructuralism—tasked with deconstruction (meaning the erasure of boundaries between binaries) and feminist theory—aimed at emancipation and equality while concerned with the intersection of oppressive patriarchal structures with gender, race, class, ability, and sexual orientation (Weedon, 1997). The confluence of these two theories works to question normalizing practices and to disrupt assumed truths about gender, subjectivity, and relations of power in social and educational institutions (McNay,
Consisting of plural forces, poststructural feminist theory is permeable and questions that which is presumed to be normal or common sense (Weedon, 2004). It challenges “taken-for-granted humanist truths” in gender power relations and seeks to disrupt them (Keddie, 2002, p. 9). The theory recognizes that issues of identity are not bounded, fixed, or unified, but instead are fluid, ambiguous, and contradictory. Identity is constantly being contested and (re)negotiated. Poststructural feminist theory is particularly relevant for educational researchers who work to produce different ways of knowing and being and for those who advocate social change. Key philosophical concepts contained within this theory include women’s relations to language, discourse, power, knowledge, and subjectivity (St. Pierre, 2000). The central tenets of poststructural feminist theory include dismantling oppressive social and institutional structures, challenging dominant social discourses, advocating for social and political change, resisting patriarchal forms of knowledge production, and disrupting boundaries and grids as to what is considered normal.

Figure 2.1. Central Tenets of Poststructural Feminist Theory

First, poststructural feminist theory works to expose and dismantle oppressive social practices and institutional structures including sexism, ageism, racism, and patriarchy. For example, Elizabeth St. Pierre and Wanda Pillow (2000) have argued that feminists and poststructuralists have worked together and separately to expose structural failures of racism, patriarchy, and ageism—“the ruins out of which they now work” (p. 2).
These “ruins” refer to humanism, a grand theory postulating the scientific and objective pursuit of truth and a rational, conscious, stable, and unified individual capable of producing truth and knowledge through reason (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Adams St. Pierre (2000) explains that “poststructuralism cannot escape humanism since, as a response to humanism, it must always be implicated in the problematic it addresses” (p. 479). In other words, poststructural feminist theory responds to and troubles the many themes and claims of humanism (Anderson & Damarin, 2001; Keddie, 2002; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). St. Pierre (2000) describes humanism as “the air we breathe, the language we speak...the relations we are able to have with others, the politics we practice...the future we can imagine, the limits of our pleasures” (p. 2). Simply said, humanism is everywhere. It determines what we think and speak. For the most part, we take these social practices and structures for granted and do not notice the way in which they regulate our daily lives because they have become so normal and natural (Keddie, 2002). Poststructural feminists work to deconstruct the humanist subject (a human being) as a rational, unified, emancipated, and self-determining individual. Instead, they claim that subjects (people) are socially constructed. Our identities are fluid, precarious, and reconstituted each time we think or speak (Anderson & Damarin, 2001; Barrett, 2005). As Davies (2000) explains, “We speak ourselves into existence within the terms of available discourses” (p. 55).

Second, poststructural feminism seeks to challenge the dominant discourses in humanism’s subject/object binaries–male/female, white/black, wealthy/poor–that have worked to oppress many individuals situated on the wrong side of these binaries (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Adams St. Pierre (2000) points out that the first term in binaries
is typically male and privileged while the second term is female and disadvantaged. Those who have suffered oppression by humanism’s structures of patriarchy and racism (including Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous Peoples) have struggled to rewrite their histories, to redefine what counts as knowledge and truth, and to challenge those who claim to speak on their behalf (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000).

Third, poststructural feminism advocates social change while considering “how gender power relations are constituted, reproduced, and contested” (Weedon, 1987, p. vii). Poststructural feminists use poststructural concepts of knowledge, subjectivity, discourse, power, and language to explain and challenge current practices (Anderson & Damarin, 2001). For example, poststructural feminists question why women tolerate oppressive social relations that subordinate their desires, goals, and interests to those of a patriarchal culture (Weedon, 1987). These feminists have concentrated their attention on subjectivity—the ways in which individuals are positioned by social discourses and on signifying practices—the ways in which communication is open to multiple interpretations (Weedon, 1987).

Fourth, poststructural feminism seeks to challenge dominant patriarchal concepts of knowledge production through opposition, resistance, and deconstruction (Adams St. Pierre, 2000; Weedon, 1987). The theory questions who gets to produce knowledge and for whom while allowing for different ways of knowing. Poststructural feminism offers a useful way to understand women faculty member’s experiences by identifying and exposing power relations in higher education (Anderson & Damarin, 2001). Such an approach leads us to question why so few Native Hawaiian women become tenured professors and why fewer still are situated in positions of leadership. Contrary to
humanism’s belief in absolute knowledge, poststructural feminists contend that we cannot objectively predict, measure, and control knowledge nor can we assume that the positivist, scientific method is the only path to knowledge (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). This perspective creates an opening in academic scholarship to consider different discourses and other ways of knowing including Indigenous epistemology.

A fifth aim of poststructural feminism is disruption – to identify boundaries, limits, and grids of regularity and normalcy and disrupt them (Adams St. Pierre, 2000). According to Weedon (1987), poststructural feminism asserts that it is language that enables us to think, speak, and give meaning to the world. It is also language that constructs the boundaries, categories, and grids into which women find themselves. For example, poststructural feminists take issue with the category “woman” and work to keep that category undefined, open, and unstable (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). They are critical of earlier feminist efforts to generalize the category “feminism” with the experiences of Western, White, middle-class women noting that women’s complex subjectivities continue to be a site of struggle (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Similarly, poststructural feminist educators are troubled with the category “education” because of its location in a rigid hierarchical grid of Western-oriented pedagogy and research (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000).

Why did I choose to use a poststructural feminist lens in this study? First, using poststructural feminism as a theoretical lens allowed me to examine social structures that have created and reinscribed patterns of domination and subordination for women faculty of color. For example, colleges and universities are particularly complicit in reproducing the “politics of domination” between student and faculty (hooks, 1994, p. 39). This
politics of domination is visible in the hiring, promotion, and tenure policies and practices of many universities that favor a Western, white, patriarchal philosophy. It is also evident in policies that discriminate against tenure-track women taking leave to care for newborns and elders.

Second, poststructural feminist theory allowed me to examine how language is used in defining and categorizing Native Hawaiian women. It allowed me to question normalizing practices (such as framing a study from a positivist, or non-Indigenous perspective) and to disrupt assumed truths about the ontology and epistemology of Native Hawaiian women. Poststructural feminism permitted me to consider Native Hawaiian women’s subjectivity and their conflicting social discourses. Through a poststructural feminist lens, I examined the power of discourse communities that ensnare Native Hawaiian women in traditional Western ways of being, thinking, and acting. I also examined how the basic tenets of poststructural theory—knowledge, subjectivity, discourse, power, and language—are manifested in the lives of Native Hawaiian women.

Third, I used a poststructural feminist lens because it supports the idea that multiple truths can co-exist based on diverse epistemological perspectives. This of course, contrasts with the universalizing principles of rationalism that claim the world is intrinsically knowable through reason and objective science (Hokowhitu, 2009). To this end, poststructural feminists argue that we can never reach an absolute knowledge because there are multiple ways of knowing—each one of which represents a valid reality (Hokowhitu, 2009; McLeod, 2008; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000).

Finally, a poststructural feminist lens directed me to ask questions from a different approach (Barrett, 2005). Rather than asking my participants to describe their
tenure experience, I asked, “How does a tenured Native Hawaiian woman make sense of the tenure experience?” “What does this encompass for you and how did you come to have this knowledge?” Continuing this line of inquiry, I asked participants, “What structures and privileges does the tenure process support, what kind of knowledge does it privilege, who does it allow to succeed, and for whom does it ensure failure?” As I considered a poststructural feminist approach, I was mindful of the critical importance of Indigenous epistemology to Native Hawaiian women.

**Indigenous Theory**

The term “Indigenous” includes Indigenous/Aboriginal/Native peoples who have been conquered and subjugated to the point of cultural extinction by dominant colonial societies. Indigenous peoples consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on their lands, or parts of them. Representing non-dominant sectors of society, they are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral lands and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, according to their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and legal systems (United Nations, 2004). While millions of Indigenous peoples are spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, each with their unique ways of knowing, some common epistemological elements emerge. In particular, Indigenous epistemology acknowledges the interconnectedness of the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional aspects of people with all living things and with all elements of the universe (Kovach, 2005; Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006; Meyer, 1998).

In ancient Hawai‘i, women were the source of knowledge and held both power and prestige. Their sociopolitical status was not based on gender. In *Nā Wahine Kapu*
(Divine Hawaiian Women) Kame‘elehiwa (1999) points out that political and social power in pre-contact Hawai‘i were based on rank and lineage, not gender. Andrade and Bell (2011) maintain it was class, not race or gender that was the central organizing feature in pre-contact society. These Native Hawaiian scholars elucidate that genealogy and class were the defining features in Hawaiian society.

Native Hawaiian scholar, writer, and editor, Ho‘omanawanui (2010) explained that although Mana Wahine (genetic female power) may embody certain feminist concepts, it differs from the Western notion of feminism because it includes an innate genealogical strength inherited from earth mother, Papahānaumoku (she who births the islands) and Pele (the volcano goddess). Mana Wahine existed from the beginning—long before western feminism emerged. Pointing out another difference between Western feminism and Mana Wahine, Trask (1993) has contended that while Western (White) feminism largely resists patriarchy, the issue for Native Hawaiian women is the struggle against colonialism and for self-determination, irrespective of gender.

**MOENAHĀ**

*Figure 2.2. Moenahā*

Similar to other Indigenous ways of knowing, Native Hawaiian epistemology can be described as fluid, dynamic, and cyclical based on the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things (Meyer, 1998). Moenahā (Figure 2.2) is a Native Hawaiian epistemological framework that incorporates traditional approaches to learning through a natural learning cycle (Kawai‘ae’a, 2010). The four major principles of Moenahā include
1) hoʻolohe—to listen, observe, and reflect; 2) hoʻopili—to bring together and connect existing knowledge; 3) hoʻohana—to practice, use, or apply; and 4) hoʻopuka—to produce or refine ideas and explore new possibilities. While figuratively, Moenahā is illustrated by four interlocking strips forming a mat (Figure 2.2), with each of the four quadrants representing one of the learning processes; it is actually a three-dimensional, circular, and cyclical process symbolizing unity, balance, and harmony. Perkins (2007) describes balance and harmony in Hawaiian culture as pono, meaning a dynamic equilibrium. Similarly, Indigenous scholar, Paula Gunn Allen (1992) describes Native American culture as “dynamic and aware,” pointing out that “all movement is described in relationship to other things, that is, harmonious and balanced or unified” (p. 56).

Analogous to Moenahā is the concept of the medicine wheel common to many Indigenous nations in North and South America. Reflective of Indigenous epistemology that is fluid, circular, and relational (Kovach, 2005), the medicine wheel is both a tool and a symbol to understand the interconnectedness of all things (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). It is a circle divided into four quadrants or segments (similar to the four sections of Moenahā) representing the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of each individual. Each quadrant is separated but interconnected. The wheel represents the infinity of life, whereas the four segments represent Indigenous learning that is holistic and interconnected (Lavalée, 2009). For example, maintaining a balance of the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual segments of the medicine wheel results in good health (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). From the Indigenous perspective, balance brings harmony, which in turn brings health and well-being. The absence of balance brings disharmony and disease. In other words, the medicine wheel represents a balance between all
elements of an individual—body, heart, mind, and spirit—all of which are interconnected (Lavalée, 2009). These four concepts represent the central tenets in Indigenous epistemology.

**Figure 2.3. Native American Medicine Wheel**

**Physical/Body**

Indigenous Peoples experience a deep connection to their physical environment, and particularly to the land, a connection that is unfamiliar to most non-Indigenous people. Native Hawaiians describe their special relationship to the land in this saying, “He aliʻi ka ʻāina; he kauwa ke kanaka” meaning the land is chief; people are its humble servants (Aluli & McGregor, n. d., p. 1). In her seminal work on Hawaiian epistemology, Meyer (1998) relates the importance of place in Hawaiian culture as “that which feeds.” Literally, the Hawaiian word ʻāina means “one who feeds” (Wright, 2003, p. 16). Meyer (1998) points out that feeding is both a literal and spiritual description of the sustenance, knowledge, and spiritual connection that Native Hawaiians feel toward the ʻāina (land). For example, Native Hawaiians consider kalo (taro) to be the origin of humanity (Meyer, 1998) and the center of Native Hawaiian spirituality, health, and well-being (Aluli & McGregor, n. d.).

**Emotional/Heart**

The Indigenous worldview maintains that each individual has a responsibility for the whole; be it the family, community, society, future generations, or the world (Loiselle
& McKenzie, 2006). Indigenous culture is communal and values contributions to the family and community over individual achievement (Ogata, Sheehey, & Noonan, 2006).

Not surprisingly, the ‘ohana (family) is at the core of Native Hawaiian values. From the ‘ohana, Native Hawaiians learn values critical to emotional well-being and harmonious relationships including aloha (love), ha‘aha’a (humility), lōkōmaika‘i (generosity), ho‘okipa (hospitality), laulima (cooperation), ho‘omanawanui (patience), na‘auao (intelligence), kōkua (helpfulness), lōkahi (harmony), and alaka‘i (leadership). The ‘ohana is a nurturing entity that transfers knowledge of culture, tradition, and values to its members (Lee, 2005).

**Mental/Mind**

Another central tenant of Indigenous epistemology is the value of experiential learning, practice, and process (Perkins, 2007). While Western science and educational institutions tend to emphasize compartmentalized knowledge that is often decontextualized and lacking a sense of place, Indigenous Peoples learn through their experiences in the natural world (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). They come to understand the specific in relation to the whole and to value observation, practice, and process (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). For example, a child learning to plant kalo (taro) must not only learn the growth stages of plants. She must also learn the cultural and spiritual importance of kalo, how to properly care for the plant to ensure its survival, and the various uses of kalo including how to prepare it as food. She learns to plant kalo through traditional learning approaches (as outlined in Moenahā) by observing, listening, reflecting, imitating, doing, and then questioning. This learning process is illustrated in the following Hawaiian proverb, “Nānā ka maka; hoʻolohe ka pepeiao; paʻa ka waha” –
Observe with the eyes; listen with the ears; shut the mouth so that one learns (Pukui, 1983, p. 248). This proverb affirms the experiential process of Indigenous learning.

Indigenous knowledge is attained through all the senses of mind, body, emotion, sensing, intuition, and dreaming, all of which come out of lived experience (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). Indigenous Peoples maintain that nature is the source of life and wisdom and that all species and elements of Mother Earth are instilled with the same life force and intelligence. Thus, Indigenous Peoples are intimately connected to and demonstrate great respect for the cyclical and harmonious pattern of life (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). Elaborating on the connection between knowledge and emotion, Meyer (1998) describes the concept of naʻauao, a word used to describe knowledge, wisdom, and intelligence, as originating from the word “naʻau,” meaning the small intestines which Native Hawaiians believe to be the core of thought, intellect, and affections. For Native Hawaiians, the stomach is the center of intelligence and emotion; the two are inseparable. Thus, to know something is to consider it intellectually and emotionally from one’s gut (Meyer, 1998).

**Spiritual/Spirit**

An Indigenous worldview considers all life forms to be sacred and interconnected. Spirituality pervades every aspect and every form of life (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). Thus, there is a spiritual side to all things—humans, animals, plants, and rocks. With a deep respect for Mother Earth, the Indigenous perspective considers “the health of the Earth as central to human existence and well-being” (Coates, 2003, p. 57). It also reveres elements of life (air, water, sunshine, and earth) as essential for human life (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006).
From this discussion, we see that Indigenous epistemology centers on achieving balance and harmony in all areas of life, while poststructural feminism seeks to disrupt and challenge structures that contribute to disharmony; particularly, racism, sexism, and patriarchy. I will now describe how these two seemingly disparate theories contribute to my study. As I considered how poststructural feminism and Indigenous theory might intersect, co-exist, merge, or sit next to one another in this study, several models came to mind.

**Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theoretical Models**

In the first model, the two theories intersect at a particular point. What occurs at this point of convergence? Given that disruption is a major aim of poststructural feminism, and achieving balance or equilibrium is a predominant theme in Indigenous theory, I describe the point at which the two theories intersect as the point of “disruptive equilibrium.” This model of disruptive equilibrium causes us to challenge old notions of thinking, acting, and being. It prompts us to consider new paradigms in which Indigenous voices are no longer marginalized, but centered in the discourse and production of knowledge. These Indigenous voices, which may have begun as a soft murmur at the margins, have now become a “distinctive cacophony” (Fitzgerald, 2003). Positioning the voices of Indigenous women at the center of theory and inquiry provides a new vantage point and challenges us to consider new roles and opportunities for effecting social and political change.

Disruptive equilibrium presents several possible implications to my study. First, I recognize that many of my participants may have experienced disruptive equilibrium in challenging Western pedagogy or leadership by striving to centralize the Indigenous
worldview. This may be problematic for Native Hawaiian women faculty trying to advance an Indigenous-centered curriculum or for Native Hawaiian women leaders who may feel compelled to acquire similar skills, knowledge, and abilities as their White colleagues (Fitzgerald, 2010). Second, Native Hawaiian women faculty may have encountered Eurocentric tenure policies and practices that are unsupportive of non-Western perspectives or scholarship that advance issues relative to Indigenous and other women of color. Third, as these two theories create a point of disruptive equilibrium, Native Hawaiian women may begin to question dominant Western discourses as they consider what it means to think, act, and be Hawaiian.

A second model conceptualizes the two models as overlapping circles with a common central area. What happens in this space where the two theories overlap? Moenahā concepts are helpful in understanding this common area. For example, Hoʻolohe prompts us to ask why are so few Native Hawaiian women in positions of leadership or power. Hoʻopili prompts the question, what constitutes a modern Native Hawaiian woman? What discourses ostracize Native Hawaiian and other Indigenous women from the literature (Fitzgerald, 2010)? Hoʻohana encourages the question, how do social discourses situate Native Hawaiian women in academe as teachers and leaders? Hoʻopuka begs the question, what if Native Hawaiians used education as a tool to enact political and social change? Moreover, what if Native Hawaiians used tools of their own choosing to “dismantle the master’s house” (Lorde, 1984, p. 25)?

In the third model, I visualize each theory as a river tributary, merging at a particular junction, forming a new stream of thought. Each theoretical tributary contributes to, but does not dominate, the new flow of thinking. In this new theoretical
construct, Indigenous Peoples, imbued with a sense of their own spirituality, strive for sovereignty by incorporating traditional beliefs with renewed responsibilities. In this model, Indigenous feminists challenge normalcy and power through Indigenous ways of knowing and by maintaining their connections to the land and to all elements on the earth. This model prompts Indigenous women to question their absence and White women’s centrality as historical agents in the three waves of feminism in which Indigenous women and women of color find themselves in the periphery (Smith, 2011). For example, in this model native women begin to correct the absence of Indigenous women in feminist history by remembering how Native American women resisted colonization in 1492, and how Native Hawaiian women resisted the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 (Smith, 2011). This model allows us to see that there are numerous feminist histories emerging from multiple communities of color intersecting and diverging at various points (Smith, 2011). This, of course, does not diminish the contributions made by White feminists, but it decenters them from our historical analyses.

In this model, Indigenous feminists seek to do more than simply elevate Indigenous women’s social, economic, and political status – they seek to systemically transform the world through Indigenous forms of governance and Indigenous ways of knowing that benefit everyone. Indigenous feminism is not about an insular identity politics, but rather, it is a framework that supports the struggles of Indigenous women as part of a worldwide movement for liberation (Smith, 2011).

The fourth model explores how poststructural feminism and Indigenous epistemology might manifest themselves as unlikely alliances in the co-creation of a new feminist Indigenous understanding. This model conceptualizes poststructural feminism
and Indigenous epistemology “sitting alongside one another” similar to parallel streams bordering a fertile patch of taro land. Each stream contributes to the growth and production of the taro without ever merging. What happens in this fertile space between the parallel streams?

Bhabha, (1994) describes this fertile area as an in-between or third space. This third space is the location of disruption and displacement of hegemonic colonial narratives (Meredith, 1998). In these in-between spaces, Bhabha envisions a space that engenders new possibilities. It is a space that produces new forms of cultural meaning, blurs any limitations of existing categories or boundaries, and moves us beyond the borders of colonial binary thinking. This is the milieu where Indigenous peoples become political advocates and demand change. This is the space where Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples gain respect for multiple ways of knowing and producing knowledge. In this in-between place, Indigenous peoples can appropriate poststructural feminism to eradicate structures of racism, sexism, and patriarchy.

In this third space, Indigenous peoples experience a form of cultural hybridity, a term used by Bhabha (1994) to describe a central place in colonial discourse that is celebrated and privileged as a higher form of cultural knowledge resulting from the straddling of two cultures. In this in-between space, Indigenous peoples gain new meaning and understanding of what it means to be Indigenous in a postmodern world. This may mean relinquishing any nostalgic images and universal representation of traditional Indigenous culture and identity. For Indigenous women faculty, this model presents opportunities to produce Indigenous research by, for, and about Indigenous peoples. Native Hawaiian women faculty can operate in this third space to raise
questions as to who has the right to speak for Native Hawaiian women, on Native Hawaiian matters, and what new knowledge might be produced (Fitzgerald, 2010).

In this in-between place, Indigenous women (again using Moenahā as a guide to inquiry) might ask why Native Hawaiian women are still found in abusive relationships, in poverty, and in poor health? What can we do to change things for Indigenous women and to make things pono? How can Indigenous women be considered feminists given that feminist theory is primarily based on western thought and the experiences of White women (Lindberg, 2004)? How can Native Hawaiian women elicit help from kumu (teachers of life), kūpuna (elders), and from ‘aumakua (ancestral guides) to provide them with direction? What if Indigenous women began to think, act, and feel more Indigenous rather than succumbing to dominant western practices? What if Indigenous women resisted feminist frameworks? What effect might this have on the academy, on their scholarship, and on their particular social discourses? How might these actions contribute to a greater sense of balance and harmony between the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional aspects of their being? How might this affect their roles as teachers, leaders, and scholars? How might this affect their relationships with family, community, colleagues, and friends?

As we embark on this journey to understand a feminist Indigenous perspective, we may hear voices on the one hand crying out that Indigenous women are not native enough if they align themselves with feminism. Lindberg (2004), an Indigenous Cree woman, finds feminism to be problematic because it seeks to align Indigenous women with women’s issues, ignoring issues of Indigenous men (many of whom have suffered the same forms of racism as Indigenous women). She points out that the strength of
Indigenous peoples is in their commitment to the well being of the whole group—both women and men.

On the other hand, we may hear that Indigenous women are not feminist enough for mainstream White feminists given that the feminist movement largely excludes their unique experiences and struggles. Donna Awatere (1984), Maori activist and writer, argues that White women are loyal first to their White culture and White way even among those who define themselves as feminists. She surmises that this occurs because the “oppressor avoids confronting the role they play in oppressing others” (p. 42). In other words, it is easier for White feminists to deal with issues pertaining to White women, than for them to serve as “collective witnesses” in the oppression of Indigenous peoples (Boler, 1999, p. 184). Fitzgerald (2010) points out that Indigenous women feel absent and silenced in the literature, unable to find themselves in the non-Indigenous world. Native Hawaiian scholar and nationalist, Haunani Trask (1996), renounces all identification with feminism claiming the feminist movement to be about White women with no real acknowledgment of the scholarly contributions of Native Hawaiian and other women of color. Contributing to this conversation, Lindberg (2004) finds the “blanket inclusion” of all Indigenous women’s identities, experiences, and ways of knowing within the women’s movement to be “offensive and exclusionary” (p. 349).

In response to these observations, Indigenous women must understand who they are and from where they have come. Indigenous women can take strength in reaffirming that native women have always been empowered to reproduce nations, to infuse cultural values in their children, and to pass on native languages and sacred traditions (Denetdale, 2010). For example, prior to colonial contact Native Hawaiian women served as
powerful figures in mythological and political spheres (Kaomea, 2006). To substantiate the power evident in the lives of ancient Hawaiian women, I present a brief discussion of the lives of akua (goddesses) and aliʻi (royalty).

**Native Hawaiian Women’s Power: Akua and Aliʻi**

Native Hawaiian women’s power is evident beginning with the Kumulipo, an ancient chant containing over 2,000 lines which describes the creation of the world, the dawn of human life, and the origin of the islands (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1999). According to the Kumulipo, the ancient Hawaiian world began with Pō, the mysterious female night who miraculously gave birth (without impregnation) to a son, Kumulipo (male night) and a daughter, Pōʻele (female night). Through their mating, Kumulipo and Pōʻele created the world and 400,000 gods and goddesses (half of whom were female). Interestingly, the first child of Kumulipo and Pōʻele was the goddess, Hina or Hine which is a shortened form of wahine (woman), a “powerful source of new life, and a life-giving source of mana, or spiritual power” (Kaomea, 2006, p. 337). According to this sacred genealogical narrative, “mana wahine” (the sacred power of women) is a force that must always be acknowledged (Kaomea, 2006, p. 337). Particularly in Hawaiian society where genealogical rank was paramount, the first ancestor is the most powerful (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1999).

Turning now to a discussion of women rulers in ancient Hawaiʻi, an examination of lesser-known histories reveals that women in pre-contact Hawaiʻi served as supreme rulers and chiefs (Kaomea, 2006). For instance, a moʻi wahine (supreme female ruler) ruled the island of Oʻahu as early as A.D. 1375, while female chiefs ruled the island of Hawaiʻi from approximately 1550 to 1720 (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1999). Rank and lineage
(not gender) were deciding factors in the distribution of power as numerous high-ranking women served as warriors and advisors to chiefs (Kaomea, 2006). Missionaries were surprised at the amount of power and respect shown to Hawaiian women. One particular missionary journal noted that women often maintained authority over the men and held the reins of government over large districts (Lyons, 1836). Indeed, the last monarch to rule over Hawaiʻi was a woman – Queen Liliʻuokalani. According to postcolonial scholar Obeyesekere (1992), this suggests that the Western historical narrative that describes the liberation of oppressed Hawaiian women by European colonists is nothing more than a myth.

How do these genealogical and historical narratives contribute to the current conversation about Native Hawaiian women faculty? First, it is imperative that Native Hawaiian women faculty understand their sacred origins and the historical contributions made by stalwart Native Hawaiian women rulers. As descendants of powerful female ancestors, Native Hawaiian women may feel emboldened and empowered to serve as leaders in their academic and social communities. As Indigenous women embrace new leadership roles, Fitzgerald (2010) points out the importance of maintaining connections to family, genealogy, and the land. Second, this perspective allows Native Hawaiian women to disrupt the Western historical narratives they learned as children and produce a counter-narrative from an Indigenous perspective of understanding the world (Kaomea, 2006). These genealogical and historical narratives give Native Hawaiian women a new worldview focused on what it means to be Hawaiian. Third, these narratives help Native Hawaiian women replace collective memories of oppression and colonization, and
feelings of disparity and entitlement with visions of empowered roles as mothers, scholars, advocates, and leaders.

Similar to the talking circles common among American Indian and First Nations Peoples, the circles in Figure 2.4 represent women’s voices as reflected in the literature, inclusive of the experiences of women in higher education, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women.

![Figure 2.4. Literature Review](image)

**Women in Higher Education**

Forming a critical mass, women now earn the majority of all college degrees from the associate to the doctorate degree (Aud et al., 2012). Women students continue to dominate enrollment in largely female fields such as nursing and allied health (Townsend, 2008) along with psychology, anthropology and education (Aud et al., 2012). Traditionally, women have gravitated toward nurturing careers in education, nursing, and social work. It may be that women students choose to major in these fields assuming that
such disciplines will provide them with greater flexibility to manage personal pursuits along with professional and family responsibilities (Townsend, 2008).

At the doctoral level, women who once comprised a small fraction of PhDs in the sciences are becoming the majority in psychology, social sciences, and the life sciences. Despite the tendency for women to gravitate to human-centered disciplines, women are gaining some ground in the sciences. For example, over the last 40 years, the relative proportion of women doctoral recipients has increased more than 100-fold in engineering (from a mere .2% in 1966 to 23% in 2006), 12-fold in geosciences (from 3% to 37%), and 8-fold in the physical sciences from 4% to 28% (Mason, Goulden, & Frasch, 2010). With larger numbers of women completing doctoral degrees in the sciences, one might expect to see a larger proportion of women faculty in scientific disciplines at academic institutions. Unfortunately, this is not the case, particularly at higher faculty ranks. Job applicant pools at universities contain relatively few women applicants relative to their rates of doctoral degrees earned (Mason et al., 2010).

The reasons for a lack of women applicants range from theories of a chilly institutional climate, to gender discrimination, to a lack of mentoring, to the effects of family formation (Mason et al., 2010). Those women who do enter the academy find advancement to the highest ranks of the professoriate to be slow (39%) and that if this pace continues at the same rate, it may take decades for women professors to achieve parity (West & Curtis, 2006). Table 2.3 describes the most recent faculty gender report issued by the American Association of University Professors, called “AAUP Faculty Gender Equity Indicators 2006.”
Table 2.3.
Faculty Gender Equity by Appointment and Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenured</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure-Track</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Faculty</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Faculty</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While women held nearly half of all tenure-track positions, they held less than one-third of tenured positions. Table 2.4 shows that women faculty tend to be clustered in the lower ranks of the professoriate as instructors and lecturers. Tenure-track women are disproportionately concentrated at the Assistant Professor level, while tenured women faculty hold higher ranks as associate and full professors. Despite achieving higher ranks, women earn 80% of men’s salaries at public doctoral universities, and at private doctoral institutions, women earn 77% of men’s salaries (Advocate, 2009).

Percent of Faculty in Non-Tenure-Track, Tenure-Track, and Tenured Appointments by Academic Rank and Sex, 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Tenure Track</th>
<th>Tenure Track</th>
<th>Tenured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This table is based on 1,319 reporting institutions and combines public, private, and religiously affiliated institutions. Data retrieved from AAUP “2010-11 Report on the Economic Status of the Profession.”

The likelihood for women faculty to achieve tenure is diminishing given the downward trend for degree-granting institutions to offer tenure and the rising trend to hire contingent faculty (Cooper et al., 2007; Cooper, Ortiz, Benham, & Scherr, 2002).
Indeed, during the last four decades, the proportion of tenured and tenure-track faculty members at American universities has declined from 57 percent to 30 percent, while the proportion of non-tenure-track full- and part-timers has increased from 43 percent to 70 percent (Williams June, 2012).

Women in Senior-Level Administrative Positions

Women administrators are included in this literature review because female academicians frequently move from faculty to senior-level administrative positions. Feminist poststructural theory exposes the dominant androcentric perspective in educational administration (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000). The practice of mentoring, for example, designed to perpetuate the status quo, often emphasizes the male tradition of cloning self, values, and attitudes.

In describing women’s experiences, many scholars tend to provide a census of the number of women in leadership positions for the purpose of affirmation action (Gardiner et al., 2000). My purpose in evaluating the numbers of women faculty of color serving as college presidents is to illustrate the proportion of women of color in positions of power and leadership who can serve as effective change agents for women faculty of color. Traditionally, White males have dominated the college presidency. In 1986, 92% of college presidents were White and 91% were male, demonstrating an organizational culture dominated by White males. Twenty years later, 86% of college presidents were White and 77% were male (June, 2007). The majority (93%) of male college presidents tend to be married compared to fewer than half of female presidents (Allan, 2011). The cultural expectation is for the wives of male college presidents to preside over the home,
while the spouses of female presidents typically have their own careers, leaving the burden of family and domestic care resting on the shoulders of female college presidents.

At 4-year institutions, particularly research universities, fewer women faculty serve as department chairs and presidents than at community colleges (Townsend & Twombly, 2007). Women are more prevalent at senior-level administrative positions in the community colleges than in 4-year institutions, yet continue to be disproportionately represented in both the 4-year and 2-year college sector as college presidents (Townsend, 2008). According to a report by the American Council on Education (2012), the number of female college presidents has more than doubled since the mid-1980s, from less than 10% to 26%. At this rate, it will take 60 years for women to achieve parity with men. Currently, of the 2,148 institutions of higher education in the United States, only 494 (or 22%) have women presidents (Moltz, 2011).

The unseen glass ceiling in business that prevents many women from climbing the corporate ladder is not quite the same in academic life. President S. Georgia Nugent of Kenyon College describes the situation in higher education as more like a “starry emporium” in which a few women college presidents such as those at Harvard, Brown, and Penn are highly visible giving the mistaken impression of the progress women have made in academe (Moltz, 2010). While women begin to chart a course to top academic leadership posts in major colleges and universities, they continue to face unique challenges. The percentage of women presidents is disproportional to the percentage of women students in higher education. Ideally, faculty, administration, and staff levels should mirror the student body. Thus, it is important to consider the barriers to women in higher education as they move through the academy.
Barriers to Women in Higher Education

A review of relevant literature reveals numerous challenges and barriers for women in higher education. These obstacles impede career advancement, promotion, and the pursuit of tenure and leadership posts in academe. Barriers to women in higher education include, but are not limited to 1) institutional or structural discrimination, 2) institutional sexism; 3) achieving a work/life balance, 4) female-only networks, and 5) a flawed tenure process (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2010; Cooper et al., 2007; Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Miroiu, 2003; Morrissey & Schmidt, 2008; Thorton, 2005).

Institutional or Structural Discrimination

The first barrier known as institutional or structural discrimination refers to the policies, practices, norms, and traditions of the dominant racial, ethnic, or gender group and the implementation of policies that disadvantage one social group for the benefit of another group (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2010). Discriminatory institutional practices in higher education begin with the way institutions recruit students, hire faculty, and determine policies and practices governing promotion and tenure. An example of structural discrimination is the faculty evaluation system that exists in most research-intensive institutions. In her study, Women Faculty Seeking Tenure and Parenthood, Armenti (2004) points out that the faculty evaluation system at four-year universities undervalues teaching and service and overvalues scholarly research and publication. This disparity is evidenced in the higher compensation allocated to faculty involved in research and publication as compared to teaching and service (Cooper et al., 2007). Women are more likely to work in teaching-centered institutions than at research
universities, and thus receive lower compensation (Armenti, 2004; Cooper et al., 2007). Despite heavy teaching and advising loads, women are expected to conduct research and publish in the “right” publications to get tenure.

**Institutional Sexism**

A second barrier to women is institutional sexism which refers to the “social arrangements, rules, practices, procedures, laws, and policies, which are apparently gender-neutral, but which actually lead to treatment that is unfavourable to women” (Miroiu, 2003, p. 23). Institutional sexism may be unintentional, subtle, and less visible than individual gender discrimination. It appears in many discreet forms including exclusion from professional networks, sexist language, condescending attitudes towards women, and various forms of sexual harrassment. Institutional sexism marginalizes women in less appreciated and less recognized activities such as teaching, advising, supervising graduate students, and serving on a multitude of committees (Armenti, 2004; Cooper et al., 2007). This results in fewer opportunities for women to conduct research and publish scholarly work reducing the likelihood of women receiving tenure (Armenti, 2004). With a proclivity to hold the lower ranks in the professoriate, women spend considerably more time teaching than men, while male faculty in the higher ranks tend to publish more frequently (Armenti, 2004). For example, Natural Sciences has the highest publication rate, but the fewest number of female faculty (Armenti, 2004) while the more “feminized disciplines” such as English, education, and anthropology tend to employ larger numbers of women faculty (Cooper et al., 2007, p. 639). Unfortunately, these departments receive fewer resources resulting in larger course loads and less support for women to participate in research activities (Armenti, 2004).
Achieving A Work/Life Balance

A third barrier for women in academe involves personal challenges to achieving a balance in their professional and personal lives. Women often strive to achieve a “work/life balance,” a term used by Morrissey and Schmidt (2008) to describe the condition of engaging in purposeful careers and the pursuit of tenure while struggling to carve out time to pursue personal goals with family or friends, contribute to their community, or invest in personal development (p. 1400). Morrissey and Schmidt (2008) point out that focusing only on the needs of faculty with children may alienate faculty without children who may be asked to cover for their colleagues. Nonetheless, family care issues have a more negative impact on salary, promotion, and tenure for women than for men (Cooper et al., 2007) and continue to be a major concern for women faculty.

Tenure track women, for example, must often choose between motherhood and tenure. Armenti (2004) noted the irony and tension women face as their childbearing years parallel with their journey toward tenure. This tension is particularly challenging for women scholars who have young children early in their careers (Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Twombly, 2007). Finkel and Olswang (1996) pointed out that women in the lower ranks of the professoriate identified childcare commitments as detrimental to the pursuit of tenure. Grant et al. (2000) found that women experienced greater stress than male faculty when combining an academic career with family life. Wolfinger, Mason, and Goulden (2009) revealed that family formation, including marriage and childbirth, may explain why women are not as successful as men in their academic careers. They discovered that having young children under the age of six negatively affects the likelihood that women will obtain tenure.
Once the tenure clock begins ticking, women faculty are disadvantaged when they take time out for maternity leave. Women scholars with children, who refer to themselves as “motherscholars,” indicated that living a bifurcated existence as both mothers and scholars can be exhausting, yet rewarding (Tintiangco-Cubales, 2010; Trujillo, 2011). While these motherscholars appreciate their dual perspectives, they are quick to point out that they have yet to come close to achieving an effective work-family balance. In an androcentric institution, colleagues may question a pregnant woman’s commitment to the academy (Armenti, 2004; Cooper et al., 2007). As a result, women faculty may postpone childbearing feeling that pre-tenure babies could reduce their chances of achieving tenure (Armenti, 2004). Fearing that time off from work for maternity leave could hinder promotion and tenure, many women plan for “May babies” so as not to interfere with the academic year (Armenti, 2004, p. 72). Due to family care issues, women are also less mobile in terms of new job opportunities (Armenti, 2004; Finkel & Olswang, 1996) that may limit their abilities to obtain a tenure-track position. Furthermore, women academics are more likely than their male counterparts to subordinate their careers to those of their partner by accepting non-tenure-track positions or working only part-time (Armenti, 2004).

Female-Only Networks

Fourth, women tend to network with other female academics rather than men, which can limit their access to key information and the political influence necessary to move them through the academy toward tenure (Cooper et al., 2007). Acquiring the knowledge and cultural capital that results from powerful mentoring networks can empower women (Cooper et al., 2007). Unfortunately, women in lower ranks are often
excluded from the powerful, male-dominated academic networks and informal professional associations. Mentoring networks can be a critical part of higher education’s structures and standards that support the diverse needs of women faculty of color.

Flawed Tenure Process

A fifth barrier to women in academe is a tenure process plagued with numerous problems. The system is biased towards men with supportive partners and discriminates against mother scholars who often must stop the tenure clock. Although colleges and universities have begun to extend the tenure clock for many qualifying reasons, tenure reviewers often assume that professors who extend the tenure clock are not serious scholars (Thornton, 2005). Members of the tenure review committee serve as gatekeepers to the academy. Reviewers exercise complete discretion when evaluating tenure dossiers making tenure a highly subjective process. For example, despite numerous publications, the reviewers may discredit an applicant who has not published in the approved refereed journals. They may also question an applicant’s political activism and community involvement. Another problem with the tenure review process is that review committees tend to reproduce existing epistemologies. As Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002) disclosed, the tenure review process controls the production of knowledge by defining legitimate knowledge. For example, tenure review committees tend to discredit and devalue women’s scholarship particularly if it concerns ethnic minorities or Indigenous issues.

Another issue for tenure track women is the recent trend to hire contingent (or adjunct) faculty. Contingent faculty include part-timers and full-time non-tenure track lecturers (Gappa, 2008). According to the American Association of University
Professors (2009), the percentage of contingent faculty on college and university campuses has expanded from 43% in 1975 to nearly 70% thirty years later. Today, nearly half of all faculty in higher education serve in part-time appointments, while 68% of all new faculty appointments are non-tenure-track positions (AAUP, 2009). Women are more likely to occupy these growing part-time and contingent faculty ranks that tend to be the least secure, least profitable, and least prestigious jobs among the full-time faculty. Many women academics find themselves in these part-time non-tenure-track positions without the benefit of health care, retirement, or job security. The fact that women are more likely to occupy contingent positions points to a consistent devaluing of women’s work in the academy and contributes to the structural tension between tenured and tenure-track women versus those in contingent positions. Recent trends toward greater flexibility in academe, hiring increasing numbers of contingent faculty, and a considerable reduction in tenure-line positions may affect the low numbers of women finding and retaining tenurable positions.

These barriers to women—institutional or structural discrimination, institutional sexism, achieving a work/life balance, female-only networks, and a flawed tenure process—contribute to the denial of tenure for women faculty (Cooper et al., 2007). A negative decision means far more than the loss of a permanent contract. It signifies termination of employment and may end a woman’s academic career (Cooper et al., 2007). While these barriers are significant, obstacles to women of color plunge into deeper waters.
Women of Color in Higher Education

Although I use the term “women of color” or “students of color,” I acknowledge the diverse and constantly changing identities and experiences constituted in these descriptions. Increasing numbers of students of color are entering higher education. Between 1976 and 2004, the percentage of total undergraduate students who were from ethnic minority groups rose to mirror their proportion in the general population (NCES, 2005). Between 1996 and 2006, the number of associate’s degrees earned by students of color increased at a faster rate than for majority white students (NCES, 2006). Minority students in 2005-06 earned 30% of associate’s degrees, 25% of bachelor’s degrees, 22% of master’s degrees, and 15% of doctoral degrees, excluding non-resident aliens (NCES, 2007). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2007), the percent change from 1991 to 2006 for minority doctoral recipients was an astounding 135%. Given that significantly more students of color are receiving doctorate degrees, where are they in the academy?

Although minority representation among full-time professors rose to 17% in 2005 (NCES, 2005), faculty of color continue to be underrepresented at both public and private universities (Salary Review, 2009). White faculty (both male and female) continue to dominate the professoriate. The percentages of Hispanic, African American, and American Indian faculty, however, are significantly below parity with 2025 population projections, while Asian American faculty have already surpassed parity. Given that professors of color held less than 13% of faculty positions at the full professor rank (NCES, 2005), what is the status of African American women, Latinas, and Asian Pacific American women in higher education?
Over the last two decades, undergraduate enrollment for African American women rose from 24% in 1988 to 40% in 2008 (Ryu, 2010). As with many women, African American women undergraduates traditionally were concentrated in the social sciences, humanities, and education along with helping professions such as nursing. Today, the highest concentration of African American students is in business and management, social sciences, humanities, and health professions. The lowest concentration is in biological and biomedical sciences, technology, math, and statistics (Ryu, 2010). At the graduate level, African American women’s share of graduate degrees has actually decreased for master’s degrees and doctorates, although they still outpace African American men. African American women with master’s and professional degrees are concentrated in education, business and management, and health professions. At the doctoral level, African American women’s fields of study continue to be located in the health professions, education, and social sciences with very few enrolling in science, math, or technology.

In a study of African Americans in higher education, researchers found that African American male and female faculty in the professoriate were systematically and significantly disadvantaged as compared to Whites, resulting in persistent barriers to their recruitment, retention, promotion, and tenure (Allen et al., 2000). Concentrated in the lower levels of academia, African American faculty represent only four percent of professors and associate professors in the academy, compared to White Americans who comprise 87 percent of tenured faculty.

In the past twenty years, Latinas have increased their representation among students, faculty, and administrators in higher education. In 2007-08, Latinas achieved
single-digit percentage increases for associates, bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010). Latina faculty held only four percent of faculty positions held by women, compared to 78 percent held by White women, seven percent held by African American women, seven percent held by Asian American women, and less than one percent held by American Indian women.

In the professoriate, Latinas comprised four percent of women assistant professors, three percent of women associate professors, and three percent of women full professors. Among women university administrators, Latinas represented five percent of executive positions compared to 80 percent held by White women. Given that a growing percent of the US population is Hispanic, it is prudent for colleges and universities to improve pathways for Latina students, faculty, and administrators (Gándara, 2009). As Latina mothers strive to attain tenure and stay true to their community and culture, they often experience feelings of fraudulence yet continue to serve as “community-engaged-MotherScholars-of-color” (Tintiangco-Cubales, 2010, p. 3).

Like women of all racial and ethnic groups, Asian Pacific American (APA) women (inclusive of Asians and Pacific Islanders) attend college at faster rates than their male counterparts and earn more than half of all college degrees granted to APA students (Ryu, 2010). The term “APA” is problematic because disparate Asian and Pacific Rim islanders are combined into a single category. Hune and Takeuchi (2009) found that degree attainment varies considerably among APA subgroups noting that Native Hawaiian women have much lower college-going rates than other APA women. Among faculty, APA women’s representation has more than doubled in the last two decades, but they still represent only a small percentage (three percent) of total full-time faculty. At
the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks, and at the highest levels of administration, APA women are notably underrepresented with one of the lowest tenure rates in academe (Hune & Takeuchi, 2009).

**Women of Color in Senior-Level Administrative Positions**

The increase in presidents of color (women and men) in the last two decades has been slow. In 1986, eight percent of college presidents were persons of color, rising to just 14 percent twenty years later (June, 2007). Universities can benefit in several ways by having a woman scholar of color serving as a university president. First, the mere presence of a female or a woman of color sends a clear message to students and faculty that the institution embraces women and persons of color (June, 2007). Second, a female college president of color sends a message that the institution is striving to achieve gender equity and racial diversity and provides a positive role model for female students and faculty of color. Third, a women president of color signals a strong paradigm shift in academe and promotes a conversation about policies, procedures, and processes to remove barriers to women of color.

**Barriers to Women of Color in Higher Education**

In addition to the general barriers faced by women faculty in the academy, women faculty of color encounter a multitude of challenges as they navigate the rough waters of academe (Turner, 2002). These barriers include 1) institutional racism; 2) adapting to Western cultural norms; 3) isolation/marginalization; 4) occupational stress; and 5) issues pertaining to family, career, and community.
Institutional Racism

First, women of color face a unique contradiction as their academic roles intersect with issues of institutional racism. Institutional racism (also known as structural racism) describes a form of racism that occurs in public institutions such as corporations and universities that imposes negative conditions against particular groups based on race or ethnicity (Turner, 2002). A university’s approach to curriculum, pedagogy, and inquiry, along with organizational factors such as the mission, culture, and resources of the institution, and existing power and social relations contribute interdependently to shaping institutional racism (Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005). An example of institutional racism is any university policy, procedure, or practice that has a disproportionately negative impact on women faculty of color. This form of racial discrimination reflects the cultural norms of the dominant group; so that the practices of that group are seen as the standard to which other cultural practices should conform. An example of this is the Eurocentric tenure review process that is unsupportive of non-Western perspectives or scholarship that advances women’s issues. When applying for tenure, women faculty of color cannot always depend on support from their White female colleagues who often lack their worldview (Turner, 2002). This demonstrates that shared gender does not guarantee the sympathy of White women toward women of color, nor does it facilitate progress toward tenure (Montero-Sieburth, 1996). Butler (1997) argues that for women of color, racism “assumes primary importance as an oppressive force with which to reckon” (p. 618). In other words, race is central to their experience. For example, women of color who choose to wear clothing or hairstyles reflecting their ethnic pride are
often treated unjustly because of racism, not sexism (Butler, 1997). Displaying ethnic pride is particularly problematic for African Americans (Butler, 1997).

**Adapting to Western cultural norms**

Second, women of color must contend with dominant Western cultural norms of individualism and masculinity framed by a White perspective, often at the expense of communalism and feminism from the perspective of people of color (Butler, 1997). Some women faculty of color experience a loss of voice and personal identity as they assimilate to the dominant culture of higher education (Calhoun, 2003; Hune, 1998). Commenting on this issue, Anna Ortiz, a Mexican American professor in educational administration said, “If I remain silent and polite, I get to do the kind of research I want to do, and if I do enough of it, I get tenure” (Cooper et al., 2002, p. 78). In essence, they learn to “play the game” to get what they want (Young, 2006, p. 154). Unfortunately, this sentiment is echoed far too often among women faculty of color who feel that they must learn to compromise and bargain to obtain tenure.

When interviewed for *The Times Higher Education Supplement* in 1995, professor bell hooks declared that assimilation requires eradication of one’s culture and ethnic heritage. For many women of color, the rejection of one’s own culture is an unacceptable compromise. For example, in their study of Black and White women in corporate America, Bell and Nkomo (2003) found that African-American women take cultural assimilation as an affront to their identity, but also recognize it as a threat to their ambition. These African-American women attributed family socialization, which formed their cultural identity, with helping them to deal with racism and sexism.
While assimilation implies the rejection of one’s own culture, Sadao (2003) describes the cross-cultural theory of acculturation as requiring women to compromise their existing beliefs and values to function in the new culture. Sadao (2003) suggests a bicultural model as a more effective way of dealing with two distinct cultures. In this model, faculty of color function in both the academic world and within their ethnic minority community by learning to successfully code switch between the two cultures as the situation requires. Women of color who are successful at code switching have learned to adapt (Calhoun, 2003; Sadao, 2003). In other words, they do what it takes to gain tenure.

Isolation and Marginalization

Third, being that their numbers are relatively few in any given department, women faculty of color are highly visible but feel isolated and marginalized and experience feelings of fraudulence as they question their position in the hierarchy of power (Calhoun, 2003; Koch, 2002). With few visible role models, women of color have difficulty visualizing themselves in positions of authority. Their lack of social and cultural capital may cause them to feel a lack of entitlement to success in the public arena (Cooper et al., 2002). Their representation or the lack thereof, within educational institutions, poses serious challenges for women faculty of color (Townsend, 2008). According to Skachkova (2007), women of color and particularly immigrant women professors experience differential treatment from students, colleagues and administrators; remain underrepresented in positions of leadership; and experience discrimination in the form of sexism, ethnocentrism, and racism. Asher (2010) describes the tension and contradiction that tenured women faculty of color experience as both insiders and
outsiders in the academy. As insiders, by virtue of their tenure, they enjoy a measure of security and seniority and a comfortable middle-class income. However, as women of color they find themselves outside the inner circle. Those in the majority (males and White women) maintain their dominance in the inner circle, and having formed strong professional alliances, they have greater opportunities for research sponsorship (Turner, 2002). Conversely, women faculty of color tend to be a visible minority situated at the margins.

In her classic study of men and women in the corporate world, Kanter (1977) proposed a theory of proportions in which she described the effects of marginality on the social interactions within the organization. She noted that social interaction differs significantly among those in the majority and those in the minority. This theory has direct applications to women faculty of color who find themselves on the periphery, often excluded from informal peer networks, facing pressure to conform to academic culture, while maintaining a heavy workload (Turner, 2002). According to Townsend (2008), women of color experience a unique social context. They feel pressure to conform to Western ideals of academe, yet face misperceptions about their role in the organization. Lacking the power alliances of the majority, women of color struggle to gain credibility and obtain necessary sponsorship for their research (Townsend, 2008).

Occupational Stress

Fourth, women of color experience significant occupational stress feeling challenged not only by their academic peers, but also by the students in their classroom who question their gender, race, and authority to teach (Townsend, 2008; Turner, 2002). To earn students’ respect, women faculty of color feel the need to be extremely organized
and well-prepared for class. Students may feel uncomfortable challenging a middle-aged White male professor, but may not hesitate to confront a woman of color (Turner, 2002). Moreover, women faculty of color often feel disconnected from majority faculty within their own discipline and perceive that their research may not garner respect if focused on women’s issues or ethnic minority populations (Cooper & Stevens, 2002).

Women faculty of color complain they are underemployed yet overused by their department or institution as ethnic tokens (Kanter, 1977; Turner, 2002). In addition to their teaching responsibilities, they are often asked to participate on numerous committees to provide an ethnic balance, and serve as advisors to students of color (Turner, 2002). Feelings of isolation and invisibility often conflict with their unwanted roles as racial minority group representatives (Hune, 1998). Siedman (1983) added that women faculty of color must work harder, perform their jobs more zealously, and be more thorough and conscientious than their White colleagues.

Family, Career, and Community

Fifth, similar to White women faculty, women scholars of color experience tension between the competing demands of family, career, and community. Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales (2010), a Filipina mother and scholar, describes three shifts that tug at mother scholars. The first shift involves the productive work of academe for which women are compensated. The second shift is the reproductive work women do at home that is often unpaid and undervalued. The third shift concerns community participation that is often expected by communities of color yet goes unrecognized. She elaborates that mothering is integrated in all three shifts and provides her with a process of liberation, resistance, and power. Despite efforts to integrate career, home, and
community, mother scholars of color feel guilty about not being wholly present when at home, not wholly focused when at work, and not fully committed to community activities. Tina Trujillo (2010), a Latina mother scholar describes this bifurcated process as a dual consciousness that women have about their lives as mothers and academics. Women of color feel they must sacrifice family and community commitments to concentrate on their careers, or contribute to family and community efforts (unrelated to work) at the risk of not being promoted or earning tenure (Turner, 2002).

Complicating the issue of family and career to women faculty of color, is the importance of the group or community over individualism. Establishing connections with their ethnic communities is vital to women of color because of the value placed on communalism (Turner, 2002). The importance of community to women of color can be illustrated by the African proverb, “I am because we are. We are because I am” (Butler, 1997, p. 620). This way of thinking and being stands in direct contrast to the Western axiom propagated by Descartes, “I think; therefore I am” (Butler, 1997, p. 620) which stresses individualism. Calhoun (2003) points out that faculty of color in the academy encounter the cultural dilemma—whether to deny one’s identity to gain tenure, or to continue to work within the academic community and remain true to one’s culture. This constant tension between family, community, and career strikes a dissonant chord for women of color in academe.

All of these factors contribute to difficulties in achieving promotion and tenure for women faculty of color. The combined effects of racism, sexism, and ageism complicate the tenure process for women faculty of color (Cooper et al., 2002). For Indigenous women, the challenges are more complex and multilayered.
Indigenous Women in Higher Education

As women of color, Native Hawaiian women are also an Indigenous people. To provide the reader with a deeper understanding of how their Indigenous identity contributes to their challenges in the academy, I have included Indigenous women faculty in this literature review. Indigenous faculty are included in the aggregate numbers reported for minorities in higher education, thus no data exist to describe the percentage of Indigenous faculty in academe. As defined in this study, Indigenous Peoples, who are native to many countries and islands throughout the world, are those peoples who have been colonized and oppressed, who have survived imperialism, yet remain “culturally distinct,” many with their native languages still flourishing (Smith, 2005, p. 86). The World Council of Indigenous Peoples (2012) defines Indigenous Peoples as those who have experienced a shared history of intimidation, threat, deprivation, injustice, discrimination and genocide, and have felt themselves threatened by extinction.

Indigenous women faculty share many of the same experiences as women faculty of color. To become a mainstream academic, many Indigenous women feel compelled to silence their native voice. They accomplish this by learning to code-switch between an alien academic culture and their own native culture. In addition to barriers of institutional racism and sexism, Indigenous women faculty must also contend with issues of colonization and oppression.

Historically, European cultures have viewed Indigenous people as “inferior and primitive” (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008, p. 135). Yet, these Indigenous people have produced a knowledge, ontology, and epistemology that define their ways of being and seeing in relationship to their physical environment (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008) that
contrasts with the colonial way of knowing (Meyer, 2008). Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) challenges traditional Western ways of knowing and research and advocates for the decolonization of methodologies. Tuhiwai Smith is concerned with the underlying cultural assumptions, perceptions, and values that inform traditional research practices. Although she adopts a critical feminist theoretical framework, she rejects the term “post-colonialism” arguing that colonialism continuous to have a significant impact on Indigenous peoples. She advocates for research practices free from racism, ethnocentrism, and exploitation.

The many barriers to Indigenous women in academe are real and poignant. Indigenous woman scholar Fyre Jean Graveline (2002) writes about her experiences of alienation as a faculty member in Canada:

As a Metis Feminist, Two Spirited Traditionalist, Activist, Scholar
These Barriers are Very Visible to Me / Yet Invisible to Others.
They are Flattening Forces / Caging Me / Reducing Me / Denying Me.
Hating My existence / My Woman-ness / My Native-ness /
My Two-Spirited-ness / My Existence Within
Eurocentric, Patriarchal, Heterosexist Systems
Which never ever / Never Ever /
Meant to Include Me / Me or "My Kind." (p. 73)

In her writing, Graveline describes isolating and violent forces that challenge her very existence. In a study of American Indian faculty in the academy, Calhoun (2003) provides insight into the plight of Indigenous faculty in their pursuit of tenure. The author, who is Native American, maintains that successful Indigenous college students are those who are most adept at “code-switching” between their Indigenous voice and their academic voice (Calhoun, 2003, p. 132). She asserts that Indigenous faculty pay a high price to become academics by silencing their native voice. She describes her dilemma to achieve tenure and questions whether she should deny her identity to gain
tenure or continue to work within her academic community and the Indigenous community with the possible risk of jeopardizing tenure. In other words, does she silence her native voice and deny her cultural and religious traditions to obtain promotion and tenure? Calhoun asserts that Indigenous students and faculty must carefully negotiate their native culture with Western academic culture by learning to function in a bicultural world. This study has particular relevance to my study of Native Hawaiian women faculty as I expected that Native Hawaiian women may also have to negotiate their native culture with the dominant White culture of academe.

**Barriers to Indigenous Women in Higher Education**

In addition to dealing with the effects of structural and personal discrimination experienced by women faculty of color, Indigenous women faculty suffer from the effects of oppression and colonization. By definition, colonization begins with conquest followed by the “denigration of the conquered people’s cultural practices, intellect, morals, and even humanity” (Carriuolo, 2003, p. 19). Unfortunately, such denigration has lingering effects generation after generation, even as the disparagement becomes less overt and more subconscious. Colonized groups, such as Native Hawaiians, Native Americans, the Maori of New Zealand, Aborigines from Australia, along with African Americans and Latina/os are typically undervalued and disregarded by the powerful majority group, while their scholarly work goes largely unsupported, especially if the research is related to women’s or minority issues (Carriuolo, 2003). Many Indigenous faculty of color struggle to gain acceptance and respect from their majority colleagues. Always under scrutiny, colonized faculty members feel the need to prove their competence, particularly in fields such as science and math, traditionally occupied by
White males (Carriuolo, 2003). Lacking the social and cultural capital of majority faculty, many members of colonized groups feel disadvantaged and discouraged and continue to experience repercussions from colonization (Carriuolo, 2003).

**Native Hawaiian Women in Higher Education**

Native Hawaiian women faculty share much in common with other women faculty, particularly in regards to the effects of institutional racism and sexism. Their experiences during the tenure process, however, may be more poignant because of their Indigenous culture and deeply rooted values that place a particular emphasis on the ‘ohana (family). Hawaiian group-centered culture stands in direct contrast to the individualistic nature of Western thought and the structure and organization of academe. Layered in complexity, Native Hawaiian women faculty face racial, gender, structural, and cultural discrimination along with a tradition of silence and marginalization in their own land (Ah Nee Benham & Heck, 1998). As an Indigenous people, however, culture is situated at the center of their experience. Values are a unique reflection of culture and may help us to understand how Native Hawaiian women faculty navigate through the stormy seas and murky waters of academe as they chart a course toward tenure.

To understand the effects of colonization on the Native Hawaiian people, one must first gain a historical perspective of the Hawaiian people. Prior to 1778, the Native Hawaiian population of nearly 800,000 people flourished in the Hawaiian Islands. Western contact introduced infectious diseases and epidemics to which Hawaiians had little immunity (Ogata, Sheehey, & Noonan, 2006). Numerous studies exist documenting Native Hawaiians as having the highest rate of poverty, homelessness, diabetes, heart disease, and suicide, and the lowest education scores (Boyd & Braun, 2007; Mokuau &
Tauili‘ili, 2004). These problems stem from the loss of land, resources, culture, and self-identity as a result of their colonized status. Native Hawaiians represent about one-fifth, or 240,000 of the state’s population (State of Hawai‘i Data Book, 2005). Twenty-four percent of students enrolled in the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa System are of Native Hawaiian ancestry (Balutski & Wright, 2011), yet Native Hawaiians comprise less than four percent of faculty at the UH Mānoa (UHM Employee Profile, 2011), which likely is the largest percentage of Native Hawaiian faculty of any college or university in the nation. Little is known about the condition of Native Hawaiian women faculty in the University of Hawai‘i System because Native Hawaiians are combined with Asian Pacific Islanders or categorized as “Other Pacific Islander.” I was unable to locate a single study dealing with tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty. The need for disaggregated data on Native Hawaiian women is particularly acute in light of the “University of Hawai‘i Strategic Plan 2011-2019” which establishes the university’s commitment to Native Hawaiian students and faculty.

Young (2006) explored how Native Hawaiian faculty members in higher education described their experience in earning a PhD. He discovered that Native Hawaiian participants employed strength and perseverance underpinned by Native Hawaiian values. Despite differences between their native culture and the world of academe, these participants learned to “play the game” to earn their degrees (Young, 2006, p. 154). Faculty influence also played a strong role in the successful completion of their doctoral degrees. A final contributing factor was the passion that participants experienced for their particular study pertaining to the Native Hawaiian community.
Young’s study has particular relevance to my research as I am interested in understanding what, if any, Hawaiian values affect the tenure process.

**Native Hawaiian Women in Senior-level Administrative Positions**

Representing few in numbers, census data typically group Native Hawaiian women in the Asian Pacific Islander category. For example, the UH Mānoa Instructional Faculty Profile (2009) combines Asians and Pacific Islanders into one group. Consequently, no disaggregated data exist describing the number of Native Hawaiian women faculty serving as presidents of universities or community colleges. I am aware of only two Native Hawaiian women serving as deans at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Further research is necessary to understand why the percentage of Native Hawaiian faculty in leadership positions is disproportionate to their representation among the faculty.

**Barriers to Native Hawaiian Women in Higher Education**

Similar to the experiences of other Indigenous People, Native Hawaiians have been the victims of oppression and colonization (Wright, 2003). Describing the oppression and colonization of the Hawaiian people, Louis (2007) a Native Hawaiian educator, asserts that Native Hawaiians have been “politically, socially, and economically dominated by colonial forces and marginalized through armed struggle” (p. 131). Under this colonial regime, Christianity replaced native spiritual beliefs and practices. The Hawaiian language was outlawed in public and private schools as English became the official language. The American government overthrew the Hawaiian Monarchy, and the military forcibly occupied Native Hawaiian lands.
For the first time, land became privatized, rather than communal, and the majority of Native Hawaiians were “dispossessed from their ancestral lands” (Wright, 2003, p. 22). Most Native Hawaiians lacked the financial means to purchase their own land. By 1850, non-Native citizens and foreigners were able to purchase great tracts of land, primarily for agricultural purposes (Wright, 2003). Not until 1920, when the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act passed, were Native Hawaiians allowed to repossess their land. Sadly, only those Native Hawaiians with a minimum of 50% blood quantum qualified for Hawaiian homelands. To understand why these issues are important to Native Hawaiian women, one must understand the connection between Native Hawaiians and their ‘āina. This is a key distinction between Native Hawaiians and other Polynesian or Indigenous Peoples.

Hawaiians consider kalo to be the origin of humanity (Meyer, 1998). Hawaiian cosmology maintains that the gods, Wākea (Sky Father) and Hoʻohōkūkalani (Star Mother) gave birth to a son. Their first offspring was an “unformed fetus, born prematurely” (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992, p. 24). His heart-broken parents named him Hāloanakalaukapalili (Hāloa of the shaking leaves) and buried their first born in the earth outside their home. From this site sprouted the first kalo plant. Hoʻohōkūkalani gave birth to a second son (named Hāloa after his older sibling) whom she fed lūʻau and poi from this plant. The second-born Hāloa was given the kuleana (responsibility) to care for the kalo (his elder brother). Thus, the ‘āina and kalo are the elder siblings of the Hawaiian people and therefore deserve great honor and respect (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992).

From this moʻolelo, we see the origin of cultural values such as mālama ‘āina (care for the land) and aloha ‘āina (love for the land). The moʻolelo of Hāloa also
demonstrates the cultural importance kalo has for the Hawaiian people. As Hawaiians care for the land and for kalo, their culture is perpetuated. According to Young (2006), “The word ‘ohana, which means family, is derived from the ‘oha, or the bulb of the taro plant, and the na, or the leafy part of the plant” (p. 38). Thus, the word ‘ohana symbolically ties Hawaiians to the land and is a central theme in Native Hawaiian values.

With such a spiritual and familial relationship to the land, it is not surprising that issues of colonialism and oppression play a significant role in the collective memories of Native Hawaiians and influence how they interact with the world (Wright, 2003). Silva (2004) argues that the colonization of Hawai‘i has resulted in depleted farmland and water sources, widespread homelessness, military and commercial pollution, disproportional imprisonment rates for Native Hawaiians, and the desecration of ancestral remains and sacred sites. As Native Hawaiians continue to experience the oppressive effects of colonialism today, many cling to time-honored Native Hawaiian values.

Native Hawaiian values, which are deeply rooted in traditions, language, storytelling, and history often conflict with Western values that focus on meritocracy and individualism causing tension within the academy (Young, 2006). According to Native Hawaiian epistemology, culture shapes ones thinking. That which one values is richly contextual in relationship with place and people (M. Meyer, personal communication, November 21, 2007). Hawaiian culture is communal, valuing contributions to the family and community over individual achievement (Ogata et al., 2006). Not surprisingly, the ‘ohana, or family is at the core of Native Hawaiian values. From the ‘ohana, Native Hawaiians learn values of love, respect, kindness, hard work, and humility. The ‘ohana is nurturing and transfers knowledge of culture, tradition, and values to it members (Lee,
The ‘ohana also serves as the first practice arena for emerging leaders. Other Native Hawaiian values that support ‘ohana including laulima (working together), aloha (love), ha’a’aha’a (humility), lōkahi (harmony), and lōkōmaika‘i, or generosity (Serna, 2005; Young, 2006). While each Hawaiian value can be translated into English, the Hawaiian word holds a much deeper, sometimes hidden meaning or kaona—the underlying essence. I explored these values and others with Native Hawaiian women faculty in their quest for tenure.

As mentioned earlier, the University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents recently amended the university’s mission statement to clarify the university’s unique commitment to Native Hawaiians throughout the University of Hawai‘i system and its ten campuses.

As the only provider of public higher education in Hawai‘i, the University embraces its unique responsibilities to the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i and to Hawai‘i’s Indigenous language and culture. To fulfill this responsibility, the University ensures active support for the participation of Native Hawaiians at the University and supports vigorous programs of study and support for the Hawaiian language, history and culture (Regents, 2009).

This revised mission statement clearly shows a renewed emphasis on the part of the University of Hawai‘i system to support Native Hawaiians in higher education. Ideally, Native Hawaiians can receive support and encouragement to fulfill their educational and employment goals, and Native Hawaiian faculty can benefit from vigorous support in their pursuit of tenure.

**Ho‘ohanohano**

The third quadrant of Moenahā, Ho‘ohanohano, explores way to resolve tenure issues for women and women of color, strategies to raise consciousness regarding women’s issues, and ways to promote social change. First, how can we resolve tenure issues for
women and women of color? We can begin with a more flexible model that credits women for years spent teaching as contingent faculty, and one that stops the clock during the tenure process to allow for maternity and family care leave. Hewlett and Luce (2005) call for more “off-ramps” by which women can exit the academy for family care issues and more “on-ramps” to facilitate their return to the workplace (p. 11). Such a model might encourage women faculty to stay the course and return to tenure-track positions. Trower and Gallagher (2008) call for clear and consistent tenure guidelines including detailed criteria regarding research, teaching, and service against which one is evaluated; constructive annual evaluations; and a culture of support by senior faculty and department chairs. As faculty serve on tenure, promotion, and review committees, they can intentionally support other forms of legitimate knowledge. Committee members can welcome, recognize, and encourage the unique scholarship of women of color acknowledging that it benefits the institution and its students.

Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002) call for changes in the decision-making processes of tenure promotion and review committees which tend to follow a racialized discourse and double standard. For example, the dominant Eurocentric epistemology that is embedded in tenure review policies places women scholars of color at a notable disadvantage. Committee members often do not have the perspective to adopt a discourse or epistemological stance that recognizes the scholarship, teaching, and service of women scholars of color as valuable (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). The epistemologies and cultural resources of women scholars of color must be recognized for their contribution to the goals of higher education and to the knowledge base in academia (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002).
Second, what strategies can we employ to raise consciousness regarding women’s issues in academe? Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002) assert that we begin by recognizing and naming issues of institutional racism and sexism, by acknowledging the role of non-Eurocentric epistemologies, and by redefining practices, standards, and discourses that discriminate against women scholars of color. They argue that mother scholars and other faculty must advocate for policies and processes that acknowledge the care-giving responsibilities of all faculty. Samble (2008) suggests that women faculty secure tenure prior to revealing their personal agenda to pursue non-mainstream research interests. Matias (2011) adds that mother scholars may need to develop social networks, have access to various resources, and develop a deliberate plan of action to successfully navigate the academic terrain. These scholars advocate shifting the culture of the academy to be more responsive to mothers’ workplace needs and challenges.

Third, how can we promote social change for women of color in the academy? Several scholars recommend peer mentoring (also known as network mentoring) as an effective strategy for promoting social change by helping women of color to navigate the tenure process (Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, & Pitts-Bannister, 2009; Reitman & Benatti, 2011). Peer mentoring, or networking mentoring, involves building a community among several faculty at a similar rank and level of decision-making who serve as both mentor and mentee, with the common goal of achieving promotion and tenure in academe (Samble, 2008). For example, a group of assistant or associate faculty might meet regularly to discuss teaching pedagogy, research and publications in progress, or to share ideas on writing a CV and dossier. Peer mentoring provides a supportive venue for women faculty of color to share advice, experiences, opinions, and perspectives
as well as provide social and professional support. This form of mentoring reinforces a positive self-concept, helps women faculty of color to overcome feelings of invisibility and marginalization, and helps them become self-reliant and confident tenure-track scholars (Driscoll et al., 2009).

Institutions also play an important role in bringing about social change. As institutions endeavor to increase workforce diversity, they have a responsibility to implement and sustain leadership and mentoring programs, and activities that promote the recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty of color (ASHE, 2011). In their study of women academics in medicine, Morrissey and Schmidt (2008) describe the importance of creating an institution whose faculty, deans, and department and administrative leaders reflect the gender and ethnic profile of the college’s student population. Department chairs and academic deans play a critical role in efforts to diversify the academy by encouraging innovative approaches to recruitment and equity in promotion and tenure (Dominici, Fried, & Zeger, 2009). Morrissey and Schmidt (2008) advocate “fixing the system” (not the women) through “data gathering, constituency building, department transformation, policy reform, and advocacy” (p. 1399).

Continuing professional education and development programs are essential to prepare women of color to assume both faculty and administrative leadership roles.

**Hoʻopuka**

The fourth quadrant of Moenahā, Hoʻopuka, promotes “what if” inquiries and demonstrates the need for the current study by revealing the gap in existing literature. This review of the literature invites further inquiry into issues faced by women of color. For example, what might happen if women faculty of color became the majority in
colleges and universities? How might pedagogy and leadership in higher education be different? What would happen if women scholars of color were not judged by the color of their skin or their ethnic attire? How would this affect their scholarship? Would learners be more effectively engaged in their classrooms? What would happen if every academic institution took steps to correct gender and racial discrimination? How would this influence discourse, curriculum, research, and the legitimization of knowledge? What would happen if women faculty of color were situated at the center of academe rather than at the margins? What affect might this have on the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women faculty of color? What would happen if universities stopped the tenure clock for family and maternity leave? How might this affect the gender ratio among faculty at higher ranks? What would happen if tenure review committees acknowledged and respected research dealing with women’s issues and people of color? How might the scope of scholarship be expanded? Finally, what would happen if we considered the affect of Indigenous knowledge systems and values on the tenure process? How might this help us to understand and improve the tenure process? My study fills in this lacuna in the literature.

**Chapter Summary**

This review of the literature examined how Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory frame this study. It explored the status of women in academe, with particular emphasis on the status of women faculty of color at four-year institutions, including Native Hawaiian women faculty. From existing literature we know that most women faculty are still clustered in the lower ranks of the professoriate and a declining number is eligible for tenure. Gender discrimination is a major barrier to tenure for
women in academe who continue to struggle with the larger share of domestic and family care issues. Other barriers contributing to the denial of tenure for women faculty include institutional or structural discrimination, institutional sexism, domestic and family care issues, gendered networks, and a biased tenure process (Cooper et al., 2007).

While women, in general, have made significant gains in higher education, women faculty of color are disproportionately represented as faculty members and experience both institutional racism and sexism as major barriers to their advancement in the academy. In addition, women faculty of color must contend with an unfamiliar erudite culture; a lack of mentors and role models; and tensions between work, family, and community. Indigenous and Native Hawaiian women encounter deeper issues resulting from the oppressive effects of colonization.

I organized this literature review around Moenahā, an Indigenous epistemological framework to provide a native lens for examining women of color in higher education. The four quadrants of this framework guided my inquiry into issues for women of color and Native Hawaiian women, with a focus on social action. In the first quadrant, Hoʻolohe, I established why this topic is important in the academic community and identified the key stakeholders. In the second segment, Hoʻopili, I analyzed the findings of prominent theorists and scholars regarding Poststructural Feminist and Indigenous Theory, women in academe, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty. In the third sector, Hoʻohana, I explored ways to address tenure issues for women and women of color, strategies for raising consciousness regarding women’s issues, and how to promote social change. The final section, Hoʻopuka, suggested the
need for further inquiry with “what if” prompts. This section revealed the gap in extant literature, and illustrated how my study contributes to the literature on Native Hawaiians.

This literature review began with a Hawaiian proverb alluding to the rising stars used to provide direction to ancient navigators. Representing the largest percentage of students and college graduates with advanced degrees, women can be viewed as the rising stars in higher education providing future direction for the academy. Women constitute a serious force. As a growing critical mass, they will help shape the future of higher education and bring about a wave of change. While existing research describes the many barriers to tenure for women and women of color (Cooper & Stevens, 2002), no research was found documenting the experiences of tenured Native Hawaiian women. The lack of extant research on Native Hawaiian women faculty indicates a major gap in the literature pertaining to women faculty of color in higher education, particularly Indigenous faculty, and supports the need for the current study. This study contributes to the limited body of Indigenous research for the benefit of Native Hawaiians. It may assist university administration and faculty in providing supportive services to assist Native Hawaiian women faculty in their pursuit of promotion, tenure, and leadership posts in academe.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

“Kū Holo Mau”
Sail on, Sail Forever
Polynesian Voyaging Society

Overview

This chapter begins with a call to ancient navigators, “Kū Holo Mau” beckoning them to sail on, sail forever. As with these seasoned voyagers, it is my hope that giving voice to these Native Hawaiian women and sharing their lived experiences will enable their stories to live on, live forever. My intention was to interview a purposive sample of Nā Wahine (tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty) to understand their experiences on their voyage through academe leading up to tenure with particular emphasis on the influence, if any, of Native Hawaiian values. I begin this chapter by describing my research paradigm and the multiple theoretical lenses, methodologies, and Indigenous methods used in this study. Next, I describe the participants and the location for this study, followed by methods of data collection and analysis. I include a discussion of my positionality along with issues pertaining to ensuring quality and reliability. I conclude this chapter with ethical concerns and limitations of the study.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

QUESTION 1: How do tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty describe their experiences leading up to tenure?

Sub-questions include the following: What barriers did Native Hawaiian women face in the tenure process? Where did Native Hawaiian women find support in applying for tenure? How can university administration, faculty, and staff support Native
Hawaiian women in the tenure process? What strategies do these women recommend for future Native Hawaiian faculty pursuing tenure?

QUESTION 2: What, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process?

Sub-questions include: How do Native Hawaiian women faculty define those values, and which, if any, came into conflict with Western values? Do Native Hawaiian women faculty assimilate to Western culture, or do they remain true to Native Hawaiian culture?

**Research Paradigm**

My research paradigm is essentially my worldview, a systematic set of beliefs together with accompanying values and methods within which this study takes place. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe this paradigm as the “net that contains the researcher’s epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises” (p. 13). In other words, as a researcher I am making certain claims about knowledge (ontology), how I understand this knowledge (epistemology), the values and ethics that I consider important (axiology), and the process I select for studying it (methodology). It is important that I acknowledge Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Native Hawaiian Epistemology as the worldviews that influence my perspectives about the world and my interactions with others. In the next section, I describe my qualitative paradigm followed by a description of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Native Hawaiian Epistemology.

**Qualitative Paradigm**

For this study of Nā Wahine, I selected a qualitative research paradigm. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting,
utilizing multiple methods to describe and interpret phenomena in their social context. Qualitative research utilizes an exploratory and descriptive focus where the researcher looks closely at people’s words and actions, as well as relevant documents or artifacts, and seeks to discover patterns emerging from the data. The process of discovery is fundamental to the philosophical underpinning of the qualitative approach. Data collection occurs in the natural setting utilizing the researcher as an instrument. The qualitative research paradigm employs qualitative methodology and inductive analysis, revealing contextual findings rather than generalizations. Qualitative inquiry works well for understanding women’s experiences and ways of knowing (Magolda, 1992; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). A qualitative design allowed me to conduct the inquiry in a natural setting, collect the data in a narrative form, focus on the process as to how things occur, and understand how participants assign meaning to their lives (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). A qualitative paradigm opens the way for multiple ways of knowing including Indigenous ways of knowing.

**Indigenous Knowledge Systems**

Indigenous knowledge systems, which include various ways of knowing, focus on relationships with people, nature, and the world (Meyer, 2004). While Indigenous communities are certainly not homogenous, they do share similar worldviews. Laying the foundation of the Indigenous worldview is holistic knowledge. The Indigenous perspective maintains that all knowledge is interconnected and inseparable from place, land, spirit, language, and mo’olelo (Smith, 1999). The Indigenous worldview maintains that everything is connected and interdependent. Indigenous knowledge is relational moving beyond the concept of individual knowledge to the idea of relational knowledge.
Indigenous knowledge is communal knowledge meaning that it is not intended for the benefit of the individual, but rather for the entire community. Indigenous knowledge systems are framed by ancestral wisdom recognizing that knowledge is a fluid, circular, ever-changing force emanating from land, sea, spirit, stories, and one’s ancestors (Meyer, 2004). Therefore, learning the wisdom of one’s ancestors is highly valued in Indigenous communities.

As a Tahitian American researcher, I recognize the influence of holistic, communal, and ancestral knowledge on my worldviews and my relationships with others. I see the world as a web of interconnectivity where everything we do in one system affects elements of another system. For example, if we pollute the moana (ocean) or ʻāina (land), our food supply could be adversely affected causing numerous social problems. We may live on islands, but we are not detached from the world; our beliefs, thoughts, and actions affect people and places—now, and for generations to come. We are connected to our ancestors and to our posterity in a perpetual succession. I am here because of my ancestors. I acknowledge their wisdom and the influence they have had in shaping my life and worldview. Another feature of my Indigenous worldview is the need for lōkahi between the heart, mind, body, and spirit. This is how I experience the world as I interact with others through emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual experiences. My worldview is also influenced by Native Hawaiian perspectives.

**Native Hawaiian Epistemology**

Meyer (2004) describes Hawaiian epistemology as “the cultural/traditional practice” of the study of knowledge (p. xi). She developed seven categories to describe the vistas and interconnection of Hawaiian knowledge as it relates to: 1) spirituality, 2)
physical place, 3) senses, 4) relationships, 5) utility, 6) language, and 7) body and mind. Noting the importance of spirituality to Hawaiian epistemology, Meyer (2004) posits that knowledge, for Native Hawaiians, is “grounded in the natural environment and in the ancestral line of family” (p. 93). In other words, knowledge is a spiritual concept. It is deeply rooted in place and sensory experiences as Hawaiians consider the ‘āina to be an ancestor—a living thing. Central to Hawaiian epistemology is the importance of relationships or interdependence with people (living and deceased) and with the planet. To the Native Hawaiian mind, knowledge must be useful to others. Obtaining knowledge for knowledge’s sake is a foreign concept.

Native Hawaiian epistemology is based on the idea that words connect thoughts to action. Words have mana (spiritual power); they can heal or destroy (Meyer, 2004). Native Hawaiians believe that in language there is life; and in language there is death (Pukui, 1983). Similar to the Native American worldview, Hawaiian epistemology acknowledges the interconnection between body and mind, intellect and feeling, and wisdom and emotion. For instance, the word na‘auu means intestines, guts, mind, heart, affections, or feeling (Meyer, 2004). The word na‘auao, which literally means “daylight mind,” refers to knowledge, wisdom, or enlightenment (Meyer, 2004). So, for Native Hawaiians, the stomach serves as the both the seat of emotion as well as the seat of intellect. The separation of body and mind does not exist in the Hawaiian way of thinking.

**Multiple Lenses**

This study's methodological framework is underpinned by the basic tenets of Poststructural Feminist Theory and Indigenous Theory. Using multiple lenses in this
study allowed me to see things from different perspectives, to examine Indigenous women’s multiple and complex subjectivities, and to experience alternate ways of knowing. Using Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory constitutes the confluence of two powerful ways of thinking about the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women.

**Poststructural Feminist Theory**

Research conducted using Poststructural Feminist Theory seeks to explain the workings of power within specific discourses and to analyze opportunities for resisting oppressive conditions (Cammack & Phillips, 2002). The poststructural feminist lens directs the research focus to the relations between knowledge, subjectivity, discourse, power, and language (Weedon, 1997) and how they are manifested in the lives of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty. From the poststructural feminist perspective, a primary focus of the study is concerned with foregrounding how social power, embedded in language, knowledge, and discourse is (re)constituted in Native Hawaiian women’s positions as tenured faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. This lens makes visible the ways through which the dominant practices and understandings of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty shape and regulate their subjectivities, that is, their conscious and unconscious thoughts, emotions and desires, their sense of themselves, and the ways through which they understand themselves in relation to the world (Keddie, 2002; Weedon, 1997). Through this lens, the nature of the self is fluid, complex, and contradictory, formed by multiple discourses of power and knowledge (Weedon, 1997). A poststructural feminist perspective acknowledges that multiple truths exist along with multiple ways of knowing.
As a feminist researcher, I was intrigued as to how these principles might offer a way to expose taken-for-granted perspectives, to rethink and rework oppressive subjectivities, and to explore alternatives to dominant and repressive ways of being (Keddie, 2002). Basic tenets of feminism guiding this study include a belief in the equal worth of all human beings, recognition that each woman’s personal experiences are reflective of social discourses, and a commitment to political and social change (Andrews, & Buchanan, 2009). I recognize the influences of dominant social discourses particularly the discourse of power and its connection to gender, race, culture, class, age, physical ability, and sexual orientation. Particularly important in this regard is the poststructural principle that subjectivities and meaning are never fixed and unitary but fluid and precarious, (re)constituted and redefined each time we think or speak (Weedon 1997). In this sense, the various ways of being an Indigenous female are continuously (re)defined through everyday discourse (Keddie, 2002). In my own experience, working within the fixed and unitary boundaries of the academy posed a unique challenge as I studied the fluid and changing identities of Indigenous women.

**Indigenous Theory**

Indigenous research seeks to “liberate authentic Aboriginal knowledges, voices, and experiences at individual and collective levels” by reclaiming the power of oral traditions (Absolon & Willett, 2004, p. 10). These oral traditions include storytelling, chants, songs, and teachings by which Indigenous culture and history have been passed down for centuries (Absolon & Willett, 2004). Tired of being the most researched ethnic group in the world, Indigenous Peoples want to tell their own stories, write their own version in their own ways, for their own purposes (Smith, 1999). The Indigenous
theoretical lens in this study directs my attention to Indigenous ways of knowing by incorporating native principles of body, heart, mind, and spirit and by utilizing an Indigenous approach in my data collection and data analyses procedures. To understand the complexities, challenges, and protocols involved when conducting Indigenous research, I present a brief discussion of the Indigenous research framework.

**Indigenous Research Framework**

What constitutes an Indigenous research framework? According to Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), an Indigenous research framework involves “rewriting and rerighting” the social and historical Indigenous position (p. 29). Lavalée (2009) understands rewriting and rerighting as a process of decolonizing academe by incorporating and centering Indigenous knowledge into the research rather than relying solely on Western theories. I acknowledge the importance of incorporating the core values and beliefs of the Indigenous community throughout the research process.

An Indigenous research framework involves three processes: empirical observation, traditional teachings, and revelation (Brant-Castellano, 2000). In this context, *empirical observations* involve listening and observing real life situations in a contextual setting from differing vantage points over time (Lavalée, 2009). In my study, I observed these women in contextual settings during three or more separate meetings spread out over six months. *Traditional teachings*, such as those taught using the medicine wheel and through Moenahā, encompass knowledge that has been passed from one generation to the next, primarily through oral traditions (storytelling, chant, dance, etc.). In sharing their personal stories, Native Hawaiian women faculty often included traditional knowledge learned from their kūpuna (elders). *Revelation* refers to spiritual
knowledge received through dreams, visions, and intuition that cannot be measured or quantified through physical means (Lavalée, 2009). For example, Native Hawaiians used moe ‘uhane (dreams) for information and instruction, to solve existing problems, and to foretell future events (Meyer, 1998). The numerous Hawaiian words used to describe various types of dreams illustrate the importance of spiritual knowledge for ancient Hawaiians (Meyer, 1998). Several Nā Wahine described spiritual experiences in which they were guided by their ancestors through dreams, visions, or an occasional “gentle nudge.”

Indigenous ways of knowing accept both physical and spiritual ways of knowing while acknowledging the interconnectedness of the spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional aspects of human beings with all things on Earth and throughout the universe (Lavalée, 2009). In fact, from an Indigenous perspective, research is considered more of a spiritual journey in that life’s greatest mysteries are accessible only at the spiritual level (Louis, 2007).

Indigenous methodologies are fluid and circular approaches that provide alternate ways of conceptualizing the research process with the goal to ensure that research on Indigenous peoples be conducted in a respectful and ethical manner (Louis, 2007). Indigenous methodologies generally include these four principles: 1) relational accountability, respectful representation, reciprocal appropriation, and rights and regulation (Louis, 2007). Relational accountability refers to the Indigenous perspective that all things are interconnected and interdependent. It implies that all parts of the research process are related from beginning to end and that the researcher is responsible for maintaining positive relationships with participants. Respectful representation requires researchers to consider how they interact with their participants and how they
represent themselves and the people they are studying (Absolom & Willett, 2004). It involves actively listening to participants without trying to push forward one’s own agenda. The researcher is humble, generous, and patient and accepts the decisions of Indigenous participants in regards to the sharing of information.

“Reciprocal appropriation” is a term used to describe the attitude of Native Americans towards their environment (Momaday, 1976, p. 80). This concept describes Indigenous people’s interdependence on the natural environment. It also infers that my study produce mutual benefits for both the researcher and the Indigenous participants. Rights and regulation stipulates that researchers follow Indigenous protocols and consider the implications of the research on the Indigenous community (Smith, 1999). Rights and regulation involves accepting and advocating for Indigenous knowledge systems (Louis, 2007) and including the Indigenous voice. These Indigenous knowledge systems, grounded in place and context, include oral histories, narratives, and spiritual practices (Louis, 2007).

Rigney (1999) offers three additional points to consider when conducting Indigenous research. First, Indigenous research is emancipatory and provides a form of resistance against the manner in which Indigenous peoples are often dehumanized by non-Indigenous researchers. This approach challenges the hold of traditional research on the production of knowledge. Second, Indigenous research is undertaken, not to exploit Indigenous people, but rather to assist with the Indigenous struggle. In this respect, the study should connect to the sociopolitical struggles of Indigenous peoples. Third, Indigenous research gives voice to the marginalized and voiceless. This approach focuses on the lived experiences, dreams, ideas, values, traditions, aspirations, and
struggles of Indigenous peoples (Foley, 2003; Rigney, 1999). These lived experiences are best interpreted if the researcher speaks or understands the native language (Meyer, 1998, Smith, 1999). In my case, although I understand many Hawaiian words and expressions, I do not speak the Hawaiian language (although I do have access to many Native Hawaiian speakers).

I incorporated the Indigenous principles discussed in this section into my research by maintaining positive relationships with Nā Wahine throughout the study; demonstrating cultural sensitivity; following Native Hawaiian protocol by using appropriate Hawaiian greetings; honoring and respecting Nā Wahine by bringing a hoʻokupu (food and/or gifts) to every meeting; allowing Nā Wahine to choose when, where, and for how long we would meet; and by actively listening to their stories. Above all, relationships are of paramount importance. I have also included implications for the Indigenous community in Chapter 7. In the next section, I focus on the qualitative and Indigenous methodologies used in this study.

Methodology

Methodology, which refers to how knowledge is gained, is based on the researcher’s worldview, ontology, and epistemology. In this study, I used narrative inquiry and arts-informed research methodologies to understand the experiences of Nā Wahine in the form of moʻolelo (a native form of storytelling) and hōʻailona (an Indigenous type of arts-informed research). This chapter begins with a brief description of narrative inquiry and arts-informed research that provide the overarching framework for the two Indigenous methods employed in this project—moʻolelo (storytelling) and hōʻailona (symbolic reflection of artifacts). While qualitative investigators often create
stories about their participants, narrative researchers consider the story to be the fundamental unit of human experience.

**Narrative Inquiry**

People are narrative beings. We all live storied lives (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992). Our life experiences are a continuum of narratives, from bedtime stories to life celebrations, that define and shape our identity. These narratives provide connections, understanding, and meaning. We make sense of our world and our life experiences through narratives, or stories. History, itself, is a series of stories reflecting particular discourses connecting people, places, and experiences. We position these discourses within our culture and within the limits of language. Among Indigenous societies, storytelling carries theoretical and cultural meaning (Perkins, 2007).

Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research that is concerned with stories. According to Creswell (2007), narrative can be both the method and the phenomenon of study. “As a method it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals” (p. 54). Narrative inquiry provides a framework for the (re)construction and (re)presentation of a person’s lived experiences. It is research centered on stories. Barthes (1966) posits that the narrative is essentially the history of humankind, noting that people do not exist without narrative. In essence, storytelling is what we do.

Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (2004) defines narrative as “something that is narrated; story, account; the representation in art of an event or story” (p. 825). This includes the possibility of other types of account—visual, audio, and tactile. A narrative is generally understood as a written discourse, presentation, or story. Witherell and Noddings (1991) describe the special quality of stories for portraying human
behavior and experience, stating, “Stories can join the worlds of thought and feeling, and they give special voice to…the power of emotion, intuition, and relationships in human lives” (p. 4). Narratives can be broadly defined as a combination of autobiographical materials comprising an entire life story. Polkinghorne (1988) narrows his definition of narrative to that expressed in story form. He uses the term narrative to describe both the process (character, setting, and plot) and the product of creating a story.

The purpose of narrative research is to study personal experiences and meaning making. We use narrative to make sense of the world through our perceptions and experiences and to share what we have learned with others. Polkinghorne (1995) described narrative as a “type of discourse that draws together diverse events, happenings and actions of human lives” (p. 5). Narrative researchers employ a variety of research methods, approaches, and strategies (Clandinin, 2007). Some narrative researchers may employ historiography, autobiography, or critical analysis as potential methods (Morgan-Fleming, Riegle, & Fryer, 2007; Freeman, 2007). Other researchers develop a generic or typical narrative describing everyday experiences within a culture or organization (Czarniawska, 2007; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007). Narrative researchers may use elements of storymaking from an Indigenous perspective to make meaning from experience (Benham, 2007). Other narrative researchers work within the three-dimensional space of visual narrative inquiry (Bach, 2007).

**Arts-Informed Research**

From a positivist perspective, the arts have traditionally been regarded as more emotive than empirical. Certainly, the arts evoke a sensory response to the way music is performed, to the array of colors used in visual art, or to the rhythmic movements of a
dancer (Eisner, 2008). It would be erroneous, however, to assert that the arts do not inform. Just as words are used to convey meaning, art is used to convey multiple meanings. For example, Eisner (2008) asserts there are multiple interpretations to a musical score, numerous ways to describe a painting or sculpture, and varied ways to derive meaning from a dance or performance. Similarly, readers of this study may derive their own meaning from the hō‘ailona. In this section, I provide justification for the use of hō‘ailona (an Indigenous type of arts-informed research) as one of my methods.

Art allows us to see many different worlds through the eyes of diverse artists (De Mello, 2007). Using our imagination, art enables us “to see more in our experience, to hear more on normally unheard frequencies” (Greene, 2000, p. 123). In this study, the use of hō‘ailona opens the way for Nā Wahine to perceive more out of their experiences. Hō‘ailona gives voice to the voiceless as Nā Wahine articulate that which might not otherwise have been spoken. Thus, hō‘ailona is an appropriate way to view multiple perspectives and dimensions of women’s lived experiences.

Referring to the importance of art in facilitating symbolic reflection, De Mello (2007) describes art as “an instrument to promote reflection and make us, as human beings, go deep inside our own conflicts and our emotional selves.” (p. 207). As an instrument for reflection, art can evoke feelings and memories about experiences that a person might not otherwise articulate. It is a useful way to examine educational experiences through qualitative inquiry since art expresses rather than defines meaning. Barone (1995) explains that art can help narrative researchers “create space where the experience can be vicariously lived.” An example of this is the original painting by Nāhiku. As she reflected on the multiple meanings represented in the painting, she
vicariously relived the experience. She could feel the waves pounding against her, smell the salt water in her nose as she unloaded her gear, see the morning sun illuminating a magnificent cloud formation, and hear the wind blowing gently over the island.

While qualitative researchers may assert that narrative inquiry is a sufficient source of data, Weber (2008) argues there are many reasons for using arts-related visual images in research. First, images can be used to capture that which is difficult to express in words. Words, alone, may fail to grasp the essence of one’s experiences. Atea’s statue of a woman warrior, for example, embodies her experiences as a Native Hawaiian woman fighting for Native Hawaiian rights. Second, visual images make us pay attention to things in new ways. As Weber (2008) points out, images enable us to “discover what we didn’t know we knew, or to see what we never noticed before.” For instance, upon first seeing the painting of the Kiwi bird, Hōkūao saw her mother (who died when Hōkūao was six years old). She realized for the first time that she was on the right path; she was doing what she was intended to do. Third, images tend to be more memorable (and more accessible) than most forms of academic text, and therefore more likely to influence our thoughts and actions. For example, Nāhiku’s image of “Tits of Steel” elicits diverse emotional and intellectual responses and serves to remind all women to stand their ground. In other words, the image sticks—long after the memory of text fades. Visual images also promote action for social justice such as the Kaho‘olawe poster. Fourth, images communicate holistically, evoking rich mo‘olelo. An example of this is Maka‘ala’s illustration of darkness and light. Her handcrafted poster evokes numerous mo‘olelo about her ʻohana, moʻokū‘auhau, values, spirituality, career, and sense of place. Finally, images help the viewer to understand another person’s perspective by seeing
through the artist’s eyes. This allows us to make comparisons to our own views and experiences. For instance, the hōnū (green sea turtle) illustration (Figure 3.1) that I shared with Nā Wahine during our first meeting helped them to understand my tenure experiences as a Tahitian American woman and make comparisons to their own experiences.

In considering the use of artifacts to symbolize the lived experiences of Nā Wahine, I was curious as to the distinction between arts-based research and arts-informed research. According to De Mello (2007), the term *arts-based research* implies that art is the foundation or starting point of a study, while the term *arts-informed research* suggests that art is selected as a means to inform the analysis and the meaning constructed from the narrative. As a form or mode of qualitative research increasingly used in the social sciences, arts-informed research is influenced by the arts, rather than based in the arts (Knowles & Cole 2008).

I selected arts-informed research as a method of inquiry for several reasons. First, arts-informed research enhances our understanding of human experiences through non-conventional processes and practices. Combining the rigorous qualities of narrative methodologies with creative art forms acknowledges the power of art to reach diverse audiences in exploring and understanding the human condition (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

Second, arts-informed research makes scholarly work more accessible to a broader audience. In using this method, it is my intention to reach audiences and communities both within and beyond the academy “bridging the connection between academy and community” (Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 59). I am particularly interested in reaching a broad audience of Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous Peoples.
Third, arts-informed research moves beyond the idea that knowledge resides “out there.” This method explicitly challenges the positivist paradigm that defines how knowledge is constructed and controlled. As Knowles and Cole (2008) point out, life is lived and knowledge is made through everyday conversations and experiences at the kitchen table, bus stop, or coffee shop; in the emotional responses to a good book or work of art; and in embodied responses to an inspiring piece of music or interpretive dance. Arts-informed research acknowledges Nā Wahine as knowledge makers. It considers the multiple and circular dimensions of each woman’s experience—physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and cultural, and the various modalities through which Nā Wahine engage in the world—visual, textual, embodied, and oral.

Fourth, arts-informed research enhances mo’olelo as another qualitative and Indigenous methodology of narrative inquiry and opens spaces for Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The use of arts-informed research—including painting, sculpture, drawing, collage, handcrafts, and photography—draws on the power of art to both engage and inform with the intention of eliciting mo’olelo, unveiling oppression, and promoting social action.

**Indigenous Methods**

Unlike research methodologies, which refer to a worldview, paradigm, or perspective, research methods are the specific techniques or tools used to gather data (Fleras, 2004). Indigenous research methods incorporate experiential learning and work to actively engage participants (Lavalée, 2009). The methods, or actual techniques for collecting data, are respectful of Indigenous protocols, values, and beliefs and provide an alternative way of thinking about research processes (Smith, 2005). Indigenous scholars
Smith (1999) and Kahakalau (2004) assert that native researchers have both the right and the responsibility to develop their own native methods of research congruent with native values and traditions. Examples of Indigenous methods for data collection include interviews, focus groups, talking circles, storytelling, visions, intuition, dreams, arts, music, dance, and drama (Bairos & Fewster, 2009). As an Indigenous researcher trained within the academy, I am using a mix of qualitative and Indigenous methods in this study. Multiple methods allow me to gather and analyze data from different perspectives providing a rich description of participants’ experiences. My traditional method of data collection, informed by Poststructural Feminist Theory, included three semi-structured interviews that I conducted in a “talk-story” format. The Indigenous methods used in this study are moʻolelo and hōʻailona.

Moʻolelo

In the Hawaiian language, the word moʻolelo is defined as a story, history, tradition, journal, or record—from moʻo ʻōlelo—meaning a succession of talk. Moʻolelo was the primary means for transmitting language, history, culture, and traditions from one generation to the next among ancient Hawaiians. Thus, the moʻolelo, or narrative, represents a succession of stories that defines and shapes our social identities. Indeed, stories shape our world. This suggests that as we share our stories we are simultaneously redefining, reclaiming, and rewriting history (Smith, 1999).

Hawaiian history, language, culture, and traditions have been passed down orally through moʻolelo providing Native Hawaiians with a rich heritage. For example, the Hawaiian genealogical creation chant, Kumulipo, consisting of over 2,000 lines, is essentially a moʻolelo about the origin of life. The chant was memorized and recited
orally, then passed down from one generation to the next. Reflecting on the spiritual nature of native narratives, Native American, Emil Her Many Horses (2003) asserts that native spiritual values live in stories. Passed verbally from generation to generation, the stories preserve native culture, languages, and ways of explaining the universe. Moʻolelo also captures communal and family values and serves as a valuable method for understanding the experiences of Nā Wahine.

Storytelling is an important part of Indigenous culture. Indigenous stories provide contextualized accounts of people’s relationships with one another and their interconnection with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the world. Stories connect us to our history, ancestors, values, culture, and land. They expose issues surrounding colonialism and oppression and illuminate ancestral wisdom. Stories “make visible and loud what has been silent and invisible” and in so doing, give voice to the voiceless (Benham, 2007, p. 517). Cherokee storyteller, scholar, and writer Thomas King (2003) said, “The truth about stories is that’s all we are” (p. 2). He cautions that while stories are wonderful things, they can be dangerous when we do not have a deep understanding of the power and beauty of Indigenous stories.

The moʻolelo is a powerful tradition for understanding the past, present, and future. Hoʻomanawanui (2010) described the importance of moʻolelo saying, “We acknowledge our existence, our identity as a people, our relationship to our ʻāina, to our past, our present and future through our stories” (p. 210). Palestinian scholar Edward Said (1994) acknowledged, “Stories…are the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history” (p. xii). Thus, moʻolelo serves as an
appropriate means for Native Hawaiians to assert their Indigenous identity and to validate their unique history.

Discussing the connection between the words *story* and *work* in making meaning through stories, Jo-ann Archibald (2008), an Indigenous educator, said, “The words *story* and *work* together signal the importance and seriousness of undertaking the educational and research work of making meaning through stories, whether they are traditional or lived experienced stories” (p. 373). Archibald described the seven principles of storywork as respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, wholism, interrelatedness, and synergy—all of which are important concepts in Indigenous culture. Pointing out the transformative learning experience that occurs through storywork, she added, “Storywork is also an Indigenous research methodology” (p. 373). In addition to moʻolelo, I also used hōʻailona as another Indigenous method.

**Hōʻailona**

In this study, I define hōʻailona as a symbolic reflection of artifacts representing Nā Wahine’s lived experiences. More specifically, hōʻailona refers to a reflection of symbols or signs (Kaiwi, 2006). To the Indigenous mind, a sign or artifact, although simple in design, can be deeply symbolic. Archibald (2008) mentioned, “understandings and insight result from both lived experiences and critical reflections on those experiences” (p. 377). ‘Olelo Noʻeau No. 580 reads, “He hōʻailona ke ao i ʻike ʻia,” meaning, “The clouds are recognized signs” (Pukui, 1983, p. 67). This Hawaiian proverb informs us that Native Hawaiians were skilled in recognizing signs in the clouds. Among ancient Hawaiians, Kilo Lani (readers of the heavens) were individuals who could predict changes in the weather that could affect planting, fishing, or harvesting by carefully
observing the sky, including the clouds, moon, stars, and the ocean. In other words, they could read the signs. Another ʻOlelo Noʻeau reads, “Kūkulu ka ʻike i ka ʻōpua,” meaning that “Knowledge is set up in the clouds” (Pukui, 1983, p. 205). This ʻOlelo Noʻeau, informing us that we gain knowledge through the clouds, is quite meaningful to me because my last name, Kaʻōpua, means “the clouds.” Whether Native Hawaiians found signs in the clouds, moon, stars, ocean, or some other form—they all had meaning.

Willis (2005), a Native American art professor, points out that the meaning of a sign comes not from the inside, but from the outside, derived from interpretation. He asserts that meaning can best be understood within a lived cultural context, which is why it is difficult for a person “academically trained in a Western paradigm” to fully understand Indigenous symbols (p. 33). For example, the Four Directions Medicine Wheel, a common Native American symbol, appears simple in its design yet is extremely complex representing an interconnection to all things. Also modest in design, yet multifaceted in meaning, is the symbol for Moenahā, illustrated by four interlocking strips that form a mat. Each quadrant of the mat represents one of four learning processes integrating heart, mind, spirit, and body. These symbols have no innate meaning—only that which we ascribe to them.

In Chapter 5, I present the hōʻailona representing Nā Wahine’s academic and tenure experiences. At the conclusion of the first meeting, I invited each woman to gather one or more artifacts representing her academic journey from the baccalaureate to the doctorate degree. Our second meeting began with a discussion of these artifacts. Some Nā Wahine shared photographs, newspaper articles, artwork, handmade crafts, certificates, or their publications. Others represented their academic experience with a
statue, painting, traveling bag, cedar rose, or metallic bra. Every hōʻailona contained a magnificent story.

At the conclusion of our second meeting, I reminded Nā Wahine to “create” something for our third meeting that represents her tenure experiences as a Native Hawaiian woman in academe. While not everyone had the time or talent to make something by hand, many of them did. Their artifacts included a critical life map; drawings of Kualoa, kalo, and ʻōhia lehua; a homemade prune cake; a handcrafted kukui necklace; genealogical and value posters; an original painting; a ceramic bowl; and a reflective essay on the tenure experience. Each hōʻailona is an Indigenous form of arts-informed research.

**Description of Participants**

The participants for this study were selected from a limited population (N=14) of tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. Among the faculty at UH Mānoa, Native Hawaiians represent only 51 (36 women and 15 men) out of a total of 1,270 faculty. Native Hawaiian women represent less than three percent of UH Mānoa faculty. Among the 36 Native Hawaiian women, only 14 are tenured instructional women faculty. Nine are classified as tenure-track, and the remaining 13 women are research or specialist faculty.

I selected a purposive sample of individuals who were likely to provide rich sources of information relevant to my study. In selecting a purposive sample, I determined the selection criteria or list of attributes essential to my study and then located participants who met the requirements (Merriam, 1998). In other words, I made subjective judgments about who would best provide the necessary information for the
study. More specifically, I used purposive criterion sampling to locate exemplary Native Hawaiian women who met specific criteria.

Participants held a doctorate degree and were selected from tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty from any discipline with the intention of eliciting information-rich cases. One participant recently attained tenure while others were seasoned tenured faculty. Professional ranks of participants included Associate Professor and Professor. The sample was limited to instructional faculty only. My sample did not include tenured research or specialist faculty, as these individuals do not obtain tenure through the traditional three-prong process of research, teaching, and service. The sample did not include male faculty members, as this was not an area of interest, or non-tenured women faculty since I am interested in studying tenured Native Hawaiian female faculty. I met with the Dean of the School of Hawaiian Knowledge and contacted the Institutional Research Office and the Center for Teaching Excellence to obtain the names of tenured Native Hawaiian women. I gathered additional names from my personal contacts at UH Mānoa. I also used snowball sampling wherein Nā Wahine recommended other Native Hawaiian women faculty to interview because of their qualifications for the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009).

I invited 14 Native Hawaiian women faculty to participate in the study. Ten women initially agreed to participate and signed the consent form. One woman withdrew from the study (following the first interview) citing a heavy workload. Nine participants constitute a reasonable sample (64%) of this relatively small population. No minimum Hawaiian blood quantum was necessary. Since there are few full-blooded Native Hawaiians left, all participants were part Hawaiian. I met with each participant at least
three times. These interviews usually lasted 60-120 minutes, with some exceeding three hours (Appendix I). A description of each interview is found under the section, “Data Analysis.” Qualitative studies typically provide demographics regarding each participant to provide readers with background information on each participant. In this study, I have intentionally left out demographic data. With only 14 Native Hawaiian tenured instructional women faculty at UH Mānoa, it would be fairly easy to determine the identity of these nine women. For example, if there were only one Native Hawaiian female biochemist, it would not be difficult to determine her identity.

In this study, a central concern was to give voice to the participants. My role as the researcher was to listen, to acknowledge the naʻauao of Nā Wahine, and to apply an Indigenous perspective into the research methodology (Mataira, Matsuoka, & Morelli, 2005). I wanted to understand these women in the context of their academic or scholarly culture. I made every effort to achieve reciprocity between Nā Wahine and me and develop a relationship of trust and respect. In Hawaiian culture, social reciprocity and trust are important aspects of interpersonal relations (Mataira et al., 2005). I was sensitive to the fact that Nā Wahine may distrust outsiders because outside researchers have exploited many Hawaiian communities. At all times, I was mindful to respect the sacredness of this relationship. Manu Meyer describes relationships as the cornerstone of Hawaiian experience that shapes knowledge and serves as the key component for all Hawaiian educators (Meyer, 2004).

**Description of Site**

The University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa (UH Mānoa) served as the research site for this study. Located in the verdant Mānoa Valley on the island of Oʻahu, UH Mānoa is
the flagship campus of the University of Hawai‘i System composed of ten campuses on four islands. Originally known as the College of Hawai‘i, UH Mānoa was founded in 1907 under the Morrill Act as a land-grant college of agriculture and mechanic arts. In 1920, with the addition of the College of Arts and Sciences, the college became the University of Hawai‘i. The name was later changed to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in 1972 to distinguish it from other campuses in the expanding UH system. The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa is currently accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

UH Mānoa offers a full array of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees to more than 20,000 students with over 1,200 instructional faculty members. Among UH Mānoa students, 69 percent are undergraduates, 57 percent claim Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry, and 56 percent are female. In Fall 2011, Native Hawaiians comprised 15 percent of UH Mānoa students (and 24 percent of the total UH System). Yet only 4 percent of the faculty are Native Hawaiian and this is likely the largest percentage of Native Hawaiian faculty at any university (UHM IRO, 2009; Balutski & Wright, 2011).

**Data Collection**

A qualitative research design provides a researcher with some flexibility in the methods used to gather data. In this study, I used several methods to understand the academic and tenure experiences of Nā Wahine: 1) semi-structured interviews in a “talk-story” format, 2) visual or textual artifacts representing Nā Wahine’s academic experiences from BA to PhD, 3) visual or textual artifacts (personally created by participants) representing their tenure experiences, 4) observations, 5) photographs, and
6) field notes. Using multiple sources of data allowed me to triangulate my data providing a more holistic understanding of the topic. Data collection methods involved both a poststructural feminist approach along with an Indigenous approach.

**Poststructural Feminist Approach**

Interviewing is a common method in qualitative studies. Using Poststructural Feminist Theory to guide and direct the interview protocol, I met with each participant on at least three occasions. The poststructural feminist approach to data collection begins with the stories of women. I designed the interview protocol to focus on issues of power, subjectivity, knowledge, language, and discourse. It is important to keep in mind that while I designed the interview instrument using poststructural feminist concepts, I conducted the interview according to Native Hawaiian protocols by establishing a personal relationship with participants, using traditional Hawaiian greetings, and gathering data through artistic inquiry and narrative interviews in a “talk story” format.

**Indigenous Approach**

Indigenous research methods, which are congruent with Indigenous culture and experiences, include storytelling, remembering, connecting, naming, creating, and sharing (Smith, 2005). Conceptualized as a learning circle, Indigenous research is a process “that generates information sharing, connections, builds capacity and seeks balance and healing” (Absolon & Willett, 2004, p. 13). This approach facilitates the process of remembering and “re-membering” of individual experiences into a collective knowing and consciousness (Absolon & Willett, 2004, p. 13). Remembering involves reconnecting to stories, experiences, teachings, and traditions. It is about conversations. In this study, I used narrative interviewing as a form of remembering and storytelling.
Narrative interviewing, also known as conversational interviewing, involves the telling of stories to explain a person’s lived experiences (Kahakalau, 2004; Louis, 2007). Storytelling provides Indigenous people with the opportunity to engage in an oral tradition and is an effective way to capture Indigenous viewpoints given that storytelling was the means by which Indigenous peoples passed on their knowledge, culture, and history (Smith, 1999). For Native Hawaiian women, remembering and talking about their experiences is a form of Indigenous “re-search” (Absolon & Willett, 2004, p. 7). This suggests that as Native Hawaiian women share their stories, they are able to “reclaim, revise, and rename” their history to arrive at a new understanding about it (Absolon & Willett, 2004, p. 7). These stories hold great significance for Indigenous peoples. For example, Native Americans believe that Indigenous spiritual values live in stories. Native Hawaiians used storytelling, known as moʻolelo, to pass on important historical information and to explain natural events.

Like many Indigenous researchers, I originally intended to bridge Indigenous ways of knowing (moʻolelo and hōʻailona) with Western ways of conducting research (coding and systematic data analysis) so that my study would be considered acceptable scholarly research within the academy (Lavalée, 2009). Adopting a Western approach also seemed plausible given that Indigenous methodologies were never discussed in my graduate program. However, as I created the moʻolelo for each Nā Wahine based on the stories they shared in our meetings, I realized that Western research methods were incompatible with Indigenous approaches and practices. It would not be pono (right) to break apart the holistic nature of moʻolelo into fragmented bits of coded data. Considering that the word moʻo means succession or series, especially a genealogical line
(Pukui & Elbert, 1986), this implies that moʻolelo embrace a succession of stories connecting past, present, and future. Moʻolelo describe the engagement and relationships of Nā Wahine with people and places connecting them to ʻāina and ancestors. These stories provide a holistic native narrative and give voice to those who have been silenced and marginalized. As a form of narrative inquiry, moʻolelo begin with a “story that is situated in a particular place/context” (Benham, 2007, p. 520). Thus, it became imperative to conduct this research on Native Hawaiian women using Indigenous methodologies.

Louis (2007), a Native Hawaiian geographer, discusses the importance of conducting research within an Indigenous context using Indigenous methodologies. She emphasizes the need for researchers to 1) accept and advocate for Indigenous knowledge systems and include the “Indigenous voice” in their work, 2) to position participants in the study as collaborators, 3) to ensure the research benefits members of the community, and 4) to share the research findings with the community. Using an Indigenous research framework with Western principles of qualitative inquiry can be particularly challenging.

**Interview Protocol**

I used a semi-structured interview protocol for this study. Semi-structured interviews are the most widely used instrument for collecting data in qualitative research (Creswell, 2003) and serve to facilitate storytelling. I was interested in hearing the stories of these women. Indigenous narratives are an integral form of epistemology and communication. Storytelling played an important role in the Hawaiian Islands in teaching cultural values, sharing historical data, passing down family genealogies, and imparting knowledge about customs and traditions (Kaomea, 2005). For example, to
teach children Hawaiian values, parents and kūpuna would typically share a story. Children understood the essence of the story and were able to remember the value being taught (Karen Leialoha Carroll, personal communication, August 17, 2012).

I pilot-tested the interview protocol with two Native Hawaiian community college women for content analysis and cultural sensitivity and modified it accordingly. This was important because the pilot study validates the instrument (McDade, 1999). Both participants shared that the questions flowed in a natural way from one stage of their life to the next making it easier to share their life experiences. The women commented that they appreciated me sharing my story first because it gave them permission to share their stories. They both suggested that I lengthen the second interview from 60 minutes to 120 minutes to allow more time to “talk story.” The interview protocol was informal and open-ended and included topics and issues pertaining to the tenure experience.

I invited 14 Nā Wahine to participate in the study via a personal invitation letter (Appendix A) followed by an email (Appendix B) informing them of the purpose of the study and providing more detailed information. Along with this email, each participant received an “Agreement to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study” (Appendix C) describing the design and purpose of the study, a “Written Consent Form” (Appendix D), and a “Prospectus” (Appendix E) providing more detailed information about the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) instrumentation involves selecting the appropriate instrument for the study as well as the procedures and conditions for its implementation such as understanding where, when, and how the data will be collected and who will collect the data. I conducted the interviews in the participant’s office or a location of their choice on or off-campus. Understandably, the location, while
convenient for the participant, occasionally posed problems in terms of interruptions and ambient noise.

I constructed the interview protocol along five topics: family, job description, Native Hawaiian values, barriers to promotion and tenure, and support and strategies (Interview Protocol, Appendix F). Given Native Hawaiian women’s history of social, political, and cultural subordination, I designed the questions to elicit the values and viewpoints of Native Hawaiian women faculty in the context of a White, male-dominated academy. Next, I created a Crosswalk Table (Appendix G) to connect each interview question to my research questions and my feminist and Indigenous theoretical frameworks. This process verified that my interview questions provided me with the information necessary to answer my research questions and ensured that the questions addressed the theoretical framework.

I invited participants to describe their experiences as Native Hawaiian women applying for tenure along with the barriers and supports. As they shared their personal stories and experiences, I listened for examples in which Native Hawaiian values may have played a role in their academic success. As the interviewer, I was flexible in deciding the wording and sequence of the questions to allow the interview process to flow in a natural manner. As the conversation unfolded, I explored any conflicts between their identities as Native Hawaiians and as scholars. Being able to obtain comprehensive data, clarify any obscure responses, and maintain a conversational flow are some of the advantages of the interview instrument. However, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), inadvertently omitting important and relevant topics and the additional time required to complete the interviews are notable disadvantages. I would add that a major
disadvantage of conducting three interviews with each participant was not only the time required to schedule and conduct the interviews, but also the time it took to transcribe and proofread lengthy interview transcriptions with some transcripts totaling 100 pages. In retrospect, however, I would not reduce the number of interviews. The time spent with Nā Wahine was invaluable in developing a warm and positive relationship with each woman and in eliciting rich moʻolelo. In the next section, I discuss the interviews.

The Interviews

For this study, I conducted 29 interviews with 10 women. The tenth participant withdrew from the study after the first meeting citing workload conflicts. I met with the nine participants at least three times. In the case of Kalewanuʻu, we met four times because we ran out of time during the second meeting. Meeting durations and intervals between meetings can be found in Appendix I, Nā Wahine Meeting Schedule. Meetings often got rescheduled because of illness, schedule conflicts, or business trips.

The first meeting lasted between 1.00–1.75 hours. The duration of the second meeting, which sometimes involved a lengthy discussion of hōʻailona, varied between 1.75–3.75 hours. The third meeting took anywhere from .75–2.75 hours. A fourth meeting scheduled with Kalewanuʻu took 1.25 hours. Nā Wahine controlled the length of the meetings based on the stories they wished to share. In general, I planned for an interval of 3-4 weeks between the first and second meeting, and 4-6 weeks between the second and third meeting. In some cases, the intervals were shorter, and in other cases they were much longer. The spacing between meetings was designed to allow Nā Wahine to gather and/or create artifacts representing their academic and tenure
experiences. Another purpose was to give me sufficient time to transcribe and proofread the transcript prior to the next meeting.

Meetings took place in various locations at the discretion of Nā Wahine. Typically, the interviews took place in participants’ offices or a nearby conference room at a mutually convenient time. Other meetings, however, took place in a participant’s home, at a restaurant, or at the lo‘i (kalo garden). The contextual setting and sense of place proved to be highly significant for Nā Wahine. For example, meeting in the lo‘i connected one woman to the ‘āina and her ancestors (which proved to be sources of strength for her) and thus opened the way for her to share experiences she might not otherwise have shared. I used Skype for the third meeting with a participant who was on a neighbor island at the time. I met with Nā Wahine from early morning to late afternoon, and on Saturdays. While meeting in their office introduced a few unexpected interruptions, it was the most convenient location for these women who maintain busy schedules. Interviewing these women in their offices or home environment gave me valuable insight into the lives and culture of each individual. For example, some venues were colorful with artistic or Indigenous décor while others were cluttered with books, journals, and papers.

In most cases, no other people were present during our meetings. In Atea’s case, we met in her home because she is the caretaker for her elderly mother who sat quietly in the living room. On two occasions, children and/or grandchildren were present for a brief time. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

An important aspect of Hawaiian culture is maintaining protocol. To honor and thank each Nā Wahine for her time and generous contributions to this study, I brought a
hoʻokupu (food and/or gifts) to each meeting, both of which are considered proper protocol. The sharing of food and/or gifts is an important part of Hawaiian culture and serves to create a bond between the giver and receiver. Growing up, I was taught to never pay a visit to anyone empty handed; always bring food. For example, if someone brought over a cake to our home, we always returned the cake pan filled with fruits or vegetables, a bag of poi or dried fish, or some baked goods. As I got to know each woman better in subsequent visits, I tailored the food or gifts accordingly. For example, upon learning that one woman was a vegetarian, I brought her a bag full of organic fruits and vegetables. Another significant feature of Hawaiian culture is the importance placed on developing relationships. With each meeting, I felt a closer connection to each woman. Our meetings were informal and relaxed, in comfortable settings including coffee shops, kitchen tables, and gardens. The women were happy to have someone listen to their stories. Many of the women commented how comfortable they felt in sharing their stories and experiences with me because I shared first.

First Meeting

The purpose of the first meeting was to establish a relationship. It was important to follow established cultural protocols such as sharing family background and genealogies as a means to establish rapport and trust (Mataira et al., 2005). For example, in Hawai‘i strangers often meet by asking, “What high school did you graduate from” and “Are you related to so-and-so” with a similar last name. These questions help place a person within a particular family, community, or island and provide a means to appraise and make connections to the person (Mataira et al., 2005). In essence, these questions form the beginning of a relationship.
To establish rapport and build a personal relationship, I introduced myself, explained my background, and shared my family genealogy dating back eight generations to my ancestral parents, Maona a Tutea and Feata a Puhurahura. I described the purpose of my study, requested their participation, and secured signatures on the consent form. I presented Nā Wahine with my own hōʻailona representing my academic and tenure experiences—an Indigenous drawing of a hōnū, or green sea turtle (Figure 3.1).

Each section of the hōnū’s protective shell features my network of support on my journey from BA to PhD. This drawing incorporates elements of Tahitian and Hawaiian design. The Tahitian sun or the all-seeing eye in the upper section represents my Heavenly Father. The lauhala pattern along the edges of the hōnū symbolizes my ʻohana. Woven together for strength, durability, and flexibility, lauhala represents the weaving together of individual and family values and symbolizes the strength of the family unit (Andrade & Bell, 2011). The 7-petal tīare flower honors my Tahitian heritage, while the 5-petal plumeria flower represents my Hawaiian family. The voyaging canoe and paddle pay respect to my dissertation advisor and committee members who have inspired and guided me along this voyage. The voyaging canoe represents my personal voyage through academe. Other sections of the hōnū pay tribute to my wonderful doctoral friends, colleagues, mentors, friends, and professors. The triangles along the center of the hōnū signify ancestral knowledge passed down from one generation to the next. The head and flippers of the hōnū contain the kalo pattern representing a pathway, and the koru, a symbol based on the silver fern of Aotearoa. This unfurling silver fern frond symbolizes new life, growth, renewal, enlightenment, and transformation. Undoubtedly, higher education has given me a new life and meaningful career, and has helped me to
grow in unimaginable ways. Pursuing a doctoral degree has renewed both my spirit and intellect. It has enlightened my understanding of the world and has opened the way for change and endless possibilities.

While not illustrated, I conceptualized the softer underbelly of the hōnū as representing my vulnerability and the many challenges I experienced along my academic journey—institutional racism and sexism, patriarchalism, isolation, marginalization, and the power and politics of higher education. Situated at the periphery of academe for much of my career, I have experienced considerable marginalization and invisibility. As a Tahitian American, I have yet to find a welcoming environment in the academy—a place where I fit in.

As I shared these supports and barriers with Nā Wahine, they got to know me as an individual and could relate to my experiences. Developing relationships is an important feature in Hawaiian culture, thus it was important for me to share my story first.
to help Nā Wahine get to know me better and feel comfortable sharing their own experiences. Prior to the second meeting, I provided each Nā Wahine with the interview questions and asked her to bring one or more hōʻailona (symbolic artifacts) to the second interview that describe her educational journey from the BA to PhD.

Second Meeting

The second meeting began with each woman’s story about the artifact(s) representing her academic experiences from the BA to the PhD. Data were collected primarily through “talk story” sessions (which are more conversational in nature) via a “semi-structured” interview with open-ended questions that allowed Nā Wahine to feel comfortable and express their thoughts and feelings more openly (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 446). The interviews incorporated a conversational style of interviewing in keeping with traditional Native Hawaiian culture. “Talking story,” a form of moʻolelo, is an important part of Native Hawaiian culture and set the proper tone for the interview. As with many Indigenous cultures, storytelling for Native Hawaiians has been and continues to be an integral way of imparting knowledge (Mataira et al., 2005). My role as the researcher in these sessions was to observe and listen actively to capture the essence of each story.

At the conclusion of the second meeting, I asked each participant to create a visual or textual representation of her tenure experience and bring it to the third meeting. The visual representation could take the form of a photo, drawing, painting, collage, ceramic, sculpture, or other types of art. Textual expressions could be in the form of a poem, essay, song, chant, haiku, or any other form of writing. Participants’ reflection on
their visual or textual symbols provided a valuable source of data and contributed to my understanding of their overall experiences.

**Third Meeting**

The third meeting began with a discussion of participants’ visual or textual representation of tenure. This reflection time gave Nā Wahine an opportunity to ponder over their tenure experiences and to discuss details not previously discussed including issues related to power, knowledge, discourse, language, and subjectivity. I used this time to clarify comments made during the second interview. We reviewed the transcript of the second meeting and made necessary corrections. This meeting also provided Nā Wahine and me with an opportunity to express our mutual aloha and gratitude to one another. I presented each Nā Wahine with a small gift tailored to her personal tastes and interests.

**Data Analysis**

My original data analysis plan involved collecting, coding, and analyzing data using qualitative research software. I assumed that analyzing qualitative data with the use of a computer would help me to store, organize, shape, and make sense of volumes of unstructured data. However, as I completed the interviews and delved into composing each moʻolelo, I soon realized that breaking these rich narratives into bits of code was not only counter-intuitive, it was also a non-Indigenous approach. In conducting her data analysis of an group from Canada, Lavalée (2009) realized that the standardized method for data analysis was problematic for her Indigenous participants because “it seemed to tear apart the stories of the participants” (p. 34). Conventional methods of data analysis tend to fragment and compartmentalize data, reducing stories to bits of data. Lindsey (2006), a Native Hawaiian anthropologist and educator, confirmed, “A native mind will...
tell you it is all interconnected. The only way you see a whole picture is to look at it holistically and not separate it out.” Recognizing that mo‘olelo is an important part of Indigenous culture and narrative research, I concurred with Lavalée and Lindsey that customary methods of qualitative analysis were not compatible with my Indigenous epistemological framework. Given that this is a study of Native Hawaiian women, I modified my approach to an Indigenous form of data analysis.

According to Creswell and Clark (2010), the first step in data analysis is to prepare the data. I transcribed a few interviews, but most of the interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service and underwent member checking. I verified the accuracy of every transcription by listening to the audio recordings several times to ensure data were transcribed verbatim. I gave each woman the opportunity to review and edit the transcripts as co-creators of knowledge to ensure an accurate transcription. Throughout the data collection process, I was cognizant of the researcher-participant relationship since feminist theory places issues involved with the researcher-participant relationship as central to the research process (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006).

Next, I read the transcripts several times, making notes in the margins of meaningful ideas and topics. I began to identify units of meanings or themes as expressed by the participants being careful to use the participants’ actual words. I considered not only the words but also the meaning of the words used by Nā Wahine, particularly Hawaiian words that often have kaona or hidden meanings.

Customarily, the second step in data analysis is exploring and coding the data (Clark & Creswell, 2010). Coding involves linking what a respondent says to the
concepts and categories of my study. Coding the data makes it easier to search the data, to make comparisons, and to identify any patterns that require further investigation. My version of coding involved looking for repetitive words, phrases, values, patterns of behavior, ways of thinking, and significant events that stood out. I color-coded each transcript and marked sections that addressed concepts and categories of my study and specific research questions.

The third step in conventional data analysis is to identify themes, patterns, or relationships (Clark & Creswell, 2010). However, the Indigenous approach to data analysis involves storytelling and symbolic interpretation (Benham, 2007; Weber-Pillwax, 2004; Willis, 2005). I began analyzing the data by constructing a *moʻolelo*, or story, based on the experiences of Nā Wahine. Native Hawaiian scholar Benham (2007) informs us that *moʻolelo* teach values and worldviews while remaining respectful of traditions and Indigenous wisdom. They make visible and audible that which was unseen and unheard. Contrary to non-Indigenous narratives that tend to follow a sequential timeline, native narratives, by design, tend to be more circular than linear. Following this native narrative design, I began each *moʻolelo* with a key event in the lives of each woman. In some cases, these events occurred during their childhood; in other cases, the events took place during their professional careers. Readers will notice that the end of the story circles back to the beginning, thus emulating an Indigenous worldview that is often portrayed as a circle or spiral, representing the “cyclical and harmonious pattern of life” (Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006, p. 7). Circling back to the beginning highlights the Native Hawaiian view that all things are interconnected and interrelated.
As I wrote, I immersed myself into the life story of each woman and imagined myself as if I were looking through her eyes. For example, I could see myself at the bottom of the tide pool looking up, and I could smell the sweet fragrance of puakenikeni flowers. I could feel the pounding rain as the Hōkūle‘a was tossed about in the stormy sea, and hear the winds sweeping over the shores of Kaho‘olawe. I could feel the pain of a little girl losing her mother and still enjoy another’s playful jaunts through the bushes. This was a deeply spiritual experience for me. To provide thick, rich description and give voice to the voiceless, I used the words of Nā Wahine wherever possible. I felt a profound sense of kuleana (responsibility), and was humbled and honored at having the privilege of co-creating mo‘olelo about these incredible and inspiring Nā Wahine.

After writing each mo‘olelo (Chapter 4), I provided an interpretation of the hō‘ailona describing Nā Wahine’s academic and tenure experiences (Chapter 5). Hō‘ailona is the process of attributing meaning to the artifacts to provide a deeper and richer narrative regarding each woman’s lived experiences. While each Nā Wahine provided unique artifacts symbolizing her experiences in academe, the artifacts were woven together by common threads of meaning.

The fourth step in data analysis is to validate the data by developing a list of key findings that I discovered from composing the mo‘olelo and interpreting the hō‘ailona. I discovered that creating a spreadsheet of common themes restricted key ideas to rows and cells and did not fit the Indigenous nature of this study. Using a more Indigenous and organic approach, I began to draw key concepts and categories in circular patterns on a large sheet of paper showing links or connections between the main ideas. As I departed from a Western form of data analysis and reflected on the key ideas in the mo‘olelo and
hōʻailona, I began to doodle my thoughts on paper. Acknowledging the Indigenous perspective that knowledge is both physical and spiritual, I invited the spirit of Ke Akua and the spirits of my ancestors and those of Nā Wahine to guide and inspire me. Various shapes, images, and designs began to emerge. As my drawing became more fluid, key categories and concepts began to emerge. The major themes of the study appeared to my mind spiritually and intuitively along with a native illustration. The three interwoven themes that emerged from the moʻolelo and hōʻailona are: 1) Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), 2) Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power), and 3) Pono (Indigenous Authenticity). Unlike conventional data analysis, this was a powerful and deeply intuitive experience. I provide a discussion of the three primary themes in Chapter 6.

A final step in data analysis is to determine the accuracy and credibility of my study through member checking and triangulation (Clark & Creswell, 2010). Data were triangulated through the use of verbatim transcriptions and member checking. As a form of member checking, each Nā Wahine had the opportunity to proofread and edit her transcription, moʻolelo, and hōʻailona.

**Ensuring Quality and Credibility**

In qualitative studies, the researcher is more concerned with issues of quality, credibility, transferability, and dependability than with issues of internal and external validity, reliability, or objectivity found in quantitative studies. Lincoln and Guba (1985) point out the importance of triangulating the data by including multiple sources of data collection; gathering thick, rich descriptions; and conducting member checking. In this study, data were collected from three or more separate interviews and from artifacts representing Nā Wahine’s academic and tenure experiences. Member checking ensured
accuracy in the transcription and my interpretation by allowing Nā Wahine to review and edit the transcription and the moʻolelo and hōʻailona manuscripts (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009).

Clark and Creswell (2010) point out the importance of accuracy in determining the findings and interpretations so that the findings will be credible. To validate my findings and enhance the credibility of the study, I verified the meaning of any Hawaiian words or slang used by the respondents. I wrote down questions the participants asked, recorded my personal thoughts and feelings about conducting the interview, and described the context in which questions were asked and answered (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 53). Each moʻolelo contains thick, rich description meaning that the reader should be able to “hear the voices” of Nā Wahine (Creswell, 2003). I have presented my findings in a clear and accessible language to the Native Hawaiian community and Indigenous researchers, and I have made the study available to my participants.

In quantitative studies, reliability is an essential criterion used to determine if results are consistent over time. In qualitative studies, however, credibility and trustworthiness are commonly used as criteria for quality (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of this qualitative study, I disclosed my background, biases, values, and experiences relative to this study and acknowledged that these factors may have influenced the findings of the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Despite efforts to provide sufficient evidence that I did not manipulate the data to coincide with any preconceived framework (Jones et al., 2006), I acknowledge that each moʻolelo and hōʻailona (although edited and approved by Nā Wahine) is my interpretation of the data.
Positionality: Role of the Researcher

In locating themselves within their research, Aboriginal scholars and researchers, Kathy Absolon and Cam Willett (2004) assert, “As Aboriginal researchers, we write about ourselves and position ourselves first because the only thing we can write about is ourselves” (p. 5). Here, these Aboriginal women affirm that locating oneself in writing and research is critical to issues of accountability and knowledge creation. On a similar note, Native Hawaiian scholar and educator, Kū Kahakalau (2004) maintains that contrary to Western research methods which advocate researcher neutrality, she brings to every task her mana which includes her physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual strengths. Kahakalau adds, “I also bring with me my personal skills and experiences, my hopes, my dreams, my visions, and my ancestral endowment...as well as the knowledge my many teachers have imparted to me” (p. 22). As these Indigenous scholars suggest, sharing one’s positionality is vital in qualitative studies because the researcher is an integral part of the study and cannot separate herself from her participants. As for me, I am a Tahitian American by birth, a college counselor by training, and a wife, mother, and academic by choice. I acknowledge that everything about me affects my study.

In qualitative studies, a researcher’s choice of topic and methodology, her approach to data collection and analysis, and her interpretation of the findings are a reflection of her personal experiences, beliefs, and values systems. I acknowledge that my personal values and experiences about this research topic shape the research questions and influence the methodology and outcomes of the study. As I endeavored to study the lives of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty, I was essentially reflecting on my own tenure experiences. This self-reflection is a critical element in understanding my standpoint, or in other words, my positionality within this study (Harding, 2004). In this
section, I discuss the role my positionality plays in this study and how this standpoint affects why I selected my topic, how I chose to study it, and for whom and for what purpose I conducted this research.

Self-reflexivity is an important characteristic in qualitative studies, including poststructural feminist inquiry (Anderson & Damarin, 2001). I chose to use multiple lenses in this study to give voice to the voiceless and to capture the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women. I recognize the need to report multiple interpretations of the data and to interrogate and reveal my own position in relation to various aspects of the study. In regards to researcher positionality, Harding (1987) points out “all research takes place from a position, and research should be conducted by one who stands in ‘the same critical plane’ as the researched” (p. 6). That is, it should begin with the lives and experiences of women (Anderson & Damarin, 2001). I also understand this to mean that research takes place from the researcher’s standpoint epistemology.

Describing the importance of self reflection, Patti Lather (1991), a leader in poststructural feminist research writes, "By reflexive, I mean those stories which bring the teller of the tale back into the narrative, embodied, desiring, invested in a variety of often contradictory privileges and struggles" (pp. 128-29). In other words, as a researcher, I am invested in what I study, what I select to report, and what meaning I find in the research situation. Anderson and Damarin (2004) add that self-reflexivity involves conducting a professional self-critique in which researchers own up to their values and how they are present in their work. The inclusion of self-reflexive material in the study gives readers a chance to learn how the personal interests and backgrounds of researchers shape research questions, approaches, and findings (Anderson & Damarin, 2001). Given
that qualitative researchers invest so much of themselves into their studies, Hokowhitu (2009) questions whether subjectivity can ever be eliminated from one’s research and believes there is no approach to research that is free from ideology.

As an Indigenous feminist researcher, I must be cognizant of the meaning and effect of my own race, cultural background, gender, class, age, and sexual orientation on this study, while examining my own biases and evaluating my interactions with participants for evidence of bias or discrimination (Andrews & Buchanan, 2009). I must first seek to understand myself and to recognize how my own social discourses not only affect my decision to study Indigenous women, but how they might also contribute to my findings. What do I contribute to this study? In essence, who am I and how does my background affect my research?

My childhood experiences growing up in Tahiti were connected to family and to various elements of nature including the ocean, mountains, beaches, and streams. I fished, paddled a canoe, caught shrimp and crab, biked around the island, walked barefoot on the beach, and swam in the ocean. I felt connected to people and places. Moving to Hawai‘i changed all that. I no longer felt connected to my environment. Instead, I felt disconnected, displaced, and disenchanted. During my most recent trip to Tahiti with my husband and children, I remember having this distinct feeling as our ship pulled out of Papeete harbor—“This is the place where I feel most at home.” In this regard, I have some understanding as to how Native Hawaiian women might feel displaced and dispossessed in their own land. I certainly have experienced being both an insider and an outsider growing up in Tahiti and Hawai‘i.
Insider- Outsider Theory

As I consider how much of this study may be a reflection of me, I acknowledge that my identity as a tenured Tahitian American woman in the community colleges system may simultaneously cast me as both an insider and outsider. In social science research, insider-outsider theory is used in research to justify a researcher’s position in relation to the participants in the study (Foley, 2003). It is based on the belief that a collective group of people has a monopoly of knowledge about itself (Merton, 1996). This would seem to indicate that only Blacks can study Blacks or Hispanics can study Hispanics. From an Indigenous perspective, however, this may hold some truth in that Western studies have proven to be discriminatory towards Indigenous peoples in that they are based on Western principles and ideology (Ogbor, 2000). Insider theory maintains that data will flow more freely from the Indigenous participant when facilitated by an Indigenous researcher. This insider doctrine supposes that the outsider is unable to comprehend Indigenous culture or society having never experienced it (Merton, 1996).

In relationship to this study, I am an insider to Native Hawaiian women faculty due to my tenure status and rank as a full professor with the community colleges. Being part of the university system provides me with easy access to my participants. I am aware that my tenure and rank situate me within a middle-class status. I may also be considered an insider by virtue of my Polynesian heritage because I am familiar with Polynesian culture, traditions, protocols, and values. However, as an insider I was cautious about my personal biases and about being too close to the culture to look critically at the topic in order to push myself beyond my current knowledge into a territory of insight and open inquiry (E. Enomoto, personal communication, March 25,
I also recognized that as a fair-skinned part Indigenous woman, I might need to negotiate my role with my participants so that the spaces between us can be opened up (Battiste & Henderson, 2000). This is particularly true in light of Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) claim that the value of any study is enhanced if Indigenous researchers study Indigenous peoples. As an insider, I was cautious about my personal biases and passion about the Hawaiian culture so that I could look critically at the topic in order to push myself beyond my comfort zone and current knowledge into a new realm of insight and open inquiry.

While my role as an insider may provide me with easy access to participants, I may be considered an outsider because I am not Hawaiian, nor do I speak the Hawaiian language. Although I grew up in Hawai‘i and understand local culture, I was not born here. I am an outsider because I am not a faculty member at a four-year research university; therefore I do not have the experience of conducting or publishing scholarly research. As a community college counselor, I am also considered an outsider because I am not affiliated with any of the academic disciplines on the UH Mānoa campus. I may also be viewed as an outsider to some participants because of my Christian religious background, heterosexual orientation, and traditional family values.

**Choice of Topic**

How has my positionality affected my choice of topic? As a community college counselor and graduate student, I recognize that my personal background and life experiences affect every aspect of my study. In reflecting upon my reasons for choosing to study the lived experiences of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty, I acknowledge that my decision may have been influenced by an unconscious desire to study something
about which I have some knowledge and to which I feel a strong personal commitment. As a woman, I have an interest in the stories and experiences of other women. Certainly, my role as a woman in academe, with its many barriers and challenges, had a strong influence on my choice to study women academics. My role as a tenured faculty member greatly influenced my decision to study other women faculty with tenure. Being an Indigenous woman, living in a Hawaiian community and working at a community college where 43 percent of students are Native Hawaiian, motivated me to study successful Native Hawaiian women. In choosing to study tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty, I made a conscious choice to select the upper echelon of academic society. So often, researchers who study Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous groups use a deficit approach focusing on negative aspects of the population. I wanted to reverse that trend, and instead used an assets approach, meaning that I made a deliberate choice to study women who have achieved tenure—the pinnacle of academic success.

As I reflect on my research topic, I acknowledge that in many cases, researchers select a topic that reflects who they are because the essence and potency of such research emanates from their life. This is true in my case because my passion for studying the lives of Native Hawaiian women emanates from my own experiences as an Indigenous woman. It stems from the fact that I am married to a Native Hawaiian, my children are Hawaiian, and we live on Hawaiian homestead land in a Hawaiian community. My passion comes from a place of deep empathy towards all Native Hawaiians who continue to suffer from the long lasting effects of colonialism (economic, political, social, and cultural) in a postcolonial world (Awatere, 1984). It comes from a place of hope that my children and grandchildren will enjoy a world free of discriminatory and oppressive
conditions based on their culture and ethnicity. Despite my passion for working with Native Hawaiian women faculty, I acknowledge the danger of being blinded by something I care about so deeply. As I reflected on why I chose to study the tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty, I began to dig a bit deeper into my reasons for conducting this research.

**Purpose of Research**

How has my positionality affected for whom and for what purpose I conducted this research? As I describe the purposes of my research, I begin by listing my original purpose followed by a deeper reflection in italics. My first purpose in conducting this study was to understand the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women as they journey through academe so that more Native Hawaiian women (and men) can experience a successful voyage through the academy and be situated in social discourses that empower them to effect social change. My second purpose was to understand the role of Native Hawaiian values and culture on the tenure experience to center Indigenous culture and ways of knowing in the production of knowledge. My third purpose was to explore the tenure phenomena (a self-serving practice that is innately antithetical to Indigenous culture) to examine how Indigenous Peoples might achieve this level of academic success and still be “pono,” or in harmony with Indigenous ways of knowing and being—spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

In a sense, this study is a form of an autoethnography, a term used by Ellis and Bochner (2000) to describe “studies and procedures that connect the personal to the cultural” (p. 740). Certainly, a reflexive ethnography can be useful for Indigenous researchers who study, write about, and interpret their own cultures for others (Ellis &
Bochner, 2000). In my case, being that I am not Hawaiian, I hope that my interpretation of the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women will open an alternate world of experience for my readers that will inspire critical reflection upon their own worldview.

As I choose to study the lives and experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty, I recognize that this study may be a projection of my own identity. I am studying a population that mirrors my identity—tenured Indigenous women faculty who have reached the apex of academic success. In reference to this mirrored phenomenon, Susan Krieger (1991) describes how the written products of research studies are more often about the researcher than anything else. For Krieger, conducting, interpreting, and presenting the research are projects of self-expression. In other words, as researchers choose to conduct a particular study, they are in a sense researching projections of themselves. Krieger considers research to be a form of artistic expression and goes so far as to blur the boundary between doing social science research and doing art. This lends credibility to my decision to use artistic inquiry as part of my data collection and analysis.

**Choice of Data Collection Methods**

How has my positionality affected how I chose to study this topic? While my role as a female academic influenced my choice of research topic, it was my experience as a Tahitian American woman that had the greatest influence on my choice of research methodology, particularly in my decision to use Indigenous methods for my data collection and data analysis. In choosing to study Native Hawaiian women, I selected a qualitative approach to set the stage for a dialectic relationship that would enhance the discovery process because it would encourage the participant and myself, as the researcher, to collaborate in investigating the complexities of our ever-changing, socially
constructed realities (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). This aspect of the researcher as research instrument, engaging in a dialectic with my participants, was an important consideration for me as my purpose was not merely to describe the experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty, but to understand the meaning of those experiences in such a way that I might accurately interpret them, and that I might learn from them (Holmes, 2012).

In this study, I considered myself a learner; my participants were the experts. As a learner, I had to interrogate the “selves” that I bring to the research process and my practices and responsibilities in relation to the knowledge that emerged from the “experts.” Given that oral traditions, including storytelling, are an integral part of Indigenous culture, I chose to use narrative interviewing as one form of data collection. This allowed my participants to share their stories, or moʻolelo, in a “talk story” format providing rich data. I also gathered hōʻailona to facilitate an arts-informed reflection. For Indigenous Peoples, creating art is a spiritual process that has meaning beyond words (Lavalée, 2009) and is therefore congruent with Indigenous practices.

**Choice of Data Analysis Methods**

How has my positionality affected how I chose to analyze the data in this study? My role as an Indigenous researcher has had the greatest influence on my choice of methods for analyzing the data. As I reflected on for whom and for what purpose I conducted this research, I felt a strong desire to adhere to Indigenous ways of knowing. This study is about Native Hawaiian women. It is for Native Hawaiians. This study may also benefit other Indigenous groups. Thus, it made sense to use Indigenous methods to analyze the data.
As I contemplated on appropriate methods for analyzing and presenting the data, I felt the urgency to centralize the experiences of Indigenous peoples by analyzing the data according to Indigenous research practices. Using artifacts and handmade works of art is a method aligned with Indigenous practices. According to Trépanier (2008), the process of colonization has had a profound and lasting impact on Indigenous/Native/Aboriginal Peoples, affecting their land, languages, cultures, and their art practices. Today, contemporary art practices are considered to be a “process of decolonization, re-appropriation, reclaiming and healing” (Trépanier, 2008, p. 8). Art can be also used to transmit stories in their appropriate cultural contexts and serves as an important tool in addressing social struggles (Trépanier, 2008). While I did not expect that Native Hawaiian women faculty would engage in Indigenous art practices, I left this modality open for them to explore and express their unique experiences (which some of them did). Regardless of the artistic form they selected, it was their reflection on the meaning of this art form that was significant. As participants discussed the meaning of their artwork or artifacts (during the second and third meetings), I recorded their comments and had these comments professionally transcribed. I used data from field notes, interview transcripts, moʻolelo, and hōʻailona to create a collective symbol reflecting the overall experiences of Nā Wahine (Figure 5.3).

My own identity is complex and continuously contested. It is something I have grappled with all my life. Am I Tahitian or White? Am I Indigenous or Western? Am I governed by Western tenets of absolute truth and rationality or by an Indigenous epistemology that considers multiple meanings and the interconnectedness of all things? In coming to terms with my own identity, I experienced an epiphany when I visited the
Hawai‘i Plantation Village. As I visited the various homes of Hawai‘i’s early immigrants, it seemed as though I heard the voices of my ancestors saying, “We are not here; therefore, you are not here.” It became clear to me that I am not of this place. My ancestors never stepped foot on Hawai‘i’s shores. But, they were voyagers much like the ancient Hawaiians who sailed throughout the South Pacific. Perhaps this will help me understand the voyage of Native Hawaiian women faculty through the perilous waters of academe. Perhaps the internal contradictions I experience in terms of who I am will ease the discomfort Native Hawaiian women might feel regarding their multiple and contested realities. In any case, the process of self-discovery, like any long voyage, is filled with a myriad of experiences.

I was aware that my personal background, along with my position at the college, level of education, and socioeconomic status, all played a role in my relationship with Nā Wahine. I was cognizant of “researcher positionality,” meaning the connection between my own socially constructed identity and those of Nā Wahine; what was happening between me and the women; and whose story was being told, why, for whom, and with what consequence (Fine, 1994, p. 70). Uppermost in my mind was to conduct a study in collaboration with Native Hawaiians, about Native Hawaiians, for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian community (Kahakalau, 2004).

**Ethical Concerns**

Ethical issues abound in qualitative research because of the focus on the human relationship (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Jones et al., 2006). As a qualitative researcher, I was sensitive to these issues at every step of the research process. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) remind the researcher to exercise care to ensure that none of the data gathered causes any embarrassment or harm to the participants, and to treat all subjects with
respect. A statement of informed consent generally covers principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy (Jones et al., 2006).

In this study, I obtained permission from the University of Hawai‘i Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to commencing the study (Appendix H). Members of the IRB Committee on Human Studies reviewed my research proposal to determine that no harm would come to the human participants. Participants received an “Agreement to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study” (Appendix C) explaining the purpose of the study along with the requirements for eligibility. The agreement included information regarding confidentiality, the right to withdraw from the study at any time, a statement about possible risks and expected benefits, and the signature of both the participant and the researcher. Participants also signed a consent form (Appendix D). I am aware that the informed consent signals issues of power and control that ultimately reside with the researcher (Jones et al., 2006).

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, each participant selected a pseudonym from a list of hōkū (Hawaiian stars) used by ancient navigators that best described her academic journey and personal experiences. These hōkū were among the navigational stars used by the Hōkūle'a on its voyage from Hawai‘i to Tahiti. Selecting these hōkū as pseudonyms for Nā Wahine proved to be more meaningful than I expected and provided several connections. First, it linked the voyaging theme of this study to the academic and tenure experiences of Nā Wahine. Second, it provided a link between the islands of Hawai‘i and Tahiti (my homeland), and thus between Nā Wahine and me. Third, the hōkū name selected by Nā Wahine connected to their life experiences in a meaningful way. For example, Nāhiku (meaning seven stars) chose this particular hōkū name to
honor her parents who had seven children. The Nāhiku constellation (known as the Big Dipper) points the way to true north, symbolic of her path or direction in life. Pi‘ikea, selected her hōkū name (which means to become light, as the day) because it brought back memories of the morning sunlight on the tide pools near her childhood home.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study focused on the experiences of nine Nā Wahine at a single institution. Findings of this study should be carefully interpreted because of several limitations. First, the sample was limited to a relatively small population of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty (N=14). Second, the sample was limited to Native Hawaiian women and did not include Native Hawaiian male faculty. Third, the sample was restricted to tenured *instructional* Native Hawaiian women faculty, and did not include tenured research or specialist faculty who receive tenure under different criteria. Fourth, the sample was self-selected meaning that these women chose to participate in this study perhaps because they were anxious to tell their story. It is unknown as to why the remaining five women chose not to participate. Most claimed they were too busy with other projects. It is unclear as to whether they chose not to participate because they felt they did not have an interesting story to share or because they may have assimilated to Western culture and values. While most Nā Wahine in the study were open and willing to share their experiences, one participant seemed reticent about sharing her personal experiences indicating that not all Native Hawaiian women are filled with story. Another woman was reluctant to share hō‘ailona because of the inherent mana, or power, within each artifact. Fifth, while this research may have implications for Native Hawaiian women faculty at other institutions, the study was limited to nine Native Hawaiian
women and cannot be generalized to a larger population. Finally, my own personal biases and values as a researcher provide both strengths and limitations to the study.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative study examined the academic and tenure experiences of Nā Wahine at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women on the voyage to tenure and to determine what, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process. Using multiple theoretical lenses, I employed narrative inquiry and arts-informed research as methodologies, and used Indigenous methods of moʻolelo and hōʻailona to explore the experiences and values of Nā Wahine. I consider this approach to be compatible with my worldview and appropriate to the participants and the nature of this study. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews conducted in a “talk story” format and the use of artifacts to represent Nā Wahine’s academic and tenure experiences. Data were analyzed in an Indigenous manner using moʻolelo (storytelling) and hōʻailona (symbolic interpretation). This topic is worthy of study because it gives voice to the voiceless; it centers the experiences, stories, and knowledge systems of the marginalized; and highlights the strengths of oppressed women.
CHAPTER 4
MOʻOLELO

ATEA
Tahitian name for the constellation Orion;
Broad, wide, spacious, open, unobstructed

“My PhD is my sword; it allows me to be a woman warrior.”

Clear blue skies and a gentle breeze accompanied the Hōkūleʻa as the canoe sailed from Opua to Papeete Harbor in the late afternoon. Atea, an assistant professor, curriculum specialist, and political activist, noticed the senior navigator had come up on deck from the hull. She said, “I wondered why he came up because he normally sits down in the hull. Maybe it was because we stopped to hook up to the tow boat. We were really overloaded. We had 30 people on board.” Shortly after hooking up to the tow, Atea observed, “Within 20 minutes, everything changed. This huge storm came out of nowhere. We had to de-rig and take down the mast.” Black clouds gathered and a fierce wind began pounding the canoe. After speaking briefly with the senior navigator, Atea learned that he could “feel” the storm down in the hull (before it ever appeared) which is why he came up. Atea recalls, “He knew the storm was coming. He could feel the vibrations.”

Aside from experienced crew members, all others were to remain in their seats and not fall overboard. Atea was tasked with helping to prepare hot beverages and soup for everyone as the crew battled the cold, pummeling rain and crashing six foot waves. After about three hours, Atea remembers thinking, “Okay, Akua (God). I’m tired of this. Pau already. I got it.” The captain of the Hōkūleʻa had previously asked Atea to help him write a course on traditional voyaging and had invited her to sail on the canoe to gain first hand voyaging experience. Atea realized that she would have to learn a lot more
about weather and wayfinding if she was going to be involved in writing curriculum for voyaging courses. After six hours of heading straight into the face of the storm, Hōkūleʻa arrived safely in Papeete Harbor around midnight.

Atea describes this experience as life changing—a huliau or turning point in her life. She said, “What we learned in those six hours was that if we did not take care of one another, regardless of our political or personal differences, we could all die.” She continued, “That’s what changed my point of view. I came to think that politics weren’t that important.” Her paradigm had shifted. Atea realized that what was truly important was understanding the wisdom of her Native Hawaiian ancestors, including knowledge of navigation, astronomy, fishing, and farming—and passing that knowledge on to future generations. As she explained, “I realized that if we didn’t know the wisdom of our ancestors, who were we? How would we be any different from Americans? So, that really changed my life.”

Following this initial voyage, Atea designed and taught a two-semester course on voyaging with help from experienced navigators. Fluent in ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian language) and cultural protocol, she was later invited to serve as a protocol officer onboard another voyaging canoe in Alaska. From this experience, Atea realized that Indigenous Peoples throughout the world share similar experiences as victims of colonization. While onboard the canoe in Alaska, a White man (who supposedly spoke Hawaiian) attempted to usurp her authority as the protocol officer. Atea asserted, “We as native peoples have to take responsibility for the ancestral knowledge and to make sure that we step up to the plate. We can’t let foreigners always be the leaders.”
Atea visited many other parts of Polynesia, usually by plane, including Ra‘iatea, Mo‘orea, Rapa Nui, Hiva‘oa, Nukuhiwa, and Ua Pou, but she was inspired to do so by understanding that the canoe had united her ancestors in the past. Reflecting on these experiences, she remarked, “Every time I have been on a canoe, I’ve always had some fabulous experience that touched me and that I learned from. I really love voyaging.” Her voyaging experiences in Ra‘iatea inspired her to select Atea (the Tahitian name for the constellation Orion) as her pseudonym. Orion, which lies at the celestial equator is one of the most recognizable constellations throughout the world.

As the daughter of a Hawaiian mother and a haole (White) father, Atea moved eleven times by the time she was 13 years old. Her parents divorced when she was four years old, but not before her father taught her to read. This ability to read at an early age resulted in a lifelong love of reading and learning. It would also help her to advance to the 6th grade after spending only two weeks in 5th grade. Sadly, however, her father left his young family desolate and destitute. As a result of her father’s abandonment, Atea would later change her last name prior to earning her PhD—a name that would honor her Native Hawaiian ancestors.

Unlike her father, Atea’s mother dedicated her life to providing for her children. She worked hard for many years as a hairdresser, but after Atea’s brother was born, she needed additional income to support the family. With a brilliant idea for setting up a second-hand furniture store, but no money for a down payment on a store lease, Atea’s mother put in a bid to purchase furniture from a hotel auction. She won the bid then called a friend to say she would sell him a koa table but she needed cash. Her friend came and paid $150 cash. Atea said, “She used this money to make a down payment on
the furniture.” The hotel manager insisted that she haul all the furniture off the premises, as the hotel was about to be demolished for construction of the H-1 freeway. So, Atea’s mother contacted a real estate company that owned a three-story storefront in downtown Honolulu. She convinced the realtors to loan her the keys over the long weekend so she could check out the property. She then had all the furniture removed from the hotel and placed in the ground floor of this store. Atea said, “She placed a sign in the window, “Beds for Sale, Really Cheap.” Several foreign ships happened to be in port. The sailors came in to purchase new beds and furniture and she sold out that same weekend. She made enough money to make a down payment on the storefront and so began a new career—in just three days!

Her mother’s resourcefulness and willingness to bend the rules to achieve a positive outcome shaped Atea’s life philosophy. “My mother never let the rules hinder her, and I’m very much like that,” she said. Similar to her mother, Atea is willing to break the rules if it results in something good. She is especially adamant about not letting “colonial capitalist rules” get in her way of bringing about something positive for Native Hawaiians. This same philosophy would later influence Atea’s path as a rebel, activist, and woman warrior for Native Hawaiian rights.

Some years later, her mother remarried. Her stepfather, whom she described as a “racist White man,” was an unemployed alcoholic. Although her mother worked long hours as a hairdresser, she could no longer keep up with the $150 monthly mortgage payments. Atea recalls, “We ended up in this little house (in rural O‘ahu) that was only $2 a month rent. It was a shack. My mother decided to tear out the inner walls because the house was full of rats.” While her mother and stepfather tore out the walls, 8-year old
Atea and her younger brother hosed down the debris from the house. Her mother put up newspaper on the walls then later covered them with old wallpaper from Salvation Army to prevent the wind from blowing through the children’s bedroom. Atea’s mother then painted the inside of the house with whitewash and lye to keep the bugs and rats away. Atea and her brother also helped repair a badly leaking roof. Her mother pieced together old pieces of carpeting to create a carpet for the house. “She found old antiques and stuff and really made the house beautiful,” recalled Atea. “So, Mom could do anything even though she didn’t finish high school. She believed where there’s a will; there’s a way. And I believe that. If you have determination, you can do it,” she said. Her mother taught Atea to always do her best and never settle for second best. This chiefly behavior would manifest itself in another example of her mother’s incredible influence in her life.

Atea’s mother decided that all the children in the valley should have a Christmas party and receive a present since many times there were no presents at Christmas because the families were so poor. Atea’s mother contacted the other parents in August to suggest that they all begin to save a little money each month. The parents dismissed the idea, preferring instead to buy beer for their own party. Undismayed, Atea’s mother put aside a few dollars from each paycheck and purchased small toys such as jacks or marbles for each child. At Christmas, she hosted a party for all the children in the valley and gave each one a present with their name on it. That year Atea said, “My brother and I only got one present.” What did she learn from this experience? Atea learned from her mother that they were descendants of Hawaiian chiefs, and that it is chiefly behavior to malama, or care for the children—regardless of one’s circumstances. Atea wondered, “If we are from chiefly lineage, why are we so poor? Where are our chiefly lands? This question
would later inform her desire to research land issues as a scholar. Atea admitted, “It took me a long time to figure out that mom was right; that chiefly behavior means that you strive for the best.”

As a young girl, Atea attended public school from kindergarten through 6th grade. Although she was placed in the fastest reading group, she encountered racial discrimination as early as kindergarten. Atea recalled:

I remember the Japanese teacher I had in kindergarten really didn’t like me. My first grade teacher (also Japanese) didn’t like me either. I couldn’t figure out why they didn’t like me. I was a pretty smart kid but still there was something wrong with me. I was not the right color.

When Atea was nine years old, she begged her mother to send her to traditional hula class. She had learned to dance hula ʻauana (contemporary hula) at the age of four but did not enjoy this modern form of hula. Then, at age nine, she heard that Auntie Hattie was teaching a traditional hula kahiko class. Her mother finally agreed to allow Atea to learn hula kahiko. It worked out well since Auntie Hattie did not charge for the class because she was selective about who she was willing to teach. Atea was the fourth student selected to dance in this hālau. “I loved hula kahiko, particularly the rhythm and chanting,” she said. “I would memorize the words while I was dancing then hurry home to write them down.” She especially loved chanting and feels that she was called to chant. “I’m a chanter,” explains Atea. “That’s what I do; I chant.” Not surprisingly, her children and grandchildren are also chanter.

Atea began 7th grade at Kamehameha Schools much younger than her peers because she had skipped the 5th grade. Kamehameha Schools was founded by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, great-granddaughter and last royal descendant of Kamehameha the Great. Atea did not enjoy her experience there. She felt the school was too haole
(most administrators and teachers were White). As a boarder, she woke up to a bell ringing at 6 a.m. and bells continued to regulate her activities until it was time to go to sleep. Atea remembers frequent visits to the principal’s office (a Native Hawaiian woman who would later be instrumental in helping Atea to secure a building for Hawaiian Studies). “I would get demerits for not conforming to the dress code. I was always pushing the envelope,” she said. As an “A” student expected to go to an East Coast college, her counselors discouraged her from taking Hawaiian language, suggesting in its place that she take French or German. Instead, she took Japanese. Atea also took a sewing class and began making her own clothes. Prior to this she said, “I had one new dress—once when I was seven, at Easter. It was blue. Other than that, I had hand-me-downs.”

After completing 7th grade Atea grew increasingly homesick and refused to return to the dorms. Her mother’s dream for Atea was to see her complete high school, since neither she nor Atea’s grandmother ever graduated from high school. Atea preferred to attend a public high school in her district. Her mother insisted that she return to Kamehameha, but agreed to allow Atea to become a day student. This meant that they would have to leave their home in the country at 4:30 a.m. to drive to Kāne‘ohe where Atea would catch the school bus at 6 a.m. This was one of many sacrifices her mother made on her behalf.

Upon completing the 8th grade, Atea and her family moved to Kailua where her mother worked at a beauty shop nearly every day including holidays. Atea remembers working at the beauty shop after school until 8 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays. When her mother finally took a day off, she and the children would clean the house and
yard. Because of this strict work schedule, Atea was unable to participate in after-school sports or activities and literally felt that she had no life. In high school, she took Hawaiian, French, and Japanese because of her love for languages. Admitting that she has always been a bit rebellious, she said, “My favorite memory of high school was the day I graduated. It was like getting out of prison!”

Determined not to become a hairdresser, Atea had already applied and been accepted to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UH Mānoa). With a strong desire to learn Hawaiian language, she had no interest in attending a mainland college. During her freshmen year, Atea read the book “Queen’s Own Story” describing the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy from the perspective of Queen Lili‘uokalani. She was outraged that she had never heard this story as a student at Kamehameha Schools. She knew nothing about the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy by the U.S. government. Atea said, “We were reading Malcolm X. We knew things that happened to Black people, but we didn’t know what happened to us.” She loved attending the university and learning many new things, but one day during her Hawaiian history class, her professor made an alarming statement, claiming that the best thing that happened to the Hawaiian people were the Calvinist missionaries who instigated the overthrow. Infuriated over this comment, but having no voice with which to challenge the haole professor, Atea dropped out of college in her third semester. It would be six years, and one baby later before she returned to the university.

Her mother told her that a woman should always have her own career and not be dependent on men. Atea wanted to return to college but she said, “Since I dropped out, I defaulted (on) my loans and I had all F’s. So that wasn’t really an option.” Desiring to
reconnect with her Hawaiian culture, she enrolled in a class on Hawaiian chants. She and
the instructor were actually the same age and had both attended Kamehameha, but
because she had skipped a grade, she graduated from high school a year earlier. To her
surprise, her classmate was in graduate school. Atea admitted, “He was already working
on his master’s degree and I hadn’t finished a BA” With her mother’s hiki no (can do)
attitude, Atea thought, “I could do that.” So, she applied to UH Mānoa and found a
babysitter for her son.

When her application was denied, Atea went to see the Chinese financial aid
officer, the son of Kohala plantation workers, who spoke fluent Hawaiian. He asked her,
“Why should I let you back in when you defaulted on your loans?” Atea explained, “If I
don’t get an education, I may be poor forever.” She offered to repay her loans at the rate
of $15 per month and was readmitted to the university. Unfortunately, because she
received all F’s in her first year, she had a terrible GPA. Atea was determined to get all
A’s in her classes to improve her GPA. At the beginning of the semester, she introduced
herself to each professor saying, “I’m an A student. I want to know exactly what I have
to do in this class to get an A.” She then wrote down precisely what they said. She
added, “I would sit in the front row of each class, take copious notes, and ask every
question I could think of because I had to get the A.” With her mother’s determination to
do her best, Atea received A’s in all of her classes with one exception—a “B” in
oceanography. “It was the only “B” I got when I came back to school,” she said. “I told
the professor there must be something wrong with his class!”

After receiving her BA degree in Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian Studies, Atea
received a 4-year grant to attend graduate school and earn a master’s degree. For a class
assignment, one of her professors assigned her to translate a Hawaiian language newspaper. When she learned that her professor (allegedly known for his unscrupulous behavior) planned to publish the work under his name, she boldly told him, “I am the native; you are the foreigner. You need me; I don’t need you.” She then turned the assignment into her master’s thesis. Reflecting on her growth as a native scholar Atea said:

My thesis represents my intellectual growth over time, but also standing up for myself as a native scholar against White people who think that they have a right to write about us and control us and tell us what to do.

Since there was no MA in Hawaiian Language at that time, she earned her MA in Pacific Island Studies. While attending an event for a departing professor, Atea was asked by the professor’s wife, “So now that you’re completing your MA, where will you do your PhD?” No one in her life had ever suggested that she pursue a PhD—not her professors, not her advisors, not even her family. Little did the professor’s wife realize what a pivotal role she played in Atea’s life. A few months later, Atea became a PhD candidate in History.

As part of her doctoral research, Atea studied moʻokūauhau (genealogy), Hawaiian history, and Hawaiian culture—all of which were beginning to expand her identity as a Native Hawaiian woman. She acknowledged that although she grew up in a Hawaiian neighborhood, most people did not speak Hawaiian. Nobody knew what it meant to be a Native Hawaiian. According to Atea:

If you were Hawaiian, you were on welfare and you were poor. You lived a short life and you had too many babies. You had no control over your life. You had no land to speak of. You were poor and penniless.

It was only after reading the “Queen’s Own Story” that she came to understand why so many Hawaiians were poor. In Atea’s words:
After I read the Queen’s Own Story, I realized a terrible wrong had been done to us, and as a result my family was poor. I am the first person in my family to graduate from high school. My Tutu (Kane) was a Royalist. He was blacklisted because he supported the Queen. And we’ve been poor ever since. Until me.

Atea shared a tragic story about her mother and grandmother that would later provide the impetus for much of her scholarly work. Her grandmother first gave birth to Atea’s mom, who is a twin, and then to a son. Later she had two other daughters but had to give them away in hanai (adoption) because she had no money to care for them. Then when Atea’s mom was eight years old, her mother (Atea’s grandmother) gave birth to triplets—three boys. Atea’s mom watched her three baby brothers die of starvation because her own mother had no milk. The babies were hungry and her mother was poor. Atea remembers her mother saying, “I can still remember them crying and crying until they stopped crying altogether.” Resentfully, Atea asked, “And why did that happen? Because America took our country, that’s why it happened.” This experience provided the underpinning for Atea’s political philosophy.

While writing her dissertation, she encountered challenges in working with the chair of her dissertation committee (a female descendant of the early missionaries) who disagreed with Atea’s anti-missionary analysis regarding her topic. Despite their analytical differences, her advisor recommended Atea to work as a lecturer in her department while she was on sabbatical. Atea spoke to her boss, a female administrator who had graduated from the same department saying, “I can’t feed my family on this amount of money. What am I going to do?” The chair suggested that she reject the lectureship and insist on being hired as an acting assistant professor. Similar to her mom who bid for hotel furniture with no money and then moved that same furniture to a place she had not yet rented, Atea insisted on being hired as an acting assistant professor before
completing her PhD. She was hired and began teaching three classes while continuing to work on her dissertation. While completing the rewrites for her dissertation, she gave birth to a baby girl.

At her dissertation defense, held in May, the committee chair said that her dissertation was brilliant and needed only a few rewrites—mostly grammatical. Weeks went by and Atea heard nothing back from her advisor regarding the changes she wanted Atea to make. Atea was afraid she would not be able to graduate in August and therefore not qualify for a full-time position. With the same brilliance and resourcefulness of her mother, Atea boldly declared to her dissertation chair, “You’re fired as my chair, I want my dissertation back.” The chair and another member of her department refused to sign off on the dissertation but Atea was still able to graduate three years after she began with only three signatures.

Earning a PhD empowered Atea with a strong voice for Native Hawaiians. She said, “My PhD is my sword; it allows me to be a woman warrior. You can fight for your people when you have the haole degree. It’s like a union card that lets you in the door, right?” Soon after completing her dissertation, she met a Hawaiian woman professor and political activist, who became a strong advocate and mentor. Together, they attended numerous meetings on campus advocating for Native Hawaiians. At one of these meetings, her political activist mentor defiantly told the president of the university, “We’re the native people. We’ll be here forever. One day you’ll be long gone.” And she was right; the president has since resigned while Native Hawaiian faculty remain.

In her position as Assistant Professor, Atea taught classes, advised students, and wrote curriculum for several new courses. When the Hokule‘a captain approached her
about writing a course on navigation, Atea exclaimed, “Oh, great! That’s what I do. I’m really good at writing curriculum.” Since then, she said, “I have written 20 courses and I have another three courses coming through, and I really enjoy doing it.”

Atea knew that in her fifth year at the university, she would have to apply for tenure. She noted, “Outside of Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian Language, there are hardly any positions or spaces for Native Hawaiians.” Her political activist colleague was the one who prodded her to complete a book on her dissertation topic. From her second year on the job, she would ask Atea every day, “So where’s the damn book?” Atea started working on the book on weekends. It took her four years to complete the book and submit it for publication. Despite being a single mother, with her mother’s strong determination, Atea found a way to write. She found people to take care of her son and daughter on weekends while she wrote six hours a day on Saturday and another six hours on Sunday just to get the book out.

Despite having a strong advocate in her corner, the voyage through academe towards tenure would not be without racial and gender tension. By the time she went up for tenure, she had a book contract. She had evidence of all the courses she had written and great teaching evaluations. She was attending national and international conferences and speaking about various issues. She received tenure five years after being hired. Achieving tenure allowed her to speak freely about politically charged issues. While the tenure process was not without challenges, Atea feels she was privileged to have received grants for graduate school and to have had two strong women (her political activist colleague and her former Kamehameha Schools principal) to protect her from haole administrators, faculty, and colleagues who disagreed with her viewpoints.
Along with her political activist colleague, Atea fought adamantly for a new Hawaiian Studies building. They met frequently with the legislature regarding funding for the new building. According to Atea:

"The legislators came to respect these two Hawaiian women who were working so hard for the benefit of the (Hawaiian) people. We weren’t asking for higher salaries for ourselves. We weren’t asking for more money or anything. We were asking for a building that could be the gateway for Hawaiians to enter the university because only five percent of the students were Hawaiian."

Six years later, after much hard work, the Hawaiian Studies building was completed. Reflecting back on this experience, Atea acknowledges that securing a building for Hawaiian Studies and helping the program to grow was far more important to her than getting tenure.

From Atea’s perspective, the best thing about tenure is that it compels assistant professors to publish a book. Atea strongly believes that the university should not grant tenure to a professor who has not published a book and who has not demonstrated some area of new knowledge. She admonishes all Native Hawaiian faculty to publish a book because, as her political activist colleague used to tell her, “The word is forever.” She feels that Native Hawaiians should be leaders among their people and never accept second best. Atea acknowledges that Hawaiian women faculty members need to have strong Hawaiian women protecting and advocating for them, but also demanding that they publish. Her current challenge is to set aside an hour everyday to finish up her other books and get them published.

Emphatically, she declared:

"It’s not enough to be native. We need to publish. We need to be better than the haoles of the university. Intellectually, we can do this. We need to publish because that’s the minimum standard at the universities of the world."
As a tenured professor and member of the Native Hawaiian Advisory Board, Atea has been instrumental in securing 108 permanent tenure-track positions for Native Hawaiians on the 10 campuses in the UH System. According to Atea, “The only way that you are going to make UH Mānoa an Indigenous serving university is to have permanent positions for Native Hawaiians. Permanent positions are the only way that you make a permanent difference.”

Today, as a seasoned professor and accomplished curriculum writer, Atea is still angry over what has happened to the Hawaiian people, but as a more determined and focused scholar she says:

I don’t have time to be angry. Four of my classmates died last year. Who knows, right? Every day is a gift. I don’t have time to be angry. I’ll leave that for somebody else to do. My job is to try to expand the base of our knowledge among our Hawaiian Studies majors so that we have an army of academics who understand our ancestor’s knowledge like our ancestors did.

Atea has remained true to the epiphany she experienced while voyaging to Tahiti on the Hokuleʻa and has dedicated her life to learning and teaching others the knowledge of her ancestors. Indeed, her ancestors have guided her voyage through life.

**HŌKŪAO**

Morning Star

“I was always at the table.”

Hōkūao remembers the long flight home with her family from Oberammergau, Germany. She was accustomed to flying back and forth between California, Hawaiʻi, and Germany. Little did she realize that this trip home to Hawaiʻi would change her life forever. Her mother, one of the first Native Hawaiian women to earn a Master’s degree in education, was critically ill. Hōkūao recalled, “My mom was very sick with cancer. They didn’t know much about cancer in the 60s so she suffered for quite a long time.”
Her mother was admitted to Tripler Hospital where she soon passed away. Losing her mother was a life-changing event for six-year old Hōkūao. She said, “This was a real critical time in my life because when you lose a parent, especially as a young girl losing her mother, it makes a real impact on your life.” Fortunately for her, she was surrounded by a loving, caring ‘ohana. Her grandparents, in particular, would play a key role in her life.

Hōkūao remembers her maternal grandmother’s home in Kaimuki as a gathering place. “In the middle of the kitchen there was a long table with benches on each side,” she said. Various people, including aunties and uncles, were always seated at this table talking story and enjoying her grandma’s cooking. Some were manaleo (native speakers of Hawaiian), some spoke only English, and others were Polynesian. As a small child, Hōkūao said, “I would squeeze myself between two adults seated at the table. I would sit quietly and listen to the conversations and the many stories they shared.” It was a great place to learn. As she recalls:

I was always at the table. I was never at the children’s table. My cousins would sit at the children’s table, but I was always at the table. I was never asked to sit at the children’s table; and I never ever thought of sitting at the children’s table.

At her grandmother’s table, Hōkūao developed essential leadership skills including the ability to listen for intent, the courage and confidence to speak her mind among men and women, the importance of gatherings to converse and resolve problems, and numerous Hawaiian values that would fuel her passion for learning, teaching, and leading. Reflecting on this experience she said, “I believe that I learned how to listen and to be patient and know when to talk because of that.”

Hōkūao heard many stories about her mother as she grew up. Her mother was a talented young woman who danced hula for the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. She was a
kindergarten teacher—well loved and respected. As Hōkūao grew up hearing these wonderful stories about her mother, she wondered if she could ever live up to her family’s expectations. She explained, “Because she was so highly loved and respected and people had such high hopes for her, you can imagine the stories I grew up with.” Her grandmothers were very clear about the path she would take in life. Prophetically, they declared that Hōkūao would follow in her mother’s footsteps. Hōkūao said, “My grandmothers told me that I would grow up to be a teacher of teachers. Because my mother had passed away, I had to take up where she left off.” At times Hōkūao found this expectation to be inspiring and at other times quite burdensome.

Her grandparents were instrumental in teaching and exemplifying Hawaiian values. Hōkūao said, “I learned so much about what it meant to be Hawaiian because my grandparents were manaleo and they lived a Hawaiian lifestyle.” Among the values she learned from her grandparents are pono (live righteously and build networks that preserve core values and catalyze innovation), kūlia i ka nu‘u (strive for the top, or summit), hana lawelawe (leadership requires service), kupaianaha (be prepared to accept the brilliance of serendipity), noi‘i (explore every angle to gain deep understanding), ‘ohana (mālama family members), and ola hāloa (strive for a life that is far-reaching).

Her paternal grandmother was a lauhala weaver and experienced fisherwoman. Hōkūao spent many days in the ocean listening to her grandmother’s instructions and following her example on how to catch and clean fish. She remembers her grandmother saying, “Stick your hand in here and grab that. Use this plant to stun the fish. Go into the cave and do this. Sit here with me and clean the fish.” Hōkūao learned a lot about fishing and respecting the ocean from her grandmother.
Her maternal grandparents also had a home in rural Ka‘a‘awa on the island of O‘ahu. Hōkūao remembers spending almost all day walking with her maternal grandfather from their country home to and from the poi factory. For Hōkūao, it was a joyous day of play. Along the way, Grandpa would throw his net in the ocean to catch fish while Hōkūao played in the ocean and in the streams. She reflected, “My grandfather was a fisherman. He knew how to throw net. He was a tall man; really tan with white hair. He was great.” That night, when they returned home, they enjoyed eating fish and poi. Hōkūao said, “I never had to learn to be Hawaiian because I grew up being Hawaiian which was deeper than language or culture—it was how we lived.” This understanding of her own identity as a Native Hawaiian would prove to be important in her professional life because she never thought of herself as coming from a colonial framework. Although she understands the impact that colonization has had on her family and other Native Hawaiians she does not want it to define her life.

Hōkūao attended public school until the 8th grade and started at Kamehameha Schools in the 9th grade. She knew she would attend Kamehameha because her grandmothers told her, “This is what you are going to do.” Hōkūao said, “I really appreciated going to Kamehameha Schools. I wanted to learn; I wanted to be there.” She took three years of Hawaiian (considered a foreign language at the time) reading and translating from Hawaiian language newspapers but never speaking the language. She took classes where she learned about the history of Hawai‘i through mele, hula, and mo‘olelo. She said, “My kumu (teachers) were fabulous role models.” Hōkūao took on many leadership roles in high school including serving as a song contest leader, class officer, and assistant to the special events coordinator. She credits her strong work ethic
to her dad who worked for the U.S. Treasury and the City and County of Honolulu following his retirement from the U.S. Army after 25 years of service. Her dad often told her, “You don’t get anything for free. You have to work hard to get it. You earn it.” Her father fought in the Korean War and taught Hōkūao and her two brothers to work hard, follow through, and be responsible—all of which are important leadership qualities. While at Kamehameha, Hōkūao said, “I learned that leadership is service; it’s working hard to serve.” She describes this kind of service as hana lawelawe and feels that the best leader is one who works diligently to serve others.

After graduating from Kamehameha Schools, Hōkūao moved to California where she earned a BA and MA degree in Theater and Communications. She said, “I became deeply involved with children’s and family theater and began working with children in the schools.” As a member of the American Conservatory Theater she worked as a teacher in their youth theater. This experience helped to open a career pathway into education because even without a teaching degree or certificate, Hōkūao explained, “I became a teacher because of my strong arts background.”

Hōkūao added, “I spent several years in California integrating the arts into public education and then I moved to Texas where I became an elementary school principal.” The school was in danger of being closed because the children, most of whom spoke Spanish as their first language, were not doing well academically. “Part of the problem,” she explained, “was the state law that stipulated instruction was to be done only in English.” Hōkūao recalled, “I learned a great deal about leadership in a short period of time. Along with key people in my school, I knew that the only way to save the school was to teach bilingually.” Fortunately, she had teachers who were capable of teaching
bilingually. They did so in a covert manner using a special intercom system to alert teachers of visits from the district office. Not surprisingly she said, “The kids were learning; people were happy.” With her theater background, Hōkūao began to introduce changes in the school environment and organized gatherings, similar to those in her grandma’s kitchen. Gatherings always included food and fun. However, by her second year at the school, things became more challenging.

Hōkūao experienced the politics and power of public education. During principal meetings, she noticed everyone would acquiesce to the male superintendent. She stated, “I would watch everybody kowtow to the superintendent and nobody—not even the women principals—would stand up for me when I would say things.” From these experiences, she said, “I learned a lot about gender and race politics.” At this time in her career, Hōkūao was only 27 years old and clearly a woman of color. Surprisingly, she said, “I experienced a tremendous amount of discrimination from women, men, and from people of color as well.” She learned how to be graceful in her leadership role and to approach these principals (women, Hispanic men, and White men) to ask for their support. In doing so, she pointed out, “The fear of power was so strong it was palpable.” She understood it because she was living it but she did not like the way in which it made people behave. The superintendent, a Hispanic man, threatened his subordinates and used every racial slur imaginable to intimidate teachers and principals. As she explained, “I didn’t like the way in which our superintendent treated people with threats.” Hōkūao described this form of Spanish male dominance as “machismo.” Ironically, she was not being dominated by White men—she was being dominated by a Hispanic man.
Despite the negative environment in which she worked, Hōkūao learned how to network and build strong relationships. She learned to listen intently, the way she did at her grandma’s table. Hōkūao explained, “I wasn’t listening to the words; I was listening to the intent. I was trying to get beneath all that and look at the na‘au.” With impending threats of getting fired, Hōkūao took a job offer in Seattle, Washington. Before moving, she attended her last executive meeting at which the superintendent presented her with a parting gift—two silver balls and a card. The card read, “Now that you have the balls, maybe you can do the job.” Reflecting on the sexist nature of the gift, Hōkūao remarked, “That was hugely characteristic of the world I lived in for three years. And you can just imagine the lessons learned from that.” She would later use those experiences in working with teachers and leaders “as case studies of the worst teaching and learning situations ever,” but would also demonstrate how being “courageous and loving” can make a huge difference in learning and teaching. Despite the racial and gender discrimination Hōkūao encountered, she learned to love her teachers, the children, and their families. Her passion for learning, teaching, and leading was only strengthened by this challenging experience. It was now time to return home to Hawai‘i.

With her experience as a teacher, curriculum specialist, principal, and assistant superintendent, she got a permanent substitute position at a high school in Honolulu. “I didn’t want to go back into adminstration because I missed the classroom,” she said. Sometime later, she secured a permanent position as a speech teacher at Kamehameha Schools. Hōkūao describes this turns of events as kupaianaha—the brilliance of serendipity. She noted, “If anything could characterize my life, that’s it. I just have to be open to the brilliance of serendipity. I was in the right place at the right time and I got
the job at Kamehameha Schools as a speech teacher and I loved it.” From the time she was a little girl, Hōkūao was destined to follow in her mother’s footsteps. As she described it:

I always wanted to be a teacher or kumu–this is very important to me! The experience of learning and teaching moves my spirit and connects me to the kūpuna on whose shoulders I stand and the generations of people yet to come. It is the most honorable of all callings!

Eventually, Hōkūao decided to pursue a doctoral degree in educational administration at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Writing her dissertation was a self-journey to learning and gave her the voice to articulate, “What it means to be Kanaka Maoli–to be me.” However, Hōkūao pursued a different path than most doctoral students. She said, “I decided I was going to matriculate through this program differently.” Rather than prescribe to established protocol, she chose to move through the doctoral program on her own terms with the support of her committee (who were all risk-taking, junior, untenured faculty). She insisted on getting an internship and convinced one of her committee members to hire her as his graduate teaching assistant to teach statistics during the summer and count it as part of her credits. She added, “I also took courses taught by forward-thinking faculty.” Hōkūao disagreed with the way in which comprehensive exams were conducted wherein various professors submitted random questions. Instead, she advocated that she and her committee chair would collaboratively write her comprehensive exam questions and submit them to her committee for approval–a process that continues to be practiced today. Her dissertation focused on educational policy that affected the lives of Native Hawaiians. From what she has been told, she is likely the first Native Hawaiian woman to earn a doctoral degree in educational administration.
While Hōkūao was completing her dissertation, her husband received full financial support to begin his PhD program in the Fall at MSU, a research-intensive mainland state university. Serendipitously, Hōkūao defended her dissertation in December and became a faculty member in January at MSU. As she recalls, “I was the only untenured, female, person of color faculty in my program.” Her first year was especially difficult working with an all White male faculty that she described as an “old boy’s club.” “These men were highly respected scholars who wrote the textbooks on educational leadership and teacher’s standards,” she remarked. Reflecting on that first year, Hōkūao said:

I did a lot of compromising (of Hawaiian values) and making excuses because it was so different. It was a culture shock in many ways. I don’t know that I lived any Hawaiian values. I don’t know that I actually lived, period.

She felt intimidated much of the time because of the gender tension, but especially due to her position as a junior faculty member. Senior faculty were quick to point out the differences saying, “I’m a full professor; you’re a junior professor. I’m tenured; you’re untenured. I have books; you don’t have any books. You’re from K-12; you’re not from higher education so how can you be with us?”

Hōkūao was literally dying on the vine. As she recalled, “I was not breathing or anything because I was in very different water and I didn’t know how to swim in it. I was not prepared (to be an academic).” Serendipitously, she received a phone call from one of her dissertation committee members who invited her to attend a women’s conference–an event that would change her life because at that conference she regained her confidence and remembered who she was before she entered the academy. Hōkūao recalls entering a room at the conference where women loved and respected each other. She was so inspired by this experience that she later became head of an organization that
fought for women and minorities. Referring to this gathering of women, Hōkūao explained, “When I’m around women who I love and respect, I regain a lot of that energy. So I continue to bring together men and women. And it’s because of the experience around my grandma’s table.” The lessons learned at this women’s conference proved to be valuable in her later efforts to pursue promotion and tenure. From that moment on, Hōkūao never looked back. Things began to change. “I visited every single one of my faculty colleagues,” Hōkūao said, “to let them know who I am, what I did, what I didn’t do, and why I did what I did because I wanted them to know my story and not make it up.” In other words, one of the valuable lessons she learned was to own her own voice, to tell her own story. Soon after, she became the program chair and interim department chair. She revised the master’s program in educational leadership and created an international master’s degree program. As she recalls:

I never looked back after that because I remembered hana lawelawe. I remembered my spirit. I remembered that I wasn’t ever going to let any person, male or female, make me feel that I knew nothing—like my experience in Texas. I have a palapala (degree). That’s my name here. It says I can do something.

As a leader in higher education, Hōkūao cites the importance for Native Hawaiians to remember their foundation, their connections to kūpuna, and their responsibility to future generations. As an example, she shared the story of the kiha, or mythical Hawaiian lizard. According to Hōkūao, the kiha’s tail represents our kūpuna and their moʻolelo. “When someone cuts off the kiha’s tail, it grows back,” she said. “In Hawai‘i, colonization ‘whacked it off’ meaning that it cut off our kūpuna, language, culture, and traditions. But it is slowing growing back.” She continued, “The hind legs represent our makua—our parents whose role is to give stability to the home.” Finally, she said, “The front legs and the mouth are ‘ōpio, or keiki. They’re feeding. They’re moving
forward. They’re seeing all the possibilities in the world. We as makua need to build this place where they can feed, grow, and learn.”

Hōkūao notes that her “journey to promotion and tenure has been quite a life journey.” Working with prolific scholars at MSU, expectations for publishing were quite high. Although these expectations were never written down, Hōkūao understood the need to get three published articles and a book contract out of her dissertation to get tenure. So that is exactly what she did. Despite being told by an esteemed scholar that she would never become a star if she did native work, Hōkūao got three articles published in respected peer-reviewed journals, and soon scholars began to read her work. In collaboration with a member of her dissertation committee, she wrote a book and invited her doctoral students to cite her book while presenting at practitioner conferences. In this way, she got her book into the hands of many practitioners from around the country. Getting promoted and tenured, according to Hōkūao, was about knowing the expectations, following the recipe (but doing it in her own way), and being strategic about getting it done. She also credits many wonderful mentors for assisting and facilitating her journey through academe.

In her current leadership position, when junior faculty express their fear of the promotion and tenure process, Hōkūao tells them, “It’s a recipe. Just do this, this, and this and get it done. If you’re going to complain about it then get out of the job. Get out of the business. This is the business you signed up for.” She admonishes faculty to understand the culture of their discipline, know the politics, and do the scholarly work they love. But Hōkūao actually goes far beyond this in helping junior faculty to succeed. As the makua of her division, she regularly provides professional development
workshops to support Native Hawaiian faculty in their pursuit of promotion and tenure including seminars on how to get published. She sends her faculty to conferences to present their papers and meet potential publishers. She encourages them to engage in scholarly research and helps them get published. She has also created a three-year leadership/fellowship appointment in which faculty spend 25% of their time in their department teaching and doing research, and 75% working with Hōkūao learning about higher education and its relationship with other institutions (e.g., government, ali`i trusts, K-12 schools, etc., and what it means to be an educational leader.

Hōkūao looks forward to each new day. She especially loves early morning watching the sun rise. She describes this as “the most beautiful time of day and the most promising part of my whole day—sunrise, the morning, the morning star.” Hence, it is fitting that she selected “Hōkūao,” meaning “morning star,” as her pseudonym.

Similar to her grandmother who was skilled at making haku lei using whatever materials she could find, Hōkūao feels it is her job to haku (weave) things together using a lot of different materials. For example, she is unwilling to accept that something just cannot be done. Instead, she looks for ways to accomplish the task. As Hōkūao explains, “I always figure out another way to get it done.” And like her grandmother who experienced barriers of poverty and a lack of education yet produced beautiful work, Hōkūao has overcome numerous barriers and continues to produce amazing results. Her leadership style is embedded with Native Hawaiian values that she learned from her grandparents and others while sitting around her grandma’s table. And like her grandma, Hōkūao continues to gather people together to eat, talk story, work out problems, and plan for the success of Native Hawaiians.
“Being Hawaiian was just how we lived.”

Under the hot Maui sun, Hōkūpa‘a scribbled the words, “Mangos and Papayas” onto a piece of cardboard and proudly nailed the sign to the fruit stand. As she glanced over at her sister, she wondered which one of them would help Aunty and Uncle by selling the most fruit today. Smiling at her uncle she asked, “After we sell all the mangos and papayas, can we go for a swim in the stream?” “Of course,” replied her uncle. Hōkūpa‘a loved spending time with her aunty and uncle both of whom were kuaʻāina—Native Hawaiians who remained in rural communities, lived off the land, and maintained traditional Hawaiian culture. With no children of their own, her aunty and uncle considered Hōkūpa‘a and her sister to be their very own.

As a child, Hōkūpa‘a spent all summer on the island of Maui with her mother in Pukalani and with her aunty and uncle in Wailua, a rural community on the Eastern shores of Maui. Living in the country, life was simple and fun. On one occasion she said, “My uncle built a boat out of roofing iron that me and my sister used to sail down the river.” “Another time,” she said, “my uncle invited all the kids who were swimming in the pond at Keʻanae to a dance at his home. He then drove to town and purchased a sound system, strobe lights, and snacks.” That night her uncle put on a dance for about 40 teenagers.

As early as three or four years of age, Hōkūpa‘a was introduced to many Hawaiian activists and scholars that she said “would just show up” at the home of her aunty and uncle in Wailua. She said, “Many of them were members of Protect Kahoʻolawe ‘Ohana (PKO),” a group dedicated to stopping the bombing and helping the
island to heal. After working all day on Kahoʻolawe, the group would camp overnight, then leave for Maui early in the morning. Arriving in Maui, they loaded their zokiaks and gear onto trucks and cars and drove to Wailua to have their meetings at the house. Hōkūpa'a never realized that these people were prominent leaders and scholars in the Hawaiian community.

Her grandfather, who was pure Hawaiian, had many siblings so every family gathering was filled with fun, food, and family. The grandchildren were expected to know and greet everyone. Hōkūpa'a explained, “Being Hawaiian was just how we lived.” Her Grandpa, a heavy equipment operator, was skilled at working with machines and planting kalo in the loʻi. He would often take Hōkūpa’a for a ride on his horses. Hōkūpa’a remembers seeing Grandma cooking all the time and added, “We never ate out.”

It was her hānai grandfather’s dream to reestablish the loʻi on the UH Mānoa campus. She said, “One day after my aunty had pulled all the kalo and made huli (taro stems), my hānai grandfather came along and took all the huli to start the loʻi near the Hawaiian Studies building on the UH Mānoa campus.” For Hōkūpa’a, kalo is a life force representing family, stability, and sustenance while the loʻi represents peace and serenity.

Her parents divorced when she was four and she and her sister lived with their father on Oʻahu. However, she said, “Our favorite memories were of times spent with our mom, aunties, uncles, and grandparents (in rural Maui).” Never did Hōkūpa’a imagine that these rural Hawaiian communities would become part of her path as a graduate student and later as a professor.

She remembers preparing for her First Holy Communion in the first grade. She said, “My father told me that I did not have to wear white.” So, he bought me a blue
muʻumuʻu and every other child showed up wearing white! I just wanted to die and so did my dad.” She attended Kamehameha Schools from kindergarten through sixth grade. She and her classmates were the first group to be tested for readmission into the 7th grade. Out of 100 students, only 28 were readmitted. Sadly, Hōkūpaʻa was not one of them. Instead, her father sent her to a private Catholic School for 7th and 8th grade. Hōkūpaʻa remarked, “For the first time in my life, I realized that not everyone was Hawaiian. In the entire school, very few children were Native Hawaiian.” Fortunately, she was readmitted into Kamehameha Schools in the 9th grade. This experience rendered her a more compassionate educator because she understands how difficult it is for many Hawaiian youth who never get into Kamehameha Schools.

While at Kamehameha, Hōkūpaʻa took the first steps toward becoming a Hawaiian language professor. She said, “I took Hawaiian Studies in 9th grade and I really enjoyed it. I started taking Hawaiian language in the 10th grade even though my high school counselor said it wouldn’t count if I went away to college.” During her senior year she was unsure about her future career. After speaking to her aunty and grandmother, both of whom were in Hawaiian Studies, Hōkūpaʻa decided that she would major in Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian language when she attended UH Mānoa.

She credits her parents with her desire to get a college education. After graduating from high school, she said, “My mom got a job working for the telephone company—first in the retail store, then in the warehouse, and later as a cable splicer.” Hōkūpaʻa remembers when her mom and stepdad moved from Hilo back to Maui, they found it difficult to find jobs. Despite her stepfather’s work experience, she explained, “He did not meet the minimum qualifications for a job because he did not have a
bachelor’s degree. The phone company was downsizing so my mother decided to retire.”

Seeing her parents struggle to get a job inspired Hōkūpa’a to get a college degree.

At the age of 18, Hōkūpa’a moved out of her father’s home and into the dorms at UH Mānoa. She said, “I received scholarships to pay for my tuition and books and my mom outfitted my dorm with a refrigerator, microwave, and computer.” With a strong background in Hawaiian language, she placed directly into Hawaiian 201. She did a double major in Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian Studies and graduated four years later.

“When I was 22,” she said, “I began working as a lecturer teaching 12 credits in Hawaiian Language while taking a full load as a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree.” At this time, UH Mānoa did not offer a master’s degree in Hawaiian Language or Hawaiian Studies, so Hōkūpa’a had to select another major. She remembers making that decision after a brief discussion with a senior woman professor in Hawaiian Studies. Her decision was also influenced by a wonderful teacher who had written a book about a subject that was of great interest to her. As she reflected on the benefits of a college education, she said, “The University of Hawai‘i provided me with opportunities and helped shape my perspective on Hawaiian culture. It helped me to understand Hawaiian history better. It also taught me that education can help a family to get ahead in life.”

Graduate school brought new challenges. Moving from Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian Studies into a Social Science master’s program was a huge transformation. Hōkūpa’a explained, “Not only was the program extremely rigorous, it was also very White. I was the only new Hawaiian student enrolled in this degree program.” During the first week of the semester, she was unaware that a particular course was required so
she missed the first session. When she attended the class the following week, Hōkūpa’a recalled:

I couldn’t engage in the conversation in the seminar. I was dumbfounded. Everyone seemed so intelligent. The other students had a general background about Marxism and Post-Modernism, but coming from a Hawaiian Studies background, I just had no idea what they were talking about.

While walking to the elevator after class, she remembers telling a classmate that she was unaware of the reading assignment (having missed the first class). Her classmate glared back at her and asked, “Why didn’t you see the professor to get the reading list?” Hōkūpa’a was stunned. She had always been a good student but it never occurred to her to see the professor for the reading list. Throughout the semester, she diligently read nearly 500 pages a week for this particular class. Not having a foundation in theory made the class especially difficult. Looking back on this experience, she said, “The biggest barrier for me was having to deal with people who didn’t understand me and not having the (theoretical) foundation.” Fortunately, Hōkūpa’a wrote an outstanding final paper and got an “A” in the course.

Upon completing her MA degree, Hōkūpa’a was promoted to an instructor position and continued on to her PhD program. Two years before she completed her PhD, she was hired as an acting assistant professor with the stipulation that she must complete her dissertation within two years. She was grateful for this provision because it forced her to complete her dissertation within the first two years in her new position. To focus on her dissertation, Hōkūpa’a knew she had to remove herself from her family and daily activities so she asked her grandmother if she could stay in the house on her family’s property in Kahakuloa. Noting the importance of place, she said, “My topic was about Hawaiians’ sense of place and relationship to the land so I knew I had to be there.” The
house was in poor condition so her ‘ohana helped to paint it, install new vinyl flooring, and make it more livable. With no electricity on the property, she also had to buy a generator. She said, “My mother worked as a cable splicer for the local phone company so she was able to run the telephone cable so I could keep in touch with the family.” Hōkūpa’a spent the next six months writing her dissertation in this beautiful rural setting, with only her dog for company.

One day while seated on the front porch, she recalled, “I was writing a chapter about the senses and how we learn by seeing and feeling through our naʻau (gut).” As I wrote, I ‘heard’ the river change.” Hōkūpa’a sensed that the river was higher. At first she thought she was crazy so she walked down to the river and discovered that it had risen. This experience was validation that she had become more intuned with the natural environment.

Once her dissertation was complete she began the journey toward promotion and tenure. With each promotion, Hōkūpa’a received a higher salary which eventually enabled her to buy a house in Maui. She explained, “After my uncle passed away, my aunt decided to sell her share of a 100-acre parcel in Wailua. I was devastated thinking that one day we might have inherited that property.” Serendipitously, the property directly across the street went up for sale and Hōkūpa’a bought it sight unseen. She remarked, “I could afford to do so because I had a college degree and was working for the university.” Wailua had great sentimental value for her because this was the place where she spent much of her childhood.

Her path to tenure was laid out for her by three strong women mentors. The first woman, Kāhealani, did not actually have tenure but she helped Hōkūpa’a to feel
comfortable and secure as a new faculty member and to understand the tenure process. Hōkūpaʻa explained that Kāhealani “applied for grant money to allow other faculty members to pursue professional development opportunities and present their work at conferences.” She added, “So, I was able to go to conferences because she had secured the money. And she did that because she understood that for tenure purposes, you have to travel and you have to present (your work).” Kāhealani helped Hōkūpaʻa to understand the importance of presenting her scholarly work at regional and national conferences.

The second woman, Moana, was a full professor with strong ties to other faculty members. She introduced Hōkūpaʻa to other professors over lunch who later invited Hōkūpaʻa to present with them at conferences. Hōkūpaʻa said that Moana “helped me with my contract renewal, preparing my curriculum vitae (CV), and formatting my dossier.” She also encouraged Hōkūpaʻa to write her dossier in an Indigenous manner by “telling a story.” Moana also extended her help to other faculty members. Hōkūpaʻa recalls one incident in which Moana helped another faculty member when she found out two weeks before his tenure dossier was due that he had nothing prepared. According to Hōkūpaʻa, “She helped him around the clock for two weeks to pull together his dossier. So, when I went up for tenure, I knew that if I needed anything, I could ask her.”

Her third female mentor, Keala, provided professional development activities for junior Hawaiian faculty and introduced Hōkūpaʻa to publishers. Hōkūpaʻa explained, “Every year, she would have these professional faculty development workshops. Each year the topic is different. Last year, it was about publishing and the year before we talked about what a dossier should look like.” Keala also provided Hōkūpaʻa with a
template for the tenure dossier. These three women mentors provided constructive guidance and support. Similar to hoʻokele who design a detailed sail plan before the voyage commences, these three mentors provided a clear plan to promotion and tenure, steered her in the right direction, and provided her with invaluable guidance and support throughout her journey.

The tension between Hawaiian and Western values emerged as Hōkūpaʻa wrote her dossier for the tenure application. She explained:

Going up for tenure is a great example of the conflict between Hawaiian and Western values because you’re supposed to talk (boast) about yourself. And that is in direct conflict with being Hawaiian and trying to be as haʻahaʻa (humble) as possible.

As a result of this tension, her narrative was quite brief but she supported it with a strong curriculum vitae detailing her teaching, research, publications, and service accomplishments. By the time she applied for tenure, she said, “I had secured a book contract and had already published several articles nationally and internationally.” She had numerous examples of service including serving as department chair and starting the department from scratch—something highly unusual for untenured faculty. Hōkūpaʻa was also quite young at the time relative to other professors in her discipline—and female. She discovered that being young and female can create significant barriers in the academy. For example, when attending meetings outside of her department, she said, “Men, and sometimes women, do not take me very seriously. They kind of wonder who I am, where I am, and why I am. But once they understand the work I do, I feel more respected.”

Hōkūpaʻa admits that in her administrative position as program director, she often resorts to a more Western approach to communication. For example, in responding to more than
a hundred emails each day, she said, “I often dispense with the kaona and metaphoric stuff and get right to the point.”

Reflecting on the tenure process, Hōkūpa’a points out that it tends to favor men and those faculty members in natural sciences. She explained, “While natural science faculty publish regularly with significant assistance from their graduate students, the publishing requirements for Hawaiian Language and Hawaiian Studies faculty are different.” Furthermore, Native Hawaiian faculty in Hawaiian Studies or Hawaiian Language usually do not have the luxury of having graduate students to assist them in doing their research.

From her roots in a rural Native Hawaiian community, Hōkūpa’a has come full circle as a tenured professor whose scholarly work focuses on geographical spaces and places in Hawai‘i and their historical, cultural, and spiritual significance to Native Hawaiians. She credits her kūpuna and mākua for setting her on this path and for modeling traditional Hawaiian beliefs, customs, and practices. She commented, “I had all these role models in my life—my parents, grandparents, my auntie and uncle; they all really shaped my journey.” Now as a mākua, Hōkūpa’a will pass on this ancestral knowledge to her haumāna (students) and ʻōpio (children).
KALEWANUʻU
The cloud firmament

“I am a conduit for our people.”

The Nevada desert sun poured through the windows of Spanish class as the instructor droned on about the upcoming test. Kalewanuʻu began to daydream as she stared at the cactus plants along the windowsill. She longed to be back home in Hawaiʻi, but the courts had removed her from her mother’s custody claiming it was no longer safe because of her mother’s alcoholism. Kalewanuʻu recalled, “After I got taken away from my mother at age 12, I was sent to live with my Auntie in Nevada. It was a totally new social situation. I was an emotional wreck so I couldn’t concentrate on my studies.” She added, “I was experimenting with drinking; it’s what you would expect after such a traumatic experience.” Having failed English the previous quarter, her counselor gave her a choice—Remedial English or Spanish. In Hawaiʻi, Kalewanuʻu had excelled in English. Defiantly, she declared, “Have you seen my reading scores? I am not taking Remedial English. I’ll take Spanish.” Remarkably, Kalewanuʻu never read her Spanish textbook, never studied, or completed a single assignment, yet she scored an “A” on every test. How was this possible? As she described it, “I just sat in class daydreaming, and Spanish just flowed into my brain.” It was effortless.

While her family was musically talented and enjoyed singing and playing instruments, Kalewanuʻu said, “My fingers got stuck in the strings.” Although she came from a family with a talent for sewing, she could barely sew because of clumsy fingers. Kalewanuʻu wondered why she lacked her family’s many talents, yet she could learn Spanish without even trying. She was too young to understand that her incredible capacity to learn languages would prove to be one of the greatest blessings in her life.
Her hōkū name, Kalewanuʻu, refers to the cloud firmament in the heavens and symbolizes her interest in learning more about how kūpuna received messages and knowledge via the clouds. Ancient navigators looked for changes in the clouds to predict weather patterns. A change in wind direction, for example, changes the curve of the clouds. Skillfull wayfinders know they must observe changes in cloud patterns over time.

For Kalewanuʻu, reading the clouds is an important way to gain knowledge about Native Hawaiian culture. As she explained, “Different cultures see things differently. For example, the way that other cultures interpret a fish cloud such as an aʻama or mullet may be different from my graphic information of what I think a fish cloud might look like.” She added that Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous Peoples are “living in different word worlds and in different visual worlds.”

Before Kalewanuʻu was born (in Kailua, Oʻahu), her father had a nervous breakdown so she and her mother moved in with her grandparents in Coconut Grove. She attended school in Kailua from kindergarten through third grade. Growing up in her grandparent’s home, Kalewanuʻu recalled:

Their house was always full. Anybody that my grandparents saw, who needed a place to live and needed care, became part of our family. No matter how poor we were, there was always food on the table; nobody ever starved. And we were very, very poor when we lived in Hawaiʻi.

Kalewanuʻu added that her grandparents were quite resourceful and grew their own food. She said, “I remember chickens and rabbits in the yard that my grandparents used for food.” At the end of her third grade year, she said:

My mother decided to move to California where her favorite sister and her brother lived. My mom and her partner (she was in a lesbian relationship at the time) bought a house but they couldn’t get a house in a White neighborhood because my mom’s quite dark; she’s considered Black in Oakland.
The street on which they lived in Oakland was racially divided. Kalewanu‘u recalled, “One side of the street was White and the other side of the street was Black. We lived on the Black side.” She remembers her mother having to lie to get her into the White school because the Black school was so underfunded.

Her family life was somewhat of a paradox. She said, “My dad had a nervous breakdown before I was born and was never part of my life.” Despite her mother’s problem with alcoholism, Kalewanu‘u said, “I felt completely safe as a young child with my grandparents and my aunts.” She recalled an incident in which she broke her leg at the age of six while climbing a ladder to pick plumeria flowers for her grandparents. She shared:

When I broke my leg, all the adults were gone. It was daytime and my sister who was ten was home. In those days, no one questioned that a ten year old and a six year old should be left home alone; it was completely safe. There were no windows in our house; we had only screens. There was no lock on the front door. Car keys were left on the driver’s side floor.

Kalewanu‘u had broken her femur and was in the hospital for a whole month. When she finally came home, she said, “I was in a body cast that went from my rib cage to my toes. I was in traction for a month and then home in a body cast for a whole month.” She remembers being carried from room to room very lovingly by her aunts and grandparents. Kalewanu‘u said, “I was totally loved. So it was important that I had that grounding of being loved because of how things fell apart later.”

As she reflected on her mother’s battle with alcohol, she said, “My mom was a very sad and angry person because of everything that she had been through in her life. She just took way too many blows for a normal person to bear. And so she became alcoholic.” Kalewanu‘u added, “I grew up in a working class family that did not believe
in the value of a college education.” She spent much of her time living with various aunts in a strong matriarchal family. Surrounded by strong Hawaiian women including her mother, aunts, sister, and grandmother, Kalewanu‘u grew up believing that, “As a woman, there was nothing I could not do.” A feminist while still in high school, she never believed that women were inferior to men.

At the age of 18, Kalewanu‘u joined the army where she was given a language aptitude test. She said, “I received one of the highest scores ever recorded.” She married an army soldier and they moved to the mid-West. Using her G.I. bill, Kalewanu‘u attended college for two years on the mainland but dropped out due to marital problems. Soon after, she went through a divorce. For the next seven years, she sidelined her education and worked for a phone company.

Ten years after graduating from high school, Kalewanu‘u returned to college, first enrolling at Windward Community College to learn Hawaiian, then transferring to the UH Mānoa where she majored in Hawaiian Language. While attending college, she lived with two aunts who often had gatherings with four other sisters, all of whom were widows. Kalewanu‘u remembers being mesmerized as she heard them conversing in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i with a native speaker from Hana. She said, “My aunts didn’t understand why I was studying Hawaiian. They said I would never get a job and suggested I take Japanese to get a good job in a hotel.” But then once they heard her speak Hawaiian, she said “They were so proud of me.”

Upon completing her BA in Hawaiian Language at age 36 (with a 4.0 GPA) she said, “I was asked if I would like to start teaching Hawaiian the following semester as a
lecturer. It was almost like a full time job because I taught 12 credits.” It was then that she realized, “This is why I have the gift of languages—to teach and inspire others.”

Kalewanuʻu knew that she qualified for graduate school, but was in a quandry as to what program to pursue. She wanted to continue learning Hawaiian but she said, “There was no master’s program in Hawaiian language at the time.” She added, “I was so upset because I didn’t know what to do. I just wanted to keep learning Hawaiian but I had no guidance as to where to go.” Perhaps her love of reading led her to pursue a master’s degree in Library Science. As a graduate student, she continued to work as a lecturer teaching Hawaiian language. At the end of her master’s program, she faced the same dilemma upon deciding what to do for her PhD. Through various conversations with teachers and students, she opted for a social science major.

For her dissertation, Kalewanuʻu focused on Native Hawaiian resistance to colonization. She said she found it more interesting to “deconstruct the politics of history in Hawaiʻi from a Hawaiian perspective and from Hawaiian language sources than to do something in public policy.” She could read Hawaiian and was able to read original accounts that contested what was being taught in history classes about the annexation. She said, “I found 550 pages of signatures of Native Hawaiian men and women in Washington, D.C., who protested against annexation.” She made a book out of the signatures and set up a small table on Sovereign Sunday with a fluorescent sign that read, “Petitions against Annexation.” Kalewanuʻu observed, “Many of the Hawaiians who stopped to look at these signatures were shocked and angry that they did not know about this.”
As a recipient of the Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, Kalewanuʻu was privileged to attend an all-expense-paid conference for underrepresented doctoral students at which she learned how to become an academic. Scholars of color presented workshops on how to write a curriculum vitae and how to conduct negotiations. As a lecturer in Hawaiian language for many years, Kalewanuʻu gained first-hand experience of what it was like to work in the academy. Receiving the Fellowship also meant she could focus on writing her dissertation and not have to worry about teaching.

While continuing to write her dissertation, Kalewanuʻu found herself increasingly busy giving talks at various campus events and community organizations regarding the Native Hawaiian protest to annexation. She commented, “Because I had been in the newspaper and I had given talks all over the campus and outside in the community, literally hundreds, if not thousands, of people knew that I was doing this. And they were thrilled with the results.” She completed her first journal article while still working on her PhD. She shared, “My very first article ever published academically was about women’s leadership and the fight against annexation. So, that was cool.”

Her gift to read and write Hawaiian allowed her to uncover the truth about a dark chapter in Hawaiʻi’s history. Furthermore, she realized that her talent for languages allowed her to be a conduit to her people—someone who could speak on behalf of kūpuna whose voices could no longer be heard. “Who is luckier than me?” she exclaimed. “I am a conduit for our people, for our kūpuna.”

Then, a few months before her dissertation defense, she suffered a devastating loss when her mother passed away. Kalewanuʻu was able to travel to California to see her mother before she passed. She said, “Luckily, I was able to see her before she died. I
got to tell her that I love her and we were good. At the time that she passed, we had a
good relationship.” Unfortunately, no one else was able to arrange for a funeral service.
Kalewanu‘u explained, “I had to stay in California for two weeks to get that all done.
Then I came back and immediately started writing again.” After the funeral, she returned
to Hawai‘i where she spread her mother’s ashes in Kailua Bay. Compartmentalizing this
emotional event, Kalewanu‘u focused solely on her dissertation, giving herself no time to
grieve. Many months after completing her PhD, she finally gave herself the space and
time to grieve the loss of her mother, a loss she still feels everyday.

Her dissertation defense was well attended by many Native Hawaiians who were
interested in hearing more about her study on the Native Hawaiian resistance to
annexation. At her defense, Kalewanu‘u thanked those who assisted in her journey
saying, “The completion of my degree seems like a miracle. I know it was brought about
by many hands. I would like to thank all of you who contributed your support; you share
in this accomplishment with me.” Recently, her dissertation chair (who is now a good
friend) shared this comment with her regarding her dissertation defense:

I didn’t know what to do because when it started you were already covered in leis.
I said to another committee member, ‘I’m afraid we have no power here to say if
she passes or fails. The crowd has already decided that she’s passed.’

In fact, there were so many people crammed into the room that when the
committee paused to deliberate, rather than excusing the crowd, Kalewanu‘u said, “My
advisor said it would be easier if the committee just left the room.” As the committee
exited, the voices of joyous Native Hawaiian chanters reverberated across the room.

As she reflected on the journey to the PhD, Kalewanu‘u remarked:

I keep lots of photos and memorabilia because I never thought I would get here.
In high school, I had desire but no hope. My family told me my life would be
about struggles. My grandmother said not to come home because life here is too hard.

Today, Kalewanuʻu teaches courses cross-listed in two departments. She teaches in English and Hawaiian and serves on committees for dissertations written in Hawaiian. As a fair-skinned part-Hawaiian, “Kalewanuʻu “codes haole” because of her speech and mannerisms, having grown up on the continent. As a result, she has not experienced as many barriers as other Native Hawaiians in academe. Her ability to speak English and Hawaiian equally well provides her with permeability in both worlds.

The road to tenure, however, was not an easy path. “Tenured faculty,” she explained, “are expected to get teaching or research awards. Once a faculty member is nominated for a teaching award, she is expected to gather all her teaching evaluations and solicit praise from students.” According to Kalewanuʻu, “The person who solicits the most praise usually wins the award.” As a Native Hawaiian, Kalewanuʻu finds this practice self-serving and antithetical to Hawaiian cultural practices. It makes her feel very uncomfortable. Instead, she recommends starting a new tradition for “teaching awards” wherein a group of faculty nominate a colleague, request recommendations from her students, and then the group puts the dossier together.

Kalewanuʻu points out that the tenure process “privileges rewards, research, publications, and an ability to handle way too much work.” This is particularly true in the first five years in which new faculty members are deeply involved in teaching, research, and writing. She said, “In this department, the expectation is to publish at least one journal article every year and complete a book manuscript that has been accepted and under contract by a publisher by the fifth year.” Of course, the junior faculty member is also expected to advise graduate students and serve on numerous committees. During her
pre-tenure years, Kalewanu‘u said, “I hardly had any days off in the first few years. The minute there was a break, I was writing and researching.”

When she received a book contract, her department chair encouraged her to apply for tenure a year early and the senior faculty agreed. Kalewanu‘u said, “I went to workshops at the Center for Teaching Excellence where they showed me how to compile my dossier.” Graduate students and faculty sent in their letters of support and she was granted tenure.

According to Kalewanu‘u, the tenure process has several shortcomings. First, she said, “It has a built-in tendency to discriminate against women of child-bearing age. Women are at a disadvantage compared to men who don’t have those same pressures to be super mom and super academic.” She pointed out that because the university has no family leave, “The tenure process privileges men.” Second, it privileges those who speak and write in standard English. As an example, she cites her ability to interact well with people of power because she can talk “haole.” She noted, “Having a haole sounding voice really confers a lot of privilege on me and others who have that ability.” However, she added, “A person with a heavy pidgin inflection may have a more difficult time gaining respect as a scholar.” Third, she said, “Tenure favors publishing over political activism and community service.” Kalewanu‘u points out that Hawaiian faculty tend to do a lot of community service which does not weigh as heavily toward tenure. She affirmed, “We feel a sense of kuleana, or responsibility. We have these pressures in the community that others do not experience. It presses on Hawaiian women a lot.”

Kalewanu‘u points out that for tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women (exclusive of “research” or “specialist” faculty), the post-tenure experience becomes
equally challenging given that their numbers are relatively few (14 out of more than 2,000 faculty at UH Mānoa) in relationship to the increasing numbers of students they are expected to serve. She credits her many predecessors who have worked tirelessly to increase the numbers of Native Hawaiian students and programs. She pointed out that many of the departments in Hawai‘inui‘ākea (School of Hawaiian Knowledge) are actively engaged in program building leaving few resources for mentoring junior faculty (many of whom are women). As greater numbers of students enroll at UH Mānoa, she said, “The workload increases for the few tenured Native Hawaiian faculty that are able to advise these students, serve on dissertation committees (as well as promotion and tenure committees), and read Hawaiian dissertations.” She continued saying, “This is because we’re seeing more Native Hawaiian students coming into the university and they’re looking for Native Hawaiian advisors and mentors and that puts additional stress on the few Native Hawaiian professors we have.”

Kalewanu‘u stresses the need for more mentoring of junior Native Hawaiian faculty. She encourages more course releases so that faculty have the time to write and still do the many things expected of them. She said, “Native Hawaiian faculty can benefit from more professional development workshops.” For example, in reviewing contract renewal documents of junior faculty, she points out, “People are not getting the direction they could be getting. It may be that Native Hawaiian faculty are not going to the Center for Teaching Excellence because they feel alienated there.” She reminds Native Hawaiian faculty to seek out professional development and mentoring opportunities saying, “We are in the academy and we have to deal with it. This is where
we decided to be.” Citing Linda Tuhiwai Smith, she added, “It’s our responsibility to figure out how the university works and then work it.”

As a Native Hawaiian educator, Kalewanuʻu observed, “We are always living with our own realities that are different from the empiricist world of the academy in which we have to engage in all the time.” She added, “You should see our students, the people who are just starting to go through their Master’s and PhD. They are so grounded in their language and hula; they want to change things.” Ideally, Kalewanuʻu would like to see a Kanaka University in which ways of learning and notions of time would be very different. She understands that this will take time. Meanwhile, she sees her role in academe as being in the middle of a moʻokūauhau.

Kalewanuʻu explained that moʻo is a succession, therefore moʻokūauhau, which means genealogy, refers to a succession or line of people. She acknowledges her immediate predecessors and professors who nurtured her and helped her get through graduate school. She said, “They spent countless hours helping me. And before them, were people like Mary Pukui and Joseph Poepoe.” Kalewanuʻu pictures herself in the middle of this succession of Native Hawaiians saying, “I’m in the middle of the moʻokūauhau; I’m training undergrads to PhD students. They are becoming teachers. My students are working in immersion schools and in different foundations. So, this succession, or moʻo of people just keeps going on.” Like Kalewanuʻu, these students will one day become teachers of future teachers.

As she considers this succession of educators, Kalewanuʻu reflects back to those days she spent in Spanish class questioning why she had been given such a gift to learn languages. Over the years, as she has magnified her talents, she has come to cherish her
role as a conduit for the Native Hawaiian people, teacher of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, and educator of future Native Hawaiian scholars.

**MAKAʻALAL**
Vigilant; watchful

“In my master’s program, I did not feel Hawaiian enough. In my doctoral program, I did not feel White enough.”

“Have you picked enough pakalana to make a lei?” called out her mother as five-year old Makaʻala plucked the fragrant pakalana blossoms from the vines. “I just need a few more,” beamed Makaʻala as she swished away the honeybees and gathered a few more flowers. Her father was alongside her tending to his garden of pakalana, puakenikeni, bird of paradise, ginger, and many other other sweet-smelling flowers that her mother used to beautify their home and to make lei for friends and family. Soon, with enough blossoms in her basket, Makaʻala eagerly presented them to her mother and then sat and watched her mother lovingly string up a beautiful lei. She recalled, “My mother would made a lei just to give away as an expression of her aloha and compassion for others.” Makaʻala was surrounded by fragrant flowers all her life—in the garden and in her home—flowers that her father had planted and cared for and that her mother used to beautify their home and bless the lives of others. Ever present throughout her life, these flowers served as a constant reminder of her parent’s love and support for her.

Her pseudonym, Makaʻala, means to be aware, vigilant and watchful. “Maka” also means “eyes” in Hawaiian and Makaʻala said people have always commented on her Hawaiian eyes. She feels that vision comes from the spirit and soul. She said, “An important part of what I do professionally and how I live my life relates to the way I
vision the world and my relationships with people.” She added, “Vision is also related to vigilance—being aware of what you are doing and its impact on others.”

As the youngest of five children, Maka‘ala remembers being cared for and spoiled by her ‘ohana. As she explained, “I was always being carried on someone’s shoulder, being put on someone’s bike, or given extra candy during Halloween because I was too small to get my own.” Her mother was a traditional homemaker who cared for the family and the home and her father worked as a mechanic for Pearl Harbor Shipyard. While her mother ensured that everyone was fed and clothed and bills were paid on time, her father took care of all household repairs. Maka‘ala said, “I don’t remember a leaky faucet, running toilet, or shattered window because my father always kept our home in good repair. He never missed a day of work; he was an unbelievable provider.” As she considered those individuals who had the greatest influence on her life, Maka‘ala acknowledged:

I know that who I am today is based on all my ancestors and all those people who have touched my life—koko (blood relation) or not. But, if I had to single out one person, it would be my mother. My mother, who passed away several years ago, was my best friend, best companion, and the best mentor in my life.

Her parents created a wonderful home for their children, but not without problems. Her father’s drinking behavior was a large challenge. He would drink alone or with friends everyday after work. Her father was an alcoholic who “managed life.” She described her father as a smart man, with a wife who adored him, and five healthy children. She said, “My father woke up early every morning to drive me from our home in Waipahu to the bus terminal in Kapālama where Kamehameha School students were shuttled to the campus.” Many years later Maka‘ala recognized that something must have been wrong in his life for him to commit to drinking the way he did. She explained,
“Drinking is a method to avoid something that’s subversive in your life because the pleasure from alcohol is short, but the addiction that occurs is because typically there is a problem that you don’t want to confront.”

Makaʻala later wondered if the sadness her father experienced came in part, from being a Hawaiian man trying to fit into a White world. She learned many years later that her father was actually a quarter German but never admitted it. “This was just something he would not disclose,” she said. She suggested that perhaps Hawaiian men have experienced greater repercussions from colonial oppression than Hawaiian women. “I just don’t think there were as many opportunities available to my dad in terms of access to education and employment,” she said. Although funds were limited, her father was extremely generous in other ways. She recalled, “Whenever someone admired something he had, my dad would give it away. When friends needed his help fixing their car, he would spend all day at their house working on the car.” Unfortunately, his friends paid back the favor with a case of beer. As a result of his drinking, Makaʻala believes her mother grew stronger. “It was my mother,” she said, “who had to hold things together, clean the house, pay the bills, help with homework, and be there for her children.” In retrospect, she said, “Growing up, I was really blessed to have the family that I had.”

In addition to emphasizing the importance of interpersonal relationships in their lives, her parents instilled several values within Makaʻala and her siblings. First, her parents were hoʻomau (steadfast) in their devotion to their family. She said, “There was a consistency to our morning routine with mom cooking breakfast and dad singing along to Ed Kenny songs on the radio.” Her parents provided stability and a sense of security to their children. Second, they emphasized the importance of ‘ike (knowledge/education)
and supported their children’s desire to get a college degree. Third, they both exemplified a love for the ‘aina. As the kids ran around in the yard having fun and getting dirty, her father tended to the heliconia, ginger, and plumeria while her mom harvested the blossoms.

Makaʻala attended public school from kindergarten through 8th grade. She entered Kamehameha Schools in the 9th grade and began a journey of self-discovery. At home, she never thought of herself as having a Hawaiian identity although her dad was Hawaiian and her mom was Japanese, Chinese, and Hawaiian. “There were no labels for what we did; being Hawaiian was just the way we lived,” she explained. For example, her aunt would often call the family together to resolve pilikia (problems). Makaʻala later learned that this process for conflict resolution was called hoʻoponopono.

At Kamehameha Schools she said, “I learned there was a public Hawaiian identity; they began to label Hawaiian ways. I learned that Hawaiians behaved in certain ways and non-Hawaiians behaved in other ways,” a distinction she never noticed before. Kamehameha teachers spoke globally about Hawaiian culture and genealogy. “I learned that it is okay to be Hawaiian; and today, I take great pride in telling people that I graduated from Kamehameha.”

Having a close relationship with her parents and siblings, Makaʻala and her two sisters decided to remain at home and attend college at the UH Mānoa. After obtaining a BA degree in psychology, she said, “I continued my studies at UH Mānoa to earn a master’s degree.” As a graduate student, she participated in a Hawaiian Leadership Program where she learned a new definition of what it meant to be Hawaiian. She recalls an activity in which Hawaiian graduate students were asked if they played an instrument,
chanted, or danced hula. Instructors passed out a questionnaire that asked, “Do you know how to speak Hawaiian, to fish, lay net, build an imu, weave lauhala, or make lei?” Maka‘ala replied, “I couldn’t fill in many of the boxes. I didn’t hula well. I didn’t oli. I wasn’t fluent in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. If that is what it means to be Hawaiian, then I don’t fit it.” Although she identified herself as Hawaiian, she said, “The results of the questionnaire indicated that I was not all that Hawaiian.” As Maka‘ala reflected on this experience, she got teary-eyed and confessed, “This awareness of my Hawaiian identity is news for me. I never really thought about it before because so often in our lives, we don’t take time to reflect on who we are.”

After achieving her master’s degree, Maka‘ala left Hawai‘i to pursue a doctoral degree in California where she experienced another identity crisis. Maka‘ala remarked, “In my master’s program, I did not feel Hawaiian enough. In my doctoral program, I did not feel White enough. I was not accepted as a Hawaiian. I needed to be White. It was not the time to be Hawaiian.” For the next four years, Maka‘ala suppressed her Hawaiian identity. She conducted her research based on Western theories and methodologies while acclimating to Western culture and academic conventions. She recalled, “It wasn’t cool to be anything minority. Being a minority, a Hawaiian woman, didn’t resonate with the way theories and methods were being taught at the time.” She relates this experience to the pōhaku (river stone)—symbolic of strength, adversity, and endurance as it goes through a refining and polishing process. The pōhaku represents many of the struggles she faced in her family and on her journey from the baccalaureate to the doctorate.

With a doctorate degree in hand, she began teaching full-time at a mainland university and imagined that she would make her home there, until her mother called and
told her it was time to come home. This call coincided with a job offer she received from the UH Mānoa as an assistant professor. As the first Native Hawaiian woman to earn a doctorate in her discipline, she acknowledges that she was probably hired because she was a Native Hawaiian woman, but also noted that it was not yet acceptable to be Hawaiian. According to Makaʻala, the subliminal message was, “You filled our quota of minority faculty, but now that you’re here, you’re really not allowed to bloom Hawaiian.” Rather than being able to chart her own course and pursue her own research agenda, she was told “this is the way” to do it in the academy. As she explained, “I was expected to teach certain classes in a particular way and publish in specific journals.” At the time, Makaʻala recalls, “Research was all quantitative, based on statistical data to reach certain findings. There was limited acceptance that other methods may be more appropriate for Hawaiians.” She knew that if she were to take a survey out to Waianae, for example, and base her findings on statistics, that she would probably never be invited back to the community. However, being in a system with prescribed rules, she did what she was told; she followed the recipe for academic success. As one of the few women in her department, she learned to teach, research, and publish according to the pattern established by a dominant Western model.

As a junior professor, Makaʻala followed the template for a tenure dossier set by senior faculty. Similar to the experiences of many Native Hawaiians, however, writing about her contributions and accomplishments made her feel uncomfortable. She noted, “The tenure process privileges those who publish, not those who serve.” For example, she said, “Faculty who get published tend to be more valued by the university than faculty who are excellent teachers and community contributors.” She remarked that
scholarship is vital to tenure and promotion and that larger units typically have more resources to enable their faculty to compete successfully for contracts and grants (e.g., assistance with IRBs). Maka’ala added, “I think we should change the dissertation process to respect all ways of knowing, including knowledge generated from service.”

While gender does not appear to influence the tenure process at UH Mānoa, Maka’ala acknowledged, “There still appears to be a gender bias at the leadership level. Although we’ve had a woman chancellor and president, the leadership of this university is still predominately male.” She is frustrated by the university’s tendency to hire faculty from outside the state, rather than hiring locally. Maka’ala is concerned, for example, that if the university does not do a better job in hiring “home-grown” talent, “our local people with PhDs will move to the mainland.” Now a tenured professor, Maka’ala looks back on the ebbs and flows she experienced along her academic journey. Once she attained tenure, she said, “Now, I can be me.” Having struggled all her life with her Hawaiian identity, she now feels comfortable and proud to say, “I am Hawaiian.” As she ruminates over this internal struggle, tears well up in her eyes as she realizes that the journey has not always been easy as a Native Hawaiian woman in academe. She credits her parents who are the greatest influence in her life for all that she has achieved. “All that I am,” she says, “is because of who they are and what they wanted for me.”

As a Native Hawaiian leader, Maka’ala cites several challenges. First, it is important to be able to move in different worlds since leaders are diverse. She has learned to “speak many languages and adopt various communication styles,” but never in sacrifice of her character. Second, she argues that if the university community really cares about empowering Native Hawaiian women leaders, they must do a better job at
recruiting and retaining them. There must be a targeted effort to educate future
generations of women leaders, recruit them for critical roles, and then provide them with
the resources to be successful. Third, she recognizes that while the number of Native
Hawaiian faculty at UH Mānoa is slowing growing, it is still not at parity. “We need
more Hawaiian faculty to help develop an Indigenous university and a true Hawaiian
place of learning.” She supports the idea of providing more financial assistance to Native
Hawaiian students and argues, “If you lift Hawaiians, you lift everyone.” She advises
future Native Hawaiian faculty to be onipa’a (stand strong) noting that the academy is
still Western, although making strides in its awareness and appreciation of a Hawaiian
place of learning. She encourages new faculty to “stand firm, do what you believe in,
and be who you are.”

Envisioning the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa as a Hawaiian place of learning,
Maka‘ala has several suggestions. First, she said, “We can begin by converting the
names of streets and buildings on campus to Hawaiian names. Second, she envisions a
university whose philosophy is embedded in Hawaiian values and manifested “in the way
we talk, and the way we are.” Third, Maka‘ala said, “I want Hawaiian scholars to know
that they have a home at the University of Hawai‘i; I want them to feel welcomed and
embraced.”

Maka‘ala truly embodies the meaning of her pseudonym as someone with vision
who is watchful, aware, and vigilant. She has learned to “maka‘ala” her family,
department, discipline, community, and university. She continuously asks herself,
“Where is my voice needed? What causes am I actively engaged in and how am I
contributing to the world around me?” She is also maka‘ala on a spiritual level as she seeks spiritual strength and guidance for the challenges that lie ahead.

As she has done throughout her life, Maka‘ala continues to surround herself with beautiful flowers symbolic of her parents’ love for her and the love she now shares with others. Photos and posters of beautiful Hawaiian women, adorned with flowers and lei, grace the walls of her office. As a Native Hawaiian woman and leader, these images serve as a reminder that her leadership style is uniquely characterized with the same aloha and compassion that her mother expressed making floral lei and beautifying their home with colorful blossoms.

MAKALIʻI
Little Eyes or Eyes of the Chief

"I am a wind-resisting ʻaʻaliʻi.
No wind can push me over."

It was nearly sundown as the weary group of activists gathered their tools and gear and carried them back to camp. They had worked all day on the desolate shores of Kahoʻolawe near Hakioawa clearing hiking trails, installing water catchments, and revegetating the island. They camped overnight and left at daybreak when the ocean waves were calmest. Makaliʻi and the others had protested to the bombing of the island by the U.S. military. After years of litigation, the group was officially designated as stewards of the land and allowed access to the island for religious, cultural, educational, and scientific activities. As they made their way back to Maui at dawn the next morning, Makaliʻi could hardly wait for their next visit. She had learned from kūpuna and kuaʻāina (traditional practitioners) that the island was a sacred place dedicated to Kanaloa, the Hawaiian god of the ocean and navigation. That evening they ate and talked story
with a Hawaiian host-family in Wailua. Makaliʻi told the group, “We are like the uku fish of Kahoʻolawe–rebels.” Sleeping in the next room was a little girl. She could hear her aunt and uncle talking with the activists—many of whom would become prominent leaders in the Hawaiian community. Like Makaliʻi, this little girl would grow up to honor her Hawaiian culture and become a professor.

Her hōkū name, Makaliʻi, which means “little eyes” or “eyes of the chief” is the Hawaiian name for the constellation Pleiades, a group of stars that signal the beginning and ending of the four-month long Makahiki season. During the Makahiki, Hawaiians celebrated the harvest; honored Lono, the god of agriculture; and enjoyed cultural festivities. According to Makaliʻi, “The Makahiki season begins with the rising of Makaliʻi. While we are sleeping on the island, Makaliʻi is our Zenith star. It represents a season of peace and agricultural productivity.” As a member of the group dedicated to protect and preserve Kahoʻolawe, Makaliʻi helped to reestablish the annual Makahiki ceremony on the island.

As a child, Makaliʻi lived in Kapālama with her parents and her two sisters. Her father worked as an accountant while her mother provided a comfortable home for the family. Although her father was a proud graduate of Kamehameha Schools, Makaliʻi said, “He promised my mother that she could raise us Catholic.” She explained, “We were raised with Catholic values; we were taught to be kind and generous; to be thoughtful, and not speak unkindly about others; and to be honest, fair, and advocate for justice.” Her parents made it clear that she and her two sisters would attend college. With several generations of teachers in the family, it is no surprise that she was attracted to a career in education. Makaliʻi shared:

188
My grandmother was a schoolteacher. She was very active in politics during her time and was the first woman to register to vote when suffrage was passed. I was drawn to education as a career because of three generations of teachers in my family—my grandmother, my aunts, my cousin, and both of my sisters.

Makali‘i enjoyed spending her summers with her maternal grandparents on Hawai‘i Island. Her grandparents owned a ranch where they raised cows, horses, pigs, and chickens. She explained, “My grandparents had one of those 40-acre homesteads that were sold in the early 1900s. They had dairy cattle that they milked for household use and beef cattle that they sold.” Makali‘i loved to take a ride on their horses through the pastures. They also had lush groves of orange trees, mango, avocado, grapefruit, and ‘ulu.

From her grandparents, she learned to appreciate the ʻāina. Her grandmother told her, “Always value the land; never sell it. Land is what will see you through hard times. As long as you have land, you are not poor. The land will provide for you.” From her Uncle Kūhi, a taro farmer, she learned, “Aloha ʻāina, aloha ke akua, aloha kekāhi i kekāhi,” meaning to love and respect the land, love and honor God, and love one another. As her uncle explained to her, “One who understands and lives by these precepts, embraces the world of Native Hawaiians.” Makali‘i explained that Uncle Kūhi “was very influential in realizing what I wanted to do as a scholar—to help document the kuaʻāina who live in rural communities.” She added, “He spoke ʻŌlelo Hawai‘i and he knew about the moon, tides, and seasons. He shared moʻolelo and told me how important it is to perpetuate the culture.”

With a strong interest in Hawaiian history, Makali‘i decided to attend UH Mānoa. Regarding her decision to major in history, she said:
So often, Hawaiians complained about our land being stolen and felt like they couldn't do anything about it. I felt that the answer to how our land was stolen and what we can do about it lay in our history—not the missionary history, but the history of Native Hawaiians.

Growing up during the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, Makali‘i witnessed racism, poverty, segregation, and the oppression of the Hawaiian people and was appalled to see so much suffering in the world. She observed:

I wanted to do something to change the world and improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. As an academic, I have a role to play to educate our communities and to work with students to give back to their communities.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in education and another in history. During her undergraduate years, she became politically active and protested against the university’s efforts to eliminate a new program on campus. Makali‘i helped organize rallies, community meetings, and a sit-in at Bachman Hall to protest the elimination of the program. The group’s slogan was "Our history, our way." Makali‘i explained:

We had support from students, alumni, labor unions, legislators and communities like the residents evicted from Kalama Valley and Halawa Housing. It was the first time that the local students and community protested. People brought us food, we showed films, and played Hawaiian music.

As a result of these organized efforts, the program was formally established and began offering classes the following year.

Makali‘i worked tirelessly with other faculty in protesting against numerous evictions that were occurring at the time. “I felt that it was a social injustice to evict people without providing them with suitable housing to relocate,” she said. In one example, the State of Hawai‘i evicted the residents from Mokaua Island, a small islet offshore. The State claimed the island was man-made, but according to Makali‘i, “the residents claimed they had been there from the time of (King) Kalakaua, and that they were descendants of the konohiki (land stewards) that served Kalakaua.” As State
officials began clearing the island, they discovered a canoe that dated back to the 1880’s thereby proving the claim made by the residents. The State permitted the residents to return, granted them a 65-year lease, and put in a water line from O’ahu to Mokauea Island. Describing the importance of organized resistance, Makali’i said, “By protesting to a wrongful eviction, the residents were able to return to their homes.”

As a graduate student, Makali’i discovered there was no written record of Hawaiian resistance to the Great Mahele, annexation, or any of the many changes that were forced upon Hawaiians. For her master’s thesis, she focused her efforts on documenting the armed resistance by Native Hawaiians in the 19th century. Her daughter was born while she completed her MA and essentially grew up while Makali’i pursued a doctoral degree.

While still a graduate student working on her master’s degree, she became the Acting Director of the same program she had fought to have permanently established on the UH Mānoa campus. She was the only graduate student heading up a program at the university. In her last year as director, another effort arose to disband the program. Makali’i lamented, “The university did not value the program. Our department was considered the stepchild or bastard of the university.” The newly-formed department lacked the resources to hire full-time faculty. She explained, “If faculty didn’t agree to be hired part-time, we could not have offered the diversity of courses that we did.” As Makali’i reflected on why there was so much resistance against her department, she said, “I think it was racism. People did not recognize the value of diversity pertaining to Native Hawaiian and multi-ethnic groups.” At the time, most university faculty were White. Makali’i pointed out, “Native Hawaiians were highly underrepresented among
the faculty at the time, and we still are.” With considerable support from the community, the program was granted permanent status. It would take another 18 years before it became a full-fledged department.

Makali‘i’s passion for researching Native Hawaiian resistance led her into a doctoral program in Hawaiian and Pacific History where she documented the status of Native Hawaiians during the first 30 years that the U.S. controlled Hawai‘i as a colony. She discovered that Native Hawaiians still constituted large portions of rural communities and found important areas of continuity with respect to Hawaiian culture among Native Hawaiians in rural areas as compared to those who lived in urban areas.

While working diligently on her dissertation, Makali‘i experienced two life changing events. She got divorced and lost her mother—all in the same year. These emotional events made it difficult to concentrate on her research. Makali‘i reflected, “It was especially hard knowing that my mother was disappointed I had not completed the dissertation sooner.” At her mother’s funeral, Makali‘i lovingly placed the first chapter of her dissertation in her mother’s casket.

As she continued to work on her dissertation, numerous community issues pertaining to Kaho‘olawe continued to occupy her time. To escape these distractions and focus on her writing, Makali‘i said, “I would leave my daughter with her dad on weekends and fly to my sister’s home on Kauai to write.” As an Acting Assistant Professor, she was motivated to complete her dissertation within the two year time limit, to be re-classifed as an Assistant Professor.

Hired into a tenure-track position, Makali‘i was eligible to apply for tenure five years later. Along with the usual challenges in any tenure application, her tenure was
threatened because of the political stand she took regarding the construction of a new building on campus. Ironically, many of those who opposed her were Native Hawaiian faculty. With her strong connection to the ‘āina, Makali‘i was adamant about maintaining a particular piece of agricultural land adjacent to the building. Similar to the ‘a‘ali‘i tree of Ka‘u which twists and bends in the worst weather but seldom breaks off or falls over, she stated, “No wind can push me over or blow me down.” She explained:

I was summoned to a meeting with a group of administrators where I was informed that if I continued to protest, it would be difficult for me to get tenure. However, if I just let it go, it would be easier to get tenure.

At the same time, a student assistant filed a letter of complaint against her because of her political position on this issue. Fortunately, the letter never became part of her record and she was granted tenure.

Makali‘i explained, “Tenure is like kalo (taro); it needs deep roots and nourishment to survive. That same kind of nurturing is needed to get tenure.” As a tenured faculty member, Makali‘i acknowledges that the tenure process privileges those who can write well and get their work published in scholarly peer-reviewed journals. She pointed out, “If we lack research and publication, we do not get promoted or tenured.” She observes that for some Native Hawaiian faculty, writing and publishing can be a challenge, particularly as she considers the role of language in producing and maintaining privilege. Describing the dual roles of language, she said, “Language is a marker of class. Your class is manifested in your language of choice. In academia, scholars are expected to pontificate, whereas in Hawaiian society, you are expected to be respectful and communicate in language everyone can understand.” She pointed out that in the Hawaiian language one word can have many layers of meaning. She explained, “In
English, they have a lot of words that mean the same thing, but in Hawaiian you have one word that conveys a lot of different meanings.” She added, “The hardest thing about writing the tenure dossier is having to brag about yourself and premier your work as your own individual achievement.” This is particularly problematic because much of her scholarly work has been in collaboration with colleagues. She said, “You’re expected to claim it as your own and promote yourself.”

Makali‘i cites three central issues for Native Hawaiian women regarding promotion and tenure. The first issue for Native Hawaiian women is being released from teaching and community service to have the time to do research, write, and publish. She remarked, “This is especially true among minority faculty because we provide a lot of support to minority students and to the community. A lot more is expected of minority faculty and women.” While she acknowledges that all faculty work under the same constraints of teaching, research, and community service, she points out that more is expected of minority and women faculty who are expected to work with increasing numbers of Native Hawaiian and other minority students. Second, for Native Hawaiian women with family responsibilities, the challenge to find time for research, writing, and publishing is even greater. As she pointed out, “Women continue to have primary responsibility for childcare and eldercare along with domestic chores.” Third, she admonishes Native Hawaiian faculty to consider expanding their scholarly inquiry beyond Hawai‘i. She noted, “Many disciplines consider Hawai‘i-based research to be too narrow and provincial.” For Native Hawaiian faculty, including those in Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian Language, the challenge is to be offered opportunities to conduct their research outside of the State.
As she welcomes junior Native Hawaiian faculty, Makaliʻi reminds them that “Perseverance and determination can overcome any obstacles.” She encourages new Native Hawaiian faculty to be hoʻomanawanui (patient) and to remain rooted in their culture. Adopting the Hawaiian value to be haʻahaʻa, she continues by saying, “We must not mistake our own accomplishments as indicators of success; the true indicator is the extent to which we have improved the living conditions of others.” Makaliʻi stresses the importance of having tenured Native Hawaiian women working across the disciplines and hopes to see her daughter (who earned a PhD in science) join the ranks of the professoriate.

Like the uku fish of Kahoʻolawe, Makaliʻi is a rebel who refuses to allow anyone or anything push her over or usurp the rights of others. A strong advocate for social justice and Native Hawaiian rights, she has dedicated her life to empowering her students and others with a history of resistance.

MELEMELE
Yellow; golden; healing
Female navigational star in Orion’s Belt

“Every day was a new adventure playing in the bushes.”

It was time for dinner but Melemele did not hear her mother calling her. She recalled, “I was too busy tunneling through the bushes towards my secret fort. My pockets were filled with grasshoppers and butterflies.” Armed with a long stick for a gun and covered in dirt, she imagined herself to be a great hunter roaming through the forest accompanied by her hunting dogs. Today, she was hunting for lions and tigers–tomorrow she would search for buried treasure. “Every day,” she said, “was a new adventure playing in the bushes with my sister and two brothers along with children from the
neighborhood.” These bushes, composed of long canefield grass, were located directly behind her home in a rural island community. Blessed with a curious mind and a vivid imagination, Melemele created many amazing adventures in the bushes, all the while knowing that if she were tired or hungry, she was not far from home.

Melemele said, “I was blessed with two strong, inspirational women in my life—my Hawaiian grandmother and my mother, who was Japanese.” These women would serve as her educational muses. Her grandmother, who spoke fluent Hawaiian, was a devout Mormon and well-loved by people in the community. Melemele recalled, “My grandmother helped me with my math homework everyday after school because I did not like math. She secretly completed the homework before my parents got home.”

Although there were four children in the family, Melemele said, “I always knew that I was Grandma’s punahele (favorite). She was just one of those really old time wonderful kūpuna.” She thought her grandmother would always be there for her. However, at the age of 16, her grandma got sick and passed away. To this day, Melemele carries a picture of her grandmother and thinks of her everyday.

Her mother graduated from high school in the 1940’s and went directly into Queen’s Nursing School. She took a job as a nurse at a neighbor island hospital where she met Melemele’s father and got married. Melemele said, “When I was in the 5th grade, my mother did something amazing—she left us four kids at home with our dad and grandmother and moved to Honolulu to pursue a bachelor’s degree in nursing.” It was 1963 and most women in their community were homemakers; very few worked outside the home. Melemele’s mother explained that she had to earn a bachelor’s degree to keep her job. She attended nursing classes in Honolulu and flew home every weekend to care
for her family. This was part of the muse of her mother. Melemele recalled, “My mother would be racing around the house cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, and helping with homework before flying back to Honolulu Sunday evening.” Although, many people in the community gave her mother a hard time for leaving her children behind to “advance herself,” her father was very supportive. Melemele said, “I took great pride as an elementary school student telling my friends and teachers that my mom was going to college.”

Melemele grew up in an idyllic rural community where people walked or rode bikes everywhere—a small town where everyone knew one another. She noted, “It was a fun time, a safe time to grow up.” Reflecting on her childhood, she said, “I’ve had a blessed life in almost every single way. I’ve had a charmed life. And I really believe that a big part of that is because of my grandmother and my mother.” She described her family as being “very much women-centered” around her mother and grandmother. Both women were easy-going and blessed with a wonderful sense of humor. “I remember their kindness, generosity, and how they were always helping others,” she said.

Unfortunately, the same was not true for her father, a car salesman, who drank with his friends everyday after work. Although he drank every day, Melemele said, “He was never mean. My dad took a hands-off approach when it came to child rearing. He never changed a diaper, never cooked or cleaned, and rarely ever attended a PTA meeting.” But, Melemele noted, “All my friends’ fathers were like that. All the fathers would go out drinking. We did everything with our mothers and would hardly ever see our fathers.”
Melemele always knew she would attend college away from home. She said, “I wanted to go to the mainland, to see new things and have new experiences.” Growing up on a neighbor island, she had visited O‘ahu several times but had only been to the continent once during her junior year. Desiring a “non-Hawai‘i experience, she selected a school in distant upstate New York. “It was a small college located in the mountains,” she said, “that would provide me with the quintessential mainland experiences I wanted like camping and skiing.” Surprisingly, Melemele travelled from Hawai‘i to New York State at the age of 17 all by herself. She recalls, “My mother wanted to accompany me but I insisted on going by myself.” It was another magnificent adventure flying to Honolulu and then making a connection in Los Angeles to New York. Upon her arrival in New York, she took a 4-hour bus ride to the small college town. Arriving two weeks before the semester started, she was the first student in the dorms.

During her freshmen year, Melemele enjoyed many new experiences including camping in the forest and learning to snow ski. Although she had never been around African American people, she quickly made friends with many Black students. She explained, “Part of the reason for this was that I felt as though I did not belong up there and I knew the Black students felt the same way.” She added, “Most of the White students at this particular college came from wealthy East Coast families. They dressed well and drove luxury cars.” Melemele had never been around rich White people. She was not prepared for that experience. She said, “It was a shock for me in a lot of ways.” Although she had dreamed about camping and skiing, she could never have imagined the disparity she saw between White and Black students.
By the end of her first year, she grew homesick and returned home to Hawai‘i where she majored in psychology. She soon grew bored, and headed back to the continent to attend college near the Great Lakes. She said, “I chose this particular school because of their psychology program and because of the social activism taking place on campus.” She became actively involved in the anti-war movement which set in motion a personal and academic trajectory leading to a life of activism. Far different from the small college she first attended with mostly rich White students, she said, “This college boasted over 70,000 diverse students from all over the country.” Melemele loved learning but by her senior year she grew less enamored with psychology which seemed to focus more on the study of the mind and less on people. Longing for more activism, she said, “I went to see a counselor who suggested I switch to social work.” Melemele had never heard of such a major. She continued, “So, I took a heavy load of social work courses and got A’s in every class and I loved it.” All of the things her mother and grandmother had taught her about caring for people and serving one’s community manifested themselves in the social work curriculum. Suddenly, Melemele realized, “This is what I am supposed to do.” Recognizing that this was her calling, she immediately applied for graduate school in social work.

Her parents continued to support her education by paying for graduate school. Melemele remarked, “I loved my social work studies, particularly the practicum which involved working in the community, activism, and advocacy—all those things that I had come to value.” Earning her MSW degree allowed her to get paid for doing the things she loved to do.
As a social worker, she spent a lot of her time counseling people with addictions. Often, her clients would ask her, “Have you ever been abused?” Melemele replied, “That’s not the point,” but secretly felt like an imposter. She grew up in a beautiful home where she was never abused. Although her father drank, he was an excellent provider. He never hit her mother or any of the children. Melemele said, “My dad was a car salesman, so we had a new car every year. There was no sexual abuse in the family, nobody used drugs, and there was no family violence.” She added, “I felt like a fake because I never had any alcohol or drug problems. I didn’t grow up poor. I always had enough food to eat and clothes to wear.”

This tension caused Melemele to question why she chose her particular profession when she had never personally experienced the issues that resonated with her. Years later, working with victims of domestic violence, she said, “I came to realize that I had been called to this kind of work, not because I had personally been abused, but precisely because I had never been hurt by anyone.” As Melemele described it, “It’s not because I have experienced it, it’s because I haven’t that I can help people. I am not damaged myself. It’s the wellness in me that has given me the skills to help people.” This is her gift—a gift that she received from her mother and grandmother who provided a caring and nurturing model for serving others.

After enjoying a 20-year career in social work specializing in domestic violence, AIDS, and community health, Melemele decided to pursue a PhD. She said, “I had always loved learning and I thought earning a PhD would be fun.” But, it was not easy. Melemele made three attempts to earn her doctorate degree. She first enrolled in a doctoral program in Educational Psychology for two years, then switched to Community
Psychology which seemed to have all the right components: activism, psychology, and advocacy. Unfortunately, she said, “I cried everyday because of the heavy emphasis on statistics; I really hated statistics.” Although she had no desire to become an academic, she eventually decided to return to the discipline she truly loved—social work. She remarked, “I worked full-time and attended doctoral classes on a part-time basis.”

While completing her dissertation, she noticed her classmates were busy applying for jobs. Melemele noted, “I was not interested in getting a job in academe, but my advisor pressured me into interviewing with several mainland colleges.” After receiving a job offer in California, she said, “I received a phone call from a friend telling me about a job at the University of Hawai‘i in Social Work.” She knew that Melemele was not planning to return to Hawai‘i but encouraged her to apply anyway. “You have nothing to lose,” her friend said, “just apply.” Melemele applied and was selected for an interview. She recalls, “I was overwhelmed by the warmth and aloha I felt from students and faculty.” She asked herself, “Is this what I am supposed to do?” Before she had time to consider this, the dean offered her the position. “My ancestors must have come to me in the middle of the night,” Melemele said, “because I suddenly switched from ambivalence and disinterest to a strong feeling that I must go home.”

Academia was not quite what she expected. She stated, “I experienced a great deal of conflict between the values of the workplace and my own ethical standards of kindness, service, compassion, and being pono (doing the right thing)—the very things I have lived by.” In preparing her tenure dossier, she encountered three major challenges. The first barrier was boasting about herself. She remarked, “It was very difficult for me to toot my own horn and talk about my accomplishments.” A senior colleague reviewing
her draft said to her, “If you don’t speak about your accomplishments, no one else will. Not even our letters of support will matter if you don’t say exactly what you did.” The second thing she found challenging was to value the many things she had done. She noted, “I refused to include every travel award I received or to reference every conference I attended,” preferring instead to stand on her scholarship and teaching. The third challenge was the political and professional tension that existed between her and the dean. Although he wrote a letter of support for her tenure application, Melemele said, “His statement was very tepid; it lacked enthusiasm.” However, with a solid dossier and strong support from her department, she was granted tenure.

As a tenured professor, Melemele noticed that the tenure process privileges three things: 1) a singular scholarly focus, 2) academic mediocrity, and 3) conformity to academic traditions. First, she pointed out, “Tenure privileges the ability of professors to speak well of themselves and promote their scholarly endeavors as being the most important work in the university.” She added, “It’s the idea that you are a singular scholar, an expert in one thing, and you’re the one person who knows a lot about that one thing.” For example, during her first review, a colleague warned her, “If you’re going to be promoted and get tenure, you’re going to have to focus. You can’t be doing so many different things. You have to focus on one thing.” With 20 years of work experience in domestic violence, AIDS, and community advocacy, Melemele wondered how she could focus on just one thing. Although these social issues are interrelated, she said, “I came to understand that doing many different things is not valued in academe.” Reluctantly, Melemele had to stop her community work and focus on just one area. She reflected, “The tenure process supports that you are able to put together a mo‘olelo showing that
you have value because of that one thing that you do really well.” She continued, “You have to make a case that you are doing it in a very unique way because tenure is showing value to the university, college, department, and to your discipline.”

Second, Melemele noticed the tenure process privileges mediocrity. With excellent teaching evaluations during her first few years at UH Mānoa, she received the Regent’s Teaching Award three years after she was hired. However, she noted, “I was cautioned by other faculty not to peak too early. They actually warned me not to get the highest ratings in my teaching evaluations because that would leave no room for improvement.” Melemele explained, “They were basically telling me not to be such a good teacher so quickly because how will I improve after that?” She admitted, “The tenure process seems to value mediocrity; being somewhat good in what you do, but not that good.”

Third, Melemele observed that the tenure process privileges the Western conventions of the academy. She explained:

Faculty learn to speak, teach, and write in an acceptable manner. They learn to narrow their research interests and focus their singular efforts on getting published in the most esteemed academic journals. Faculty members who prescribe to academic conventions and play by the rules usually get tenure. From Melemele’s perspective, tenure infers that faculty fit into an academic box, meaning that they play by the rules; perform community service, teach, and conduct scholarly work in a prescribed manner; and get published in the most esteemed journals. She explained, “If you don’t prescribe to the formula, you’re going to have a hard time.” However, she observed, “Native Hawaiian women really have to give up a lot, and that’s why a lot of us don’t make it.” She continued, “But, when Hawaiian faculty do not make tenure, they claim we are not smart enough, we are not able to play by the rules, or we’re
hostile. Instead of looking at what’s wrong with the system, we are blamed and victimized.” She claims the central issue for Native Hawaiian faculty is that “there are not enough of us.” Melemele maintains, “UH Mānoa is still a bastion of White colonialism and until Native Hawaiians achieve a critical mass, little will change.” She doubts that the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa can ever truly be a Hawaiian place of learning because it is so deeply rooted in Western conventions.

She describes the “ivory towers” of academe as consisting of many singular towers of scholars doing their individual research in isolation. Melemele elaborated, “Scholars are socialized to behave in this manner. They’re supposed to be in a singular tower.” She added, “People come to you because you are that tower of knowledge, information, experience, and research. They come to you because you know a lot about that one thing.” According to Melemele, tenure is awarded to those faculty who can demonstrate their value to their department, discipline, college, university, and community. She finds the tenure process to be arcane, designed to “mainstream people who have been trained in a conventional and very Western way of education.” Such a process promotes individualism wherein faculty focus on singular versus group publications. But getting tenure is just one hurdle in academe. The next hurdle is becoming a full professor.

According to Melemele, to become a full professor, faculty must continuously demonstrate their value to the university. They also must establish a scholarly reputation on a national and international level. Research is not enough; a large part of this reputation is based on publications. In Melemele’s case, she said, “I had a really good national reputation and nearly $2 million in research money, but that didn’t matter because I hadn’t published all the research I had done.” She added, “You can’t just
publish anywhere. You have to publish in the best journals, and the best is determined by who? Old White guys, basically.”

Despite the many struggles and challenges she has encountered in academe, Melemele enjoys academic life, “There is always something to do.” Similar to the joy of playing in the bushes as a child, she finds there is always something interesting and creative to do. “This is what I do everyday—looking around for new adventures, standpoints, (and) learning—connecting the outdoors and nature with the internal of mind and heart.” Her natural curiosity leads her from one project to the next. Imaginative play as a child has resulted in a highly productive professor who loves her work.

NĀHIKU
Constellation of Seven Stars

“My path has been laid for me. There will be people coming behind me. I need to make sure the path is ready for them.”

Arriving in Kahoʻolawe before dawn, Nāhiku and the others jumped out of their Zodiac and began offloading into the ocean and passing their gear onto the beach. As they passed their belongings from one person to the next in a human chain, they were tossed about by strong, pounding waves. It was Nāhiku’s first trip to Kahoʻolawe and she was in charge of a group of graduate students and faculty participating in an Indigenous governance program. She explained, “I had never been to Kahoʻolawe; I didn’t know where we were going. I was going to be in charge of this and I needed to be open and ready for anything.” Although she knew how to swim, she was not prepared for the ocean’s relentless turbulence. She recalled, “I swallowed so much salt water that day; I had water up my nose. It was crazy.” Nor was she prepared for how students’ anxieties
mirrored the rough ocean waves. Many students felt uncomfortable and questioned why they were there—cold, wet, and tired.

As the poʻo (leader) of the group, Nāhiku knew she had to resolve the pilikia (problem) to help make things hoʻomalie (calm) again. That night, the group discussed some of their concerns. Nāhiku said, “The next morning we got up at four o’clock in the morning and we were out on the bluff by 5 a.m. waiting for sunrise while chanting to “E Ala E,” a chant designed to beckon the sun to rise in the heavens. As the group chanted, the sun peaked out over the eastern horizon illuminating a magnificent cloud formation. This dramatic cloud pattern, consisting of small patches of clouds, continued to widen in a great expanse over the island. Nāhiku observed, “The way the clouds were laid out was like a path for me.” She continued, “As the sun kept getting higher in the sky, it slowly illuminated the path; the path became brighter. It looked like a path paved with stones.”

In the morning sunlight, Nāhiku noticed the waves were much calmer, the whales were out playing, and the students seemed more relaxed.

That morning, the group was tasked with clearing the path that had formerly encircled the island connecting each ahupua’a to the next. Nāhiku explained, “Our task that morning was to work on the alaloa—the path that used to encircle the island. Our job was to pull weeds and cut back all of those keawe trees that obstructed the path.” Nāhiku and the others cut down the keawe trees, pulled weeds, cleared debris from the path, and then lined up pōhaku (stones) to mark the edges of the ala kipapa (a path laid with stones). The path that was once previously obscured was once again visible. The ala kipapa was wide enough for two people to walk comfortably shoulder-to-shoulder. As she walked along the path, Nāhiku acknowledged those who first created the ala kipapa. She
affirmed, “The paths we are on were laid by other people, other generations who cut and laid the path for us. It’s important to acknowledge the labor that went in to making that path possible.” One of the graduate students in the group described the path as a kuamo‘o, which can mean backbone, trail, or path. Nāhiku explained that “kua” refers to the backbone that connects body parts and holds a person upright, and “mo‘o” refers to a succession or series as in one’s genealogical line. In other words, she said, “Kuamo‘o represents the pathway and connection to our ancestors and to future generations.” As she reflected on this connection, Nāhiku added, “I feel a great sense of kuleana to make sure the path remains clear for future generations.” Her experiences in Kaho‘olawe helped her to see that she has a particular path to follow—a path intended for her by her kūpuna (elders and ancestors).

For her hōkū name, she selected “Nāhiku,” meaning “seven” to honor her parents who had seven children. Nāhiku is also the Hawaiian name for the Big Dipper constellation which points to the North Star—an important navigational star used by ancient voyagers. The Nāhiku constellation was instrumental in helping voyagers find their way because it illuminates a true north direction. In the same way that this constellation points the way to navigators, this hōkū name also indicates the path or direction that Nāhiku will take in her life.

As she considers those who have guided her path, two key family members come to mind: her father and grandmother. Her entire family revolved around her dad. “He had this huge personality and people were just drawn to him,” she said. Her father graduated with a degree in education from a Hawai‘i college and held a teaching certificate. Unfortunately, in the early 1970s, Nāhiku noted, “They really weren’t hiring
Hawaiians in the public schools here.” So, he moved his family to the mainland where he
got a job teaching on a Native Nation’s reservation. The family later moved to a
community of Polynesians in a nearby state who attended the same church. These
families had all migrated from O‘ahu where they had attended the same college. Nāhiku
said, “I grew up in this unusual community—a nucleus of Polynesians (Hawaiians,
Tahitians, Samoans, and Maori) in an otherwise White religious community.”

Her father taught third and fourth grade throughout most of his entire career. At
the end of his career, he taught sixth grade. His family joked with him saying, “It took
you 25 years, but you finally graduated to the sixth grade!” Nāhiku enjoyed helping her
dad set up his class at the beginning of each year and remembers how much his students
loved him. She fondly recalls many adults walking up to him saying, “I had you in third
grade; you changed my life.” As a Native Hawaiian teacher, her father felt it was
important for students of color to have a role model, so he often requested that these
students be assigned to his class. Tears well up in her eyes as Nāhiku speaks of his
passing two years ago after a long illness. Unbenownst to her father, he laid out a path
that Nāhiku would follow in her professional life.

The second major figure in her life was her paternal grandmother, Tūtū. After
retiring from hotel housekeeping, her grandmother and grandfather moved in with
Nāhiku’s family on the continent. Tūtū shared many stores with Nāhiku about growing
up in Maui—stories that helped Nāhiku develop her consciousness as a Native Hawaiian.
Nāhiku came to understand the many challenges her grandmother faced as a Native
Hawaiian women.
Despite the fact that her father was an elementary school teacher, her family did not emphasize higher education. Nāhiku said, “I was never on a college track in high school. In fact, I thought about going to beauty school.” She added, “I knew my parents couldn’t afford to send me to college. If I was going to attend college, I would have to figure out a way to pay for it; but I didn’t know how.” After graduating from high school in the late 1980s, she moved to St. Louis to work as a nanny. She met another young woman, Sarah, who was also working as a nanny to save money for college. Sarah told Nāhiku, “I am going to college and this is how you do it.” She taught Nāhiku how to apply to college and for financial aid. One year later, the two friends got an apartment together and began attending classes at a university in Nāhiku’s home state. Nāhiku majored in Women Studies with a minor in Sociology. She recalled, “Reading the works of feminist writers, particularly women of color, opened my mind and gave me a new language to understand my experiences as a fair-skinned Native Hawaiian woman.” During this time, she often took a 30-minute drive to visit her Tūtū who continued to help her develop her Native Hawaiian identity.

As an undergraduate, Nāhiku got involved in campus politics and served on a Women Studies student advisory committee. The committee was tasked with making recommendations as to which affiliate faculty should be teaching core classes that were cross-listed in Women Studies because certain teachers consistently received low evaluations. Being naïve to campus politics, Nāhiku could never have imagined how the issue exploded to the point where she and the other committee members were being threatened with expulsion. Faculty members accused the student advisory committee with threatening their academic freedom. A special meeting was convened which lasted
all afternoon. Nāhiku recalled, “I didn’t understand the politics involved. I had never been in that situation before. It was just devastating to be in that meeting.”

During a break from the meeting, one of her professors approached her in the hallway and said, “You know, to be a feminist in the academy, you’re going to have to have tits of steel.” This comment made a lasting impression on Nāhiku who added, “It’s not just about being a feminist in the academy. You need tits of steel to do innovative work and push back against the colonial, patriarchal apparatus because people are going to push back against you.” Sometime later, Nāhiku purchased a postcard with a picture of a padded metallic bra with a caption that reads, “She developed slowly but learned how to stuff her bra so that both sides matched.” This illustration reminds her that, like many Native Hawaiian women, she often feels like an imposter in the academy. As she explained, “I sometimes feel I have to pad things to appear on par with non-Hawaiian faculty.”

After receiving her baccalaureate, Nāhiku had no plans to attend graduate school; she was going to get a job. She said, “After my undergraduate degree, I was planning to take time off so I didn’t apply to any master’s programs. I didn’t think of myself as an academic. I didn’t think that I had a career in the academy.” Her mentor, Janis, invited her to present an undergraduate paper at a sociology conference. While at the conference, she and Janis had dinner with a group of women. A month later, Nāhiku received a call from one of these women. She encouraged Nāhiku to apply to a master’s program at a historically Black college and offered her a graduate assistant fellowship. Nāhiku commented, “Janis is just a perfect mentor because she understands that is how things happen. You bring students in to the academy and show them how to present and
network at conferences. You set all those things up and good things happen.” As if her kūpuna were guiding her along this path saying, “Follow this star,” Nāhiku started her master’s program three months later.

While her undergraduate program allowed her to gain a Native Hawaiian consciousness, her master’s program gave her a new perspective into the intersectionality of gender, race, and class. She also learned how to become an academic. Nāhiku commented, “In the master’s program, I learned how to become an academic including how to apply to conferences, write and publish articles, and do peer mentoring.” She observed two inspirational mentors who showed, by example, how to mentor graduate students and junior faculty. It was at this point in her life that she said, “I decided to get a PhD and become a professor.” While still in her master’s program, Janis—who by now had become a good friend—invited Nāhiku to have lunch with a group of doctoral students from the mid-West. Nāhiku was so impressed with this group of graduate students and the work they were doing that she moved to the mid-West, a decade after graduating from high school, to enroll in the doctoral program.

As she contemplated her dissertation topic, she reflected on how she grew up on the continent as an “off-island” Hawaiian. As a child, she was surrounded by a religious community of Polynesian families who shared food and music on Sunday afternoons at her home. These gatherings became her genesis of what it meant to be Hawaiian. Curious about the way Polynesians were represented in popular culture, Nāhiku said, “I was thinking about doing a critical history of tourism in Hawai‘i for my dissertation.” This was the path she had chosen—until she went to another conference.
Nāhiku attended a conference in Santa Cruz that focused on Native Pacific cultural studies and identity and Pacific Islanders in the Diaspora. Among the speakers that day was a Native Pacific Islander professor from a small liberal arts college on the East Coast and a Native Hawaiian professor from a university in the Pacific. Nāhiku said, “I connected to them personally and professionally,” and suddenly her direction shifted. As if being led by her father and Tūtū along a different path, following a different star, Nāhiku changed her dissertation topic to the migration of religious Polynesians from O‘ahu to the continent—essentially sharing her father’s story.

After collecting her data, she received a Ford Foundation Dissertation Writing Grant which allowed her to move home to Hawai‘i and continue writing her dissertation. Her decision to move home, thirty years after her family left the islands, turned out to be a huliau (major turning point) in her life. Shortly after arriving in Hawai‘i, Nāhiku said, “I found out I was pregnant. A few days later, my Tūtū passed away (on the continent).” Dealing with two emotionally-charged events while writing her dissertation felt overwhelming. Reflecting on this experience, Nāhiku said, “The academy provided me with a pathway to return home to Hawai‘i. Tūtū’s passing coincided with me coming home. With her passing, Tūtū could now be with me.” Her grandmother could now continue guiding Nāhiku along her ala kipapa.

Traveling along this pathway was not always smooth or easy. It took Nāhiku eight years to get her PhD. While writing her dissertation, she got married and gave birth to a son. Although she was also taking an intensive Hawaiian Language course at the time, her husband encouraged her to buckle down and finish her dissertation or she would
never get it done. When the fellowship ended, Nāhiku took a job as a lecturer. She explained:

I got a job teaching Women’s Studies as a lecturer. That’s how I paid for that last year. They gave me an office upstairs; it was a closet. I would teach two classes and then spend as many hours as I could—I just didn’t leave that room—writing my dissertation.

During this time she joined a dissertation writing group with a few other lecturers who were also trying to complete their dissertations. Nāhiku noted, “We read each other’s work, provided feedback, and kept one another on track.” She was motivated to complete her dissertation so that she could apply for a full-time position at UH Mānoa. She began her new position shortly after receiving her PhD.

As a junior faculty member, Nāhiku quickly figured out that she would need to publish one article every year and secure a book contract by the end of her fifth year to get tenure. She received a post-doctoral fellowship to turn her dissertation into a book. That same year, her second child was born. While writing the revisions to her manuscript, her father passed away. Despite her tremendous grief and the delay of her book, she was granted tenure.

That summer, she attended a conference in Victoria, British Columbia. She had just lost her father and was still reeling in grief. “It was just so hard,” she said. Recognizing her sorrow, a First Nations tribal elder presented her with a cedar rose and told her, “It’s going to be okay. Your dad loves you and your family will always be with you.” The cedar rose was a hōʻailona for Nāhiku. First Nations people use cedar to make hats and baskets. They also use cedar in their healing ceremonies. Nāhiku said, “Cedar trees grow tall and strong and can withstand the worst weather. When transformed into something as fragile as a rose, cedar becomes delicate and malleable and
requires care.” Just as the cedar rose needs care and attention, she points out that Native Hawaiian women faculty need to continuously care for and support one another.

As a tenured faculty member, Nāhiku described five barriers to her growth as a scholar and professor. First, she said, “Not having a family leave plan (at the university) is a major barrier for women of child-bearing age.” She explained, “At UH Mānoa, women faculty must take vacation, sick leave, or leave without pay to care for newborns.” On a personal note she added, “I am the primary breadwinner in our family; my husband works part-time. When we had our second child, I didn’t have enough medical leave to take off so I applied for a post-doc.”

Second, Nāhiku said, “There is a lack of funding for faculty to attend various conferences where they can network with prospective publishers to promote their books.” She added, “Janis (her mentor) hooked me up early on with a publishing press that ended up printing my book.” She cited Hawaiʻi’s distant location from major publishing houses as another problem for faculty seeking a book contract.

Third, Nāhiku described tokenism as a prevalent barrier. She explained, “Native Hawaiians are often asked to serve on a variety of department and university committees to fulfill the need for Native Hawaiian representation.” With a relatively small proportion of Native Hawaiian faculty on campus, this places an additional burden on those who may already be participating on Native Hawaiian advisory councils. “We’re all pulled in a thousand different directions,” she said.

Fourth, Nāhiku mentioned the lack of a consistent and comprehensive professional development program for Native Hawaiian faculty as another barrier. While she applauds the efforts of the dean of Hawaiʻinuiākea (School of Hawaiian Knowledge)
to provide professional development workshops for junior Native Hawaiian faculty, she said, “We need to do more on a campus level.”

Finally, Nāhiku finds it frustrating having to justify a Native Hawaiian perspective to her scholarly work. Among non-Hawaiian faculty, she observed, “They have a presumption that because we’re Hawaiian, we can’t have a comparative critical lens. They claim we are being too Hawaiian.” She continued, “This is a supportive department and we still have to justify our position.” She wonders how other Native Hawaiian faculty manage in less supportive departments.

As Nāhiku applied for promotion and tenure, she learned about the process through tenured colleagues and mentors and a well-established network outside of the university. For example, one of her colleagues took the time to review her contract renewal and pointed out what she needed to do for the following year. He also reminded her to explain to her readers that her articles were published in flagship journals in her discipline demonstrating her contribution to her subfield. She also took advantage of professional development workshops on campus focusing on writing documents for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure. Although she found it uncomfortable having to sing her own praises in the dossier, she said, “I got over it.” As Nāhiku described, “It doesn’t come easy. It doesn’t come natural. But, it’s what you have to do, so that’s what you do.” She found her department chair to be somewhat less supportive as he was pressuring her to apply before she had her book contract in hand.

As a Native Hawaiian scholar dedicated to engaged community participatory research, Nāhiku finds the tenure process still privileges those who publish over those who teach and serve. “Although innovative teaching is starting to matter a little more,”
she said, “that’s not going to get you tenure. It’s the research; it’s the writing.” She lamented that tenure still privileges men with partners who assume childcare and domestic responsibilities, and single people who do not have the same responsibilities as those with families. Unlike many married men, who arrive home to enjoy dinner with their partners and children, Nāhiku said, “When I walk through the door, I am no longer a professor; I am Mommy to three young children.” With that title comes preparing dinner, helping the children with homework, supervising bath time, doing laundry, and cleaning the house—things with which many of her male colleagues are unfamiliar.

Nāhiku recommends several things the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa can do to support Native Hawaiian women faculty. First, she suggests that the university provide a family leave plan and access to affordable childcare. Second, she said, “I would like to see more university-sponsored professional development activities targeted to support Native Hawaiians.” Third, in order for the university to become an indigenous serving institution, she urged, “We need more Native Hawaiians at all levels.” She maintains there is still too much racism on campus as manifested in the university’s tendency to hire non-Hawaiian faculty from outside the state. Fourth, Nāhiku said, “I would like to see a Native Hawaiian leadership training program aimed at helping Native Hawaiian faculty fill administrative positions including department chairs and deans.” Fifth, she cited the need for more mentoring on grant writing to help Native Hawaiian faculty develop their programs, manage budgets, and build capacity in their subfields. She stated:

We also need more mentoring on how to get grants so that we can do program development. Training to help us build our capacity as Native Hawaiians would be super so that when it’s our turn to step up, we can do so effectively.
Although Native Hawaiians continue to fill the pipeline from BA to PhD, she added, “We’re still missing the link in the pipeline from faculty to administration.”

Looking back at her experience on Kaho‘olawe, Nāhiku said, “Just as the chant, E Ala E, commands the sun to rise, it is also a command to follow the path that is intended for you.” She explained that we each have a choice about following our intended path:

It’s important to acknowledge that other people laid the paths we are on. My path has been laid for me. I cannot be complacent about it. There will be people coming behind me. I need to make sure the path is ready for them.

Nāhiku acknowledged that her father, Tūtū, and other kūpuna have been instrumental in laying out her path. She is also keenly aware that she does not walk this path alone; her kūpuna are always by her side providing her with guidance, wisdom, and protection.

**PI‘IKEA**

“To become light, as the day.”

“We will never settle for less.”

Today was 11-year-old Pi‘ikea’s turn to demonstrate her skills. In the darkness of early morning, she and her mother proceeded into the tide pools on the west side of the island. Her mother had taught each one of her children the process of catching ‘ōhua liko. Her mother explained, “The ‘ōhua are baby manini. Before the sun comes out they’re transparent. You have to catch them before the sun rises because the moment the sun hits them, they turn color.” Her mother was careful to teach Pi‘ikea the importance of catching ‘ōhua in season and to memorize the tides and every part of the tide pool. Pi‘ikea was confident that she had memorized everything she needed to know. She rattled off a list of things necessary to catch ‘ōhua liko. “That’s good, but you’re missing
something,” her mother said. Pi‘ikea insisted she had remembered everything. Her mother persisted, “You’re still missing something…something important. Look.”

As the sun began to rise, Pi‘ikea saw her shimmering reflection on the water. “All I see is my reflection,” she said. “Exactly,” her mother replied. “That’s what you’ve forgotten. You are part of the process of remembering—part of the learning. Instead of reciting a checklist, imagine yourself at the bottom of this tide pool, down there with the string fish, looking up. Now describe what you see.” Suddenly, instead of reading the ‘list’ her brain had memorized, Pi‘ikea’s mind moved her beyond the boney limits of her cranium, into the surging sea filling the tide pools, down to where the string fish spread its white tentacles on the floor of the tide pool. As she sat among coral next to the string fish on the soft, slippery, limu-covered floor, looking all about her, the two-dimensional list in her head was gone. In its place was a three-dimensional tide pool that her empathic imagination had placed within her. She had become part of the tide pool, as naturally as the teeming sea life within it. She saw the tide pool through the mind and eyes of her teacher—her mother. She effortlessly described the pool with a breadth and depth that amazed. She thought, “How did I do this?” That morning, Pi‘ikea learned a valuable, life-long lesson—the importance of empathically immersing oneself into any learning experience.

Her hōkū name, Pi‘ikea, which means “to become light, as the day,” refers to the shimmering morning sunlight on the tide pools. This particular star rises in the house of ‘Āina (land)—something of great importance to Pi‘ikea’s family and all Native Hawaiians. Pi‘ikea was the middle child of a large family. This was an ordinal ranking that she benefited from because as she describes it, “I was indulged in love and adored by my
older siblings and parents. I was respected, admired, and revered by my younger siblings whom I was expected to take care of and protect.” Twice, before she was six months old, Pi’ikea’s parents nearly lost her. She was anoxic at birth from her umbilical cord wrapped around her neck. At six months, she nearly drowned after she had moved over her crib padding, slipping through the bars of her crib into her diaper pail. By the time her mother (who was tending to her other children) found her, she was blue and unresponsive. Her father resuscitated her. Pi‘ikea believes this explained why her parents always felt she was special.

As a little girl, Pi‘ikea possessed an excellent memory. One of her favorite things to do was to stand next to her dad while he was driving (before seat belt laws). Her father would say, “OK, navigator. Tell me where to go.” Four-year old Pi‘ikea would then provide specific directions to get to their destination. As Pi‘ikea reflected on this experience, she said, “I think children learn what parents model for them because even at that very young age, my father took me seriously.” Later in life, she would credit her leadership skills, particularly when working with men who were senior to her in age and experience, to these early experiences with her dad. “Because my father took me seriously as a child growing up, I’ve never been intimidated about setting a course and interacting with men or women,” noted Pi‘ikea.

Before starting school, Pi‘ikea had already learned to read by learning beside her older siblings as their mother helped them with their homework and writing the alphabet. Her parents read the newspaper to their children every morning. At night, her mother read the children stories from the Bible and from their favorite books. After attending kindergarten in a rural neighbor island community, her family moved to O‘ahu for five
years. While attending an elementary school in Honolulu, she set and met a goal to read every book in the school library. She developed an interest in science at a young age and by the time she was eight, she was role-playing the lives of famous scientists for her siblings and parents. Piʻikea shared, “I would role-play the character because that’s how I would teach them what I was reading about.” After reading about Louis Pasteur, she asked her father if he could get some milk from a cow so that she could pasteurize it using Pasteur’s technique. Her father awoke at 3:30 in the morning, before going to work, to get some milk from his friend’s cow. As her mother looked on, Piʻikea performed the pasteurization process while the rest of the family was still sleeping. Then she went to bed until it was time for breakfast. Many years later, Piʻikea learned that her mother, out of concern for her family’s health but not wanting to discredit Piʻikea’s experiment, had secretly switched the newly pasteurized milk with store-bought milk. This occurred at a time when people contracted tuberculosis from drinking unpasteurized milk. As usual, her mother and father provided her with unwavering support for her “experiments”.

On another occasion while role playing Madame Curie, Piʻikea enlisted the help of her siblings to collect rocks so that she could perform Madame Curie’s radium experiment. In those days, clocks used radium to light up the numbers at night. Piʻikea still remembers her father asking her mother, “What happened to the numbers on the clock? I can’t read any numbers on the clock,” because she had scraped all of the numbers off to get the radium to make her rocks glow. Intrigued by her intellectual curiosity, rather than scolding Piʻikea, they encouraged her scientific inquiry.

As a child, Piʻikea learned Hawaiian values from her parents and kūpuna. Four particular values permeate every aspect of her life: aloha, lōkahi, ʻohana, and pono. She
defines aloha as the “ability to anticipate what someone needs and to give without any expectation of return.” She explained, “Our ancestors were voyagers. When you’re in the middle of the largest ocean in the world, you don’t have time to ask questions. You have to anticipate. You learn by doing.” She extends her understanding of lōkahi (meaning balance and harmony) to involve thinking about the needs of the individual, balanced by the needs of the group or family. For example, in her role as an administrator she encourages people to find the best way to work together and with their environment.

Her definition of ʻohana goes beyond the nuclear, extended, or generational family to encompass a powerful tradition of family prayer—a tradition passed down from her great-grandfather. Piʻikea described ʻohana as “a ritual that we learned from the time we were little children. It’s like a prayer circle.” Piʻikea’s mother, who served as the haku (spiritual leader) of the family, gave each child a “memory verse” from the bible. This verse helped to guide and define the unfolding character and behavior of each child. Every day, following an opening prayer, the family performed ʻohana by taking turns reciting their memory verse after which the family, guided by Piʻikea’s mother, would celebrate family accomplishments, resolve any family disputes, or share the family’s oral history. Reflecting on this family tradition, Piʻikea said, “It’s a terrific way of gathering the family. We did that throughout our lives with our mother.”

Finally, she said, “All my life I had been taught the concept of pono—how as a leader and a child with an aliʻi heritage, everything you did as a leader required that you strive to serve your people.” She further explained that pono requires a “balance between
the tenants of Lono—peace, healing, harvest, and bounty balanced by the tenants of Kū—to be unafraid to fight when you have to for things you believe in.”

After graduating from high school in a rural Hawaiian community, Piʻikea went directly to college where she majored in science. Upon receiving her bachelor’s degree, she was selected to participate in a one-year, post-baccalaureate program designed to prepare minorities as well as educationally and economically disadvantaged students for the rigor of medical school. The program also provided continuous tutoring throughout medical school. While rote memory, as a learning technique, served her well during her baccalaureate program, Piʻikea realized that her medical courses would require a “comprehension and synthesis and a different way of remembering things.”

The dean of the medical school frequently met with students to see how they were doing. During one such visit, Piʻikea told him she was struggling with molecular biology. The dean said, “You know, rote memory just doesn’t do it anymore.” He then asked Piʻikea, “How did you learn as a child? How did your parents teach you? Is the Hawaiian way of learning different from the White way of learning?” Piʻikea replied, “Yes, it is.” She then shared the story of how her mother taught her to catch ōhua liko in the tide pools. The dean gave her permission, and more importantly his support and authority, for her to learn the way she had been taught at home. Sometime later, while trying to memorize the phospholipid and cellular membrane, she applied the way of learning she had been taught by her mother catching ōhua liko. She imagined herself riding on the molecules right into the cycoplastic reticulum and the mitochondria all the way to the nucleus, and learning and remembering became effortless. By immersing
herself into the topic, she became part of the learning process and was soon earning “A’s” in her classes.

Pi‘ikea’s medical school professors, who were of both genders and many races, took great pride in advancing minority students. She said, “My professors saw it as their responsibility to make sure I succeeded in medical school.” Many of her professors were from working-class families which Pi‘ikea believes may be a reason they were so empathetic with minority and disadvantaged students. Surprisingly, the challenges in medical school did not come from the professors, many of whom were White; they came from other minority students who had not been selected for the one-year, “pre-med” program. Although many of them were graduates of prestigious private high schools, Pi‘ikea explained, “They were envious and resentful of the program resources and special mentoring we received.” To build a bridge with her fellow students, Pi‘ikea explained to them that she did not have the same level of academic preparation and that she was basically catching up to them. As she mastered the material, despite the heavy demands of medical school, Pi‘ikea took the time to share what she learned from her tutoring sessions with fellow students who were struggling academically and did not have access to the tutoring resources.

During her summer break from medical school, Pi‘ikea returned home to teach Vacation Bible School. One day she took her class on a field trip to the ruins of their church that had been built in the 19th century and later destroyed by an earthquake in the 1950s. When a boy in her class inquired about the background of the church, Pi‘ikea realized she knew nothing about its history. She explained, “During my second year of medical school I started doing research on the church at the Mission House Archives and
Bishop Museum.” She learned that her great-grandfather had served as the lead deacon in the church and continued to affirm that if the congregation had faith, then God would help them find a way to restore the church. Despite receiving a four-year scholarship for medical school, at the end of her second year, at the age of 24, she requested a one-year leave of absence to restore this Hawaiian church which had been a landmark in the community. Piʻikea explained:

I was raised in a deeply spiritual home. So, for me it was a calling. The church was the embodiment of the Hawaiian people there. We had to restore it because in doing so we would restore a very significant part of our history and of ourselves.

For the next year, Piʻikea met with ministers and contractors to find a way to raise funds to rebuild the church. She became quite discouraged when the ministers and architects told her it could not be done. One day she got a phone call from her seven-year old cousin. He said, “I had a dream and we have to go to the church.” Piʻikea knew that dreams can be symbolic or prophetic so she agreed to meet her cousin and his mother at the church. When she arrived, her cousin told her not to be discouraged because there was a message for her in the church. Piʻikea took him by the hand and walked into the ruins. Sitting on the pulpit was a white pueo (owl). The pueo circled three times and flew out leaving Piʻikea with “chicken skin.” Piʻikea recognized the pueo as a hōʻailona from her ʻaumākua (spiritual guardian). Her cousin eagerly inquired, “Did you get the message?” Piʻikea responded, “Yes, it will be all right.”

A few days later she learned of a special restorative technique used to repair structural damage. She and a key member of the restoration project contacted a structural engineer who provided her with a reasonable estimate and completed the work of restoring the church. Reflecting on this experience and her own spiritual growth in the
process, Pi‘ikea said, “That was one of the great things in my life that shaped me as a person.”

Not surprisingly, she received a lot of pressure to join the ministry. Her mother told her two things: “Nothing would make me happier than to see you join the ministry,” followed by:

You must finish your training first, and then you can consider the ministry. You must finish this for our people because too many Hawaiians start things and don’t finish. They don’t realize that they make it harder for those Hawaiians that will follow.

Pi‘ikea gently protested, “Ma, I’m so tired of having to prove myself.” Her mother looked into her daughter’s eyes and said, “You’re a leader, so be one.” At that moment, Pi‘ikea realized that her mother had consciously raised her to be a leader all her life.

Clearly, the most significant and influential person in her life was her mother, a self-sufficient woman, coffee farmer, and homemaker who spoke Hawaiian as her first language. Even while living in Honolulu for a few years, her mother maintained a small farm with ducks and chickens. Upon returning to their home in a rural neighbor island community, she and her children picked coffee for farmers and saved their money for three years to purchase a farming lease. Her mother called this property her “paradise on earth” and taught her children that as long as they were connected to the ʻāina from which their ancestors came, that all would be well with them. Pi‘ikea recalled, “My family grew coffee, macadamia nuts, taro, and avocados and planted lauhala trees for weaving.” They raised several cows, chickens, and ducks for eating and often went fishing. In fact, a family day at the beach did not involve sodas or treats from the store. Instead, her mother taught them to harvest their own food from the ocean. The children grew up
knowing how to catch, clean, and cook fish. Piʻikea noted, “We would catch the fish, clean it, take it home and prepare it; some raw, but usually pulehu (smoked).” Her mother also reminded the children to harvest and cook only what they needed.

Piʻikea remembers being continuously amazed at her mother’s skills. On one particular day, Piʻikea watched her mother catching crab on the beach with a spear in each hand. Her mother, who was probably 29 years old at the time, carefully perched herself on the jagged rocks along the beach, keeping a close eye on the waves, as she skillfully speared ʻaʻama crab. Piʻikea recalled, “I realized that my mother had been born in this place and had learned these skills. It was amazing to me that my mother had this entire skill set that I was not aware of.” Similar to her ancestors, these skills enabled her to feed herself and her family and maintain a subsistence style of living.

The second most influential person in her life was her great-grandfather. It was through him that the family learned their oral history. Her great-grandfather remembers singing and chanting, while still a young man, for Princess Kaiʻulani when she became ill and had to be transported from Kamuela to Kawaihae to catch a ship back to Honolulu. Upon his passing at age 97, Piʻikea remembers the kanikau (funeral dirge) where women dressed in black, chanted and wailed for her great-grandfather for three days and nights. They chanted his life story. Through these chants, Piʻikea learned that he was a descendent of Kekūhaupiʻo, the beloved warrior of King Kamehameha.

Unlike other Native Hawaiian women who experienced racism and sexism during their baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate programs, Piʻikea affirmed that each one of her professors in medical school considered it a personal responsibility to ensure the success of all students regardless of their background. “They were dedicated to make
she said. Two professors, in particular, a Japanese male professor from Hawai‘i Island and a male professor from North India, were aware of her public school education in a rural neighbor island community and were instrumental in her academic success.

Upon graduating from medical school, Dr. Jackson, her mentor, invited her to join the faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Pi‘ikea told him that she planned to return to her home island to open a primary care clinic. Dr. Jackson flew from Honolulu to her home on a neighbor island to meet with Pi‘ikea’s mom. He spent the entire morning at the church (which was still under construction) “talking story” with her mother. During their conversation, he acknowledged Pi‘ikea’s dream to come home and work with her people. He said, “Pi‘ikea could impact the lives of hundreds of people here and provide them with superb care. However, if she stays in academia and becomes a professor, she will impact the lives of thousands of people.” He told Pi‘ikea’s mother that her daughter would rise to the highest levels in the medical profession and that he would do everything in his power to make that happen. Upon his return to Honolulu, he told Pi‘ikea, “In my lifetime, less than a handful of people have touched my life in a way that I will never forget. Your mother is one of them.”

Pi‘ikea joined the faculty at UH Mānoa with Dr. Jackson’s commitment to establish a foundation for Native Hawaiian research. She brought the first research grants into the department. These grants were instrumental in building a research division by serving as a “springboard” for other extramural funded research. Today, the division brings in about $3 million annually in research funding. Pi‘ikea affirmed, “In Hawai‘i, when you focus on and begin with Native Hawaiians, everyone benefits. Understanding
the gaps in health among Native Hawaiians gives you an incisive understanding of what all minorities or disadvantaged groups experience.”

Both her dean and department chair were extremely supportive during the tenure and promotion process. Pi‘ikea started in a part-time, permanent position then moved to a tenure-track position when the chair retired. As with many Native Hawaiians, she found it problematic to praise herself in her promotion and tenure dossiers. Dr. Jackson, the department chair, encouraged her to write her dossier in an Indigenous manner by telling a story. He said, “Explain to your readers who you are and what makes you unique.” For the “Statement of Endeavors,” Pi‘ikea adopted the language of the ali‘i, which her great-grandfather believed was precise and focused. For Pi‘ikea, the real challenge was how to use language as precisely as possible to convey to the reader, “who I am, what I stand for, what I believe in as an educator; what are my passions and my goals; and why I am in academia and not practicing medicine on my home island.” With the assistance of many mentors guiding her through the process, Pi‘ikea was promoted and received tenure. Today, she continues this practice of mentoring by providing guidance to junior faculty seeking promotion or tenure.

Although she much prefers to be a researcher, educator, and clinician, she was invited by Dr. Jackson, her life-long mentor, to join the administrative team as his co-chair. Her post-graduate training in clinical executive leadership provided her with some useful tools and expertise. Pi‘ikea believes she has been blessed with the skills of a good administrator because she is able to think strategically and look at things from multiple perspectives (such as from the bottom of the tide pool)–skills she learned from her ‘ohana and kūpuna.
Piʻikea affirmed that Native Hawaiians in her academic unit receive substantive support and advancement, but she has observed varying levels of support for Hawaiians in departments outside of the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM). She cited a meeting regarding the Native Hawaiian Advancement Task Force Report. The task force made recommendations to: 1) establish an office for a Vice Chancellor of Hawaiian Affairs, 2) develop a program to educate every new faculty member about Hawaiian culture, 3) increase the recruitment of Native Hawaiians among the faculty, and 4) develop a Native Hawaiian leadership program. At the conclusion of the meeting, the lead senior administrator supported tenure and promotion, but was ambivalent and unwilling to support other initiatives (e.g., a Vice-Chancellor of Hawaiian Affairs) and deferred decision making to the chancellor or president. Piʻikea boldly declared, “Who, if not you, will bring this to the attention of the chancellor and president? By dismissing it, you remove it from their agenda, and you’re using the weight of your authority to tell us what we cannot do.” The administrator explained, “In my experience you have to start small. Your goal for this part of the strategic plan is too bold, too large.” Piʻikea countered, “You’re asking us to settle for less. If the people who preceded us settled for less, we wouldn’t exist. We will never settle for less.” These six words reflect the oppression that Native Hawaiians have experienced due to colonization and dispossession of their ʻāina, but also symbolize the collective resolve and determination of Native Hawaiians to resist subjugation.

A passionate educator and administrator, Piʻikea remarked, “The most important thing about who I am as a professional stems from the nurturing, support, and guidance I received from my parents, professors, mentors, and colleagues.” Her parents saw
something in their inquisitive bold little girl and continued to nurture and support her curiosity about the world. Her professors, who again saw something unusual in her, nurtured her intellectual curiosity. Dr. Jackson saw her great potential as a third-year medical student and continued to provide her with opportunities to grow. The dean and department chair saw that same potential and nurtured and supported her in many ways. Piʻikea added, “These men used the fullest extent of their authority to create the context and the environment in which I could learn and thrive; where I had choices.” They guided her into areas such as administration, that she would otherwise never have chosen, because they realized it was not just about her—it was about the significance of the work she could do for others.

Piʻikea encourages future Native Hawaiian women scholars to hold fast to their dreams:

When you have a dream, look for the signs, the hōʻailona along the way that are expressed by a number of things in your life that validate and reaffirm that the dream is your destiny. That is your path. You must work as hard as possible with focus and dedication with all your heart and soul to make it happen. If you do this and keep an objective, observing mind, you will gain skills of self-reflection, self-assessment, and a sense of wholeness that will enable you to determine what your capabilities are and where your gaps in skills are. And most important, it will enable you to see your true path and destiny, which may be so much more than your original dream.

Finally, Piʻikea emphatically stated that the model for JABSOM must be replicated throughout the University of Hawaiʻi system. She affirmed:

Here at JABSOM, Hawaiians are valued. Administrators, faculty, students, and staff see Native Hawaiians as capable leaders and nationally recognized scholars, educators, researchers, and clinicians. We have three Native Hawaiians serving as department chairs—two females and one male. And Hawaiian culture is embraced as a unique trait and distinction of JABSOM that must be valued and nurtured.
Piʻikea is committed to realize the vision of JABSOM to bring doctors to neighbor islands and rural communities and reduce the disparities of access of delivery. She is the leader her parents and mentors envisioned, a leader emboldened with Native Hawaiian values and a moral responsibility to give back to her community. Immersing herself empathically into each new learning experience, she continues to practice the lessons learned from her mother at the bottom of a tide pool.

**Chapter Summary**

Capturing the essence of Nā Wahine’s lived experiences through moʻolelo was a challenging, yet inspiring work. Moreover, it proved to be a spiritual experience as I immersed myself into the lives of each woman and endeavored to interpret her experiences through her eyes. Nā Wahine’s lived experiences have colored their life’s portrait in vivid hues with rich undertones. As I wrote each moʻolelo, I thought, “This is my favorite story.” Then, I wrote the next and said the same thing. In the end, they were all my favorites. Despite their many accomplishments, Nā Wahine remain humble. A Hawaiian proverb, “E noho iho i ke opu weuweu, mai ho‘okiʻekiʻe,” reminds Native Hawaiians to remain among the clumps of grasses and not elevate themselves (ʻŌlelo Noʻeau, No. 361, p. 44). This wise saying was reflected time and time again in the self-effacing stories shared by Nā Wahine. In the next chapter, I provide an interpretation of the hōʻailona describing the academic and tenure experiences of Nā Wahine. Their stories continue through hōʻailona.
“My PhD is my sword; it allows me to be a woman warrior.”

In her office, Atea keeps a statue of a woman warrior carved by a Maori master carver and presented to her at her PhD party following the dissertation defense. Pointing to the statue, she proudly exclaimed, “That’s me! My PhD is my sword; it allows me to be a woman warrior.” Atea truly is a woman warrior—one who has fought all her life for the rights of Native Hawaiian people. Recalling her days as an activist and rebel, she divulged, “My children grew up on picket lines. I took my children to every protest march.” They accompanied her to protest unlawful evictions and to stop H3 from destroying the heiau at Kukuiokāne. When she protested about the delays in establishing Hawaiian Immersion programs or in constructing the Hawaiian Studies building—her children were there.
As a woman warrior, Atea champions the sacred role of Native Hawaiian women. “In ancient times,” she explained, “women were the source of knowledge. Haumea, the goddess of childbirth, politics, and war, who took the form of many women from one generation to the next, was the source of knowledge.” She continued, “Haumea exists in every Hawaiian woman; she is our source of mana. Native Hawaiian women are the source and conduit of knowledge. Our kuleana is to teach the next generation the knowledge of our ancestors.”

Twenty-five years from now, Atea envisions a Native Hawaiian woman as university president. She expects that Native Hawaiian women faculty will be surrounded by supportive mentors who will help guide them through academe and the tenure process. She added, “I hope this cadre of women will challenge Hawaiian women faculty to greater levels of academic success and to be a star in the universe. After all, there is more than just one star in the universe.” In addition, she envisions a 16-story, state-of-the-art building that she described as a “house of honor and pride for our Hawaiian nation–our lahui.” In such a place, Atea affirmed, “All Hawaiian children will know what great scholars their ancestors were and what a joy it is to walk in their footsteps.”

As she reflected on her academic experiences from BA to PhD, Atea stated, “I think my books are reflective of that whole experience.” She submitted her first manuscript on Hawaiian mythology to Bishop Museum hoping to receive a book contract. According to Atea, “In the academic world, the book contract is essential. If you don’t have a contract, you don’t have a book.” She added, “The reason you need a contract is
that if anything should happen to the editor, you still have a contract and your book gets published.”

While she was still negotiating the contract, Bishop Museum hired Mr. Steinberg (a former publisher from MIT Press) as the new director. Mr. Steinberg approached Atea saying, “I understand you have another book about land based on your dissertation.” Atea responded, “Yes, I do. It’s an anti-missionary analysis of land tenure in Hawai‘i.” When Mr. Steinberg indicated he would like to read the manuscript, Atea replied somewhat skeptically, “You can’t publish the book because you work for Bishop Museum which is very pro-missionary; they will not publish my book.” Undeterred, Mr. Steinberg replied, “If it’s a controversial book, it will sell better. I want to publish it.” And so, he did. A few years later, Atea published two books on Hawaiian Mythology followed by another book on the sacred power of Native Hawaiian women.

Known in academic circles around the world as a Native Hawaiian historian, cultural expert, and master storyteller, Atea travels the world sharing her cultural expertise with international audiences. For example, she has travelled to Europe at least ten times, most recently to visit the European sites frequented by Hawaiian ali‘i (royalty) and to share her historical acumen. In addition to presenting her own work, she said, “I make sure that we take our students to the World Indigenous People’s Conference on Education every year. Last year eight students went with me to present their papers in an international setting.”

As she reflected on hō‘ailona that symbolize her academic journey, Atea drew a picture of Kualoa, considered by ancient Hawaiians to be one of the most sacred places on the island of O‘ahu. Kualoa was the former residence of Hawaiian ali‘i—a place of
refuge, training, and sanctuary. Atea explained, “Kualoa was a sacred place where the
gods came together. Everything I have done since receiving tenure has been about
discovering the ancient knowledge of our 400,000 gods—half of whom were women.”
According to her drawing, the highest peak atop the Kualoa mountain ridge is called
Kānehoʻalani, meaning “Kāne’s heavenly companion.” She labeled the cliffs as
“Haumea o Palikū” and stated, “These cliffs represent the genealogy of Haumea; this is
where she lived.” According to Atea, “Haumea’s husband, Wākea, had an argument with
the ruling chief of the island, Kumuhonua, who worshiped the god Kāne.” To avoid
Kumuhonua’s wrath, Haumea and Wākea fled to live with Kānehoʻalani, the brother and
former husband of Haumea, upon his ridge at Kualoa. Atea continued, “Haumea
defeated Kumuhonua’s army from on high by multiplying herself a thousand times and
pelting his warriors with kukui nuts.” Following the defeat of Kumuhonua, Haumea
declared that Wākea should be the new ruler of the land and that all gods must pay
allegiance to Wākea by changing their names to Kāne-nui-ākea (Kāne made stronger by
Ākea), Kū-nui-ākea, Kanaloa-nui-ākea, and Lono-nui-ākea; hence the name for the UH
Mānoa Hawaiian Studies building—Hawai‘i-nui-ākea (meaning Great Hawai‘i of Atea)—
inclusive of all of the islands located within the Polynesian Triangle.

Atea included several temples in her drawing, including the temples of Wākea,
Kū, Lono, and Kanaloa. Referring to her drawing, she said, “This is my intellectual map.
Temples are places where ancestral knowledge is taught and received. Ancestral wisdom
is most important; it’s a gift. So, it is significant that Hōkūleʻa launched from Kualoa.”
Moreover, she said, “Hōkūleʻa shifted my interest from politics to ancestral knowledge.
Hōkūleʻa shifted my paradigm.”
Inspired by her mother’s hiki no (can-do) attitude and empowered through ancestral wisdom, Atea continues her work as a woman warrior—learning, teaching, writing, and fighting for the advancement of Native Hawaiians. With great enthusiasm she exclaimed, “My career is on an upward trajectory. I’m still learning so much. It’s such a gift.”

HŌKŪAO
Morning Star

“This is my life story—my life’s journey through learning and loving to learn.”

Always seeming to be in the right place at the right time throughout her career, Hōkūao admits that she has been blessed with the brilliance of serendipity. As a teacher of teachers and leader of leaders, she maintains an open mind and positive expectations, regardless of the challenges she encounters. And serendipitously, marvelous things open up for her.

As we visited in Hōkūao’s office, I admired her children’s colorful artwork and two beautiful paintings that hang in her office. Each painting symbolizes her academic journey; each has its own story. The first painting, by a Maori woman artist, depicts a brightly colored Kiwi bird flying towards the sun. While visiting Aotearoa (New Zealand) with a friend, Hōkūao observed a young woman painting. Leaning up against her workspace was the painting of the Kiwi bird.

When she saw the painting, Hōkūao began to cry. She said, “It spoke to me. It was my mother—flying into the sun with all these rays of power and story. I just felt this immediate connection to my mother.” Reliving this experience, she became emotional as she recalled, “Everything that I had done up until this point was what I was supposed to
be doing. When I saw this picture, all the tension about living up to my grandmothers’ expectations regarding (becoming a teacher like) my mother just disappeared.” When Hōkūao explained to the artist what she saw and felt upon first seeing the painting, the young woman immediately connected to her and replied, “I painted it because I just lost my mother.”

Following this exchange, Hōkūao was in a meeting nearby when a friend entered the room with the painting and a note which read, “I would like you to have this.” Hōkūao immediatly knew she could not accept the painting without paying for it. She returned to the artist with money in hand to pay for the painting, but the young woman refused. Hōkūao explained that she was not paying for the painting. Instead, she said, “I am helping you with your education.”

Looking at the painting, Hōkūao said, “This is my life story–my life’s journey through learning and loving to learn.” She added that the Kiwi bird symbolizes collective leadership and leading in grace. “It speaks to power through love,” she said. “It’s very powerful but it’s also filled with joy and love.” The Kiwi bird (symbolic of her mother) reminds her to lead from a place of aloha, from a feeling of love and inclusivity.

The second painting, entitled “Council of Women,” illustrates a group of Native American women standing in a circle. The women appear to be engaged in a lively conversation. In the hair of each woman is a cluster of white feathers pointing upward. Hōkūao explained, “The circle is one of the most powerful and common metaphors among many Indigenous peoples.” Specifically, the Talking Circle is a traditional pattern of communication among Native American communities used to share information, offer support, or solve problems (Becker, Affonso, & Blue Horse Beard, 2006).
The painting also has a profound story behind it. As a junior faculty member at MSU (Mainland State University), Hōkūao was surrounded by esteemed, White, male men—all of whom were tenured professors. She remarked, “These were the people who wrote the books you read and study in school. They were not ordinary people. They wrote the books on leadership in education and teachers’ standards.” Although these men were highly intelligent and wonderful as individuals, Hōkūao reported, “Together, they sounded like scraping antlers; they were absolutely mean.” As a young woman of color, Hōkūao was dealing head on with the old boys’ club of educational administration. “It was an all White male boys’ club,” she said, “and I clearly did not fit in.” Feeling tremendously overwhelmed and under supported, she was invited to attend a women’s conference. The conference provided her with much needed energy and clarified her vision as to who she was before becoming an academic. The lessons learned at the conference prompted Hōkūao to meet with each professor individually to share her story. As she met with these esteemed colleagues, she soon learned the requirements for promotion and tenure and was on her way to become an effective Native Hawaiian woman leader and educator.

Similar to the quadrants on a medicine wheel representing body, spirit, heart, and mind, the “Council of Women” painting reminds Hōkūao that gatherings of women always replenish her energy, renew her spirit, refortify her values, and refine her ideas. It helps her to be mindful of who she is as a Native Hawaiian woman leader and teacher of teachers. And so, just as her grandma gathered people around the kitchen table to eat and talk story, Hōkūao continues to gather women and men over food and conversation.
In another example of hōʻailona, Hōkūao explained, “During my first five years at MSU, I had an annual review each year. Then in my 5th year, I went up for promotion and tenure. Each year, I included a picture on the cover of my annual review.” She selected a particular theme for each annual review document with a corresponding illustration on the cover of the document. On one cover, she placed a picture of a keiki hula hālau. She explained “In every hālau, the dancers work collectively and collaboratively towards a common goal. Everybody works together to learn the dances and get ready to perform. It’s a lot of work and it really does require everybody to work together.” Hōkūao related the efforts of the hula hālau to the professors in her department who work collectively and sometimes collaboratively to assist students with their academic goals.

Another cover featured the golden ‘ōhiʻa lehua flower. Weaving the story into her review, she shared the moʻolelo of how the golden ‘ōhiʻa lehua, following a destructive lava flow, emerged from the middle of the lava representing hope and promise. On a third cover, she chose a photo of Hawaiian canoe paddlers racing in a canoe regatta to discuss the importance of teamwork and to illustrate the point that progress is made when everyone works together. Hōkūao said, “I used the waʻa (canoe) to symbolize my journey through promotion and tenure.” She added, “The covers I used during the promotion and tenure process reflected my knowledge of Hawaiian culture. The stories that I wove into each document were the stories I heard as a child.” Hōkūao explained, “I shared those stories to help the committee members understand who I was and the work I was doing.”
Insightfully, the covers not only reflected a particular theme and some aspect of Hawaiian culture; they also were highly indicative of her nature and inclination to work collectively with others as part of a group—a distinctively Native Hawaiian value. Hōkūao consistently models cultural values of aloha, `ohana, and laulima (working cooperatively). She embodies grace and humility and strives to create an environment of inclusivity. Despite Hōkūao’s numerous accomplishments during the promotion and tenure process, she remained haʻahaʻa among the clumps of grasses as she continuously sought to elevate others, particularly her graduate students.

If the covers for these documents had not been in storage, Hōkūao had planned to weave the pictures together to form a bowl. Just as each cover symbolized her academic journey, her desire to create a bowl from the covers of her annual review documents is symbolic of her life-long aspiration to “feed others”—physically, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. Thus, it is not surprising that she chose to bake a prune cake to symbolize her experiences during the promotion and tenure process.

While preparing for promotion and tenure at MSU, Hōkūao enjoyed cooking. She tried various recipes and often paired them with wines. As she stated, “Cooking allowed me to be creative in a very different way.” Food was an important part of her childhood and became part of her academic journey. While at MSU, she invited doctoral students to her home two Saturdays every month to work on their dissertations. While the students worked, Hōkūao cooked for them. She also brought food to all types of social gatherings. Hōkūao said, “I love to cook; it makes me happy. I love to feed people and I enjoy our enriching conversations.” Admiring her prune cake, she added, “This is grandma’s recipe for prune cake. I think of this as comfort food. It reminds me of both
of my grandmothers on whose shoulders I stand.” Prune cake also reminds Hōkūao of her childhood days sitting around her grandma’s kitchen table—eating, listening, and learning. She reflected, “Prune cake reminds me of my foundation and the stories I grew up hearing. I used these same stories to tell ‘my story’ as I went through promotion and tenure.”

However, according to Hōkūao, “It is more about the process than the cake.” She explained, “I bought the ingredients several days ago. I discussed what I was planning to do with friends.” Having awakened that day at 3 a.m., she put in a long day followed by an evening meeting. By the time she returned home and attended to her family, it was 9:30 p.m. before she started baking. She then related how this same process is similar to preparing for promotion and tenure, “We put in long days; it was a lot of hard work. We had to take care of our professional lives and family stuff first. Then we could begin working on our dossier.” Interestingly, working on her dossier often got pushed out to the very last thing in her day—just as the prune cake did.

She continued to share the process of baking the cake saying, “I was a little tired having been up since 3 a.m. I drank some coffee to stay up while doing this. As I reached up to grab some spices from the cupboard, two shelves collapsed! She quickly added, “That’s the process! You’re going along and bang—something hits you!” Multitasking, she placed the cake in the oven and cleaned up the mess while watching a cooking show on TV. Once the cake had cooled, she began to prepare her grandma’s special peach frosting. Unfortunately, due to the humidity, she said, “The butter began to tighten up.” It was after midnight and Hōkūao had to make a choice—either start all over or go to bed and leave the frosting for the morning. She wisely chose to go to bed.
In the morning, there was no change in the frosting; it was still bunched up. So, Hōkūao decided to drive to the supermarket to purchase frosting. Again she noted, “That’s part of the promotion and tenure process—things don’t always work out as planned. You have to find alternatives and be creative about it.”

In the same way she gathered the essential ingredients for her prune cake, she said, “At MSU, I understood the requirements for the promotion and tenure process. I took a look at the CVs of all my senior faculty.” Hōkūao asked to see their CVs at the time they went up for promotion and tenure so she could see exactly where they were in their careers at the time. She spoke to several professors to find out what was most important to them in their promotion and tenure application and what, if anything, they would do differently. Many replied that because they did not yet have a book contract in hand, they chose to publish a few articles. Hōkūao commented, “I was lucky. I had two books already. One had already been published and I had a contract in hand for the second, so I didn’t have to look for alternatives.”

Although she had secured external grants early in her career, she was also required to obtain internal grants to demonstrate that her college was supportive of her work. When she went in to apply for an internal grant, they suggested she do something else—a variation of what she had planned. Hōkūao noted, “Although I wasn’t too happy about it, I chose to do it and it turned out to be a really good idea. In fact, it led to a subsequent book.”

As we enjoyed a slice of her delicious prune cake, Hōkūao explained, “The whole process of making this cake is very similar to my promotion and tenure process. It’s all about the process; it’s all about the journey. I always trust something good will happen.
I trust the brilliance of serendipity.” She added that it is important to plan well. Feeling disappointed that she could not make her grandma’s frosting, she commented, “I thought about adding peaches to the frosting I bought at the store. Maybe I should tweak it this way or that.” Relating this to the promotion and tenure process, she added, “It’s the same thing when you go through promotion and tenure. You’re constantly tweaking this or that, but at some point you have to say, I’m done.”

Undoubtedly, Hōkūao has enjoyed an amazing journey guided by those who have played the most significant role in her life—her mother and father, her maternal and paternal grandparents, her husband and children, her close life-long friends, leaders from the American Indian Tribal College and University, her ‘ohana at Te Wanango O Aotearoa, and her students and colleagues. Although she continues to face daily challenges, her life has truly been blessed with kupaianaha—the brilliance of serendipity.

HŌKŪPAʻA
Fixed Star or North Star

“The kalo represents who I am as a Hawaiian.”

Growing up in rural Maui, Hōkūpaʻa was surrounded by family members who were kuaʻāina—those who embraced and practiced a traditional Hawaiian lifestyle living in rural communities, speaking Hawaiian, and living off the land. For example, her aunt and uncle grew and sold their own fruit while her grandfather was skilled at planting kalo. Throughout her life, Hōkūpaʻa has maintained a strong connection to the ‘āina and continues to research and write about Native Hawaiians’ sense of place and their intimate relationship to the land. From these rural beginnings, Hōkūpaʻa developed a sense of tenacity and determination allowing her to adapt to multiple, diverse environments.
Symbolic of her educational experience is the ‘ōhi’a lehua—a flowering plant that can grow almost anywhere. Describing the ‘ōhi’a lehua’s incredible adaptability, Hōkūpa’a said, “It grows near the ocean and in the mountains and adapts to each environment. ‘Ōhi’a lehua can be dwarfed in one ecosystem—growing only knee high—and grow up to 50 feet tall in another.” She explained that the leaves of the tree also vary; some leaves are smooth, while others are deeply furrowed. Most leaves are stiff and rounded but others can be broad and pointed. As Hōkūpa’a progressed from BA to PhD, she had to adapt to each new environment, its culture, language, and expectations. Although she flourished in her baccalaureate program, she felt dwarfed by the strange new environment of her master’s program where people looked and behaved so differently. Relating the ‘ōhi’a lehua to the tenure process, she said:

Going through the tenure process is similar to the ‘ōhi’a lehua that has to adapt to multiple environments. Like the unfolding liko (bud), we go through the process without really understanding it. Finally, we get to a place where we can blossom and can then create the seeds for the next generation.

Although blooming as a young tenured Native Hawaiian woman, Hōkūpa’a admits that she is not yet at the point where she can begin to shed new seeds. As program director, she acknowledges that she is still striving to build her program. “I am still trying to find myself,” she said, “and how I can be supportive to new faculty. I have not yet reached that pinnacle. As a department, we’re still really young.” Symbolizing adaptability and continual growth, the ‘ōhi’a lehua represents the flexibility and adaptability that Hōkūpa’a has demonstrated throughout her academic journey. Similarly, kalo symbolizes her tenure experiences and embodies her identity as a Native Hawaiian woman.
With a deep connection to the ‘āina, it seemed appropriate that Hōkūpa‘a selected kalo as the hō‘ailona symbolizing her tenure experiences. She drew a picture of the kalo plant and labeled its various parts. It is important to note that Hawaiians believe the kalo to be the elder brother of the Native Hawaiian people. Specifically, Haloanakalaukapalili (kalo) is the older sibling to Haloa (long stalk, long breath, long life), considered to be the first Hawaiian. Given such an intimate genealogical relationship to the land, it is not surprising that Hōkūpa‘a sustains such a strong connection to the ‘āina.

She explained, “The kalo represents who I am as a Hawaiian. The mature lau (leaves) represent my research, teaching, and service. The pua (flowers) represent new scholars coming into the academy who are just beginning to blossom.” She continued, “The huli (cuttings) represent the mentors that have supported and nurtured me throughout the tenure process.” Interestingly, the huli consist of the crown of the kalo, which will grow new roots when planted back in the lo‘i. Thus, the huli symbolize continuous mentorship and learning from one generation to the next. Hōkūpa‘a said, “The kalo represents my ‘ohana.” She explained that the word ‘ohana is derived from the ‘ōha, or young shoots, of the kalo plant. The ‘ōha represent the keiki or children—the next generation. Thus, the word ‘ohana symbolically ties Hawaiians to the land. For Hōkūpa‘a, kalo is not only the source of life, but also a sustaining life force representing family, stability, and peace.

With the flexibility and adaptability of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua, Hōkūpa‘a has learned to adapt to numerous new environments and take on new assignments despite heavy teaching and administrative duties. Her love of the ‘āina has kept her grounded in Native Hawaiian culture and values and focused on serving the Native Hawaiian community.
Just as the kalo embodies her identity as a Native Hawaiian, it also serves to remind her of her kuleana to support, guide, and mentor new scholars coming into the academy who face a new environment and are just beginning to blossom.

**KALEWANU‘U**
The cloud firmament; to float or move with the wind, as clouds

“*Go for what makes you really happy—the thing you don’t want to stop doing.*”

Have you ever gazed up into the sky and watched as the clouds passed by? Have you ever wondered what the various cloud formations symbolize and what we can learn from them? Kalewanu‘u, whose hōkū name means “the cloud firmament,” has often wondered the same things. She said that she is especially curious “to learn how kūpuna received knowledge from the clouds.” As she explained, “The knowledge is there.”

Among ancient Hawaiians, the ability to accurately predict rain was essential to properly care for the ʻāina. Kalewanu‘u expounded, “My interest in learning to read the clouds is to understand the knowledge and wisdom of my kūpuna.” With her incredible gift for languages, she graciously serves as a conduit for kūpuna and continuously seeks new sources of knowledge.

At our second meeting, Kalewanu‘u brought a box filled with numerous family and graduation photos, newspaper clippings, journal articles, awards, and precious memorabilia. She said, “Each item is symbolic of my journey from BA to PhD. I keep these things because I never thought I would get here.” These hō‘ailona remind Kalewanu‘u of her challenging academic journey—coming from a working class family, starting college at age 21 while continuing to work, and not completing her BA degree.
until age 37. Many women might have quit at this point, but Kalewanuʻu was determined to persist and earn a PhD.

Despite being raised in what she described as “a dysfunctional family,” she is immensely proud of her kūpuna with whom she lived upon returning from the continent ten years after completing high school. Holding a photo in her hand, she pointed out the people in the photograph—her grandmother, six aunts (whose husbands had passed away) and one uncle. This strong matriarchal family had a significant influence on her feminist perspectives and perhaps on her desire to learn Hawaiian. Kalewanuʻu was determined to learn Hawaiian upon returning to Hawaiʻi and chose to major in Hawaiian language at UH Mānoa. After taking a few Hawaiian language classes, she said, “I was still not speaking fluently.” She shared a photo taken near Kalapana on Hawaiʻi Island where she attended a Hawaiian language immersion camp. “Within a few days,” she said, “I broke into fluency.” This gift of fluency would later prove to be a great blessing in her doctoral research on Native Hawaiian resistance to annexation. She explained, rather than reading translated texts, “I could read Hawaiian and I could read the accounts of what Hawaiians actually did.”

The next hōʻailona she shared was a photo of her master’s cohort (a group of seven students) and her master’s commencement hood. The photograph and the commencement hood represent much more than a graduate degree. Considering that Kalewanuʻu returned to Hawaiʻi from the continent and began her academic journey at a community college, more than ten years after graduating from high school, is a tribute to her tenacity and perseverance. Although she received a substantial fellowship to study Library and Information Science, she explained, “I felt frustrated that UH Mānoa did not
have a master’s program at the time in Hawaiian language or literature.” However, her master’s degree did provide her with something of value—the network and resources to pursue a PhD.

Symbolic of her doctoral research on Native Hawaiian resistance to annexation is the book she made from the signatures of Native Hawaiians who protested against the annexation. She proudly shared this book as one of her hō‘ailona. Glancing at these historic signatures protesting annexation—some with only a single name—gave me a chill as I realized what a terrible wrong had been done. Kalewanu‘u explained, “The total number of signatures was about 38,000 which was about 90% of the Hawaiian population.” I wondered, “How could the American government have disregarded the wishes of the majority of the Native Hawaiian population at that time?” Consequently, many Native Hawaiians have misgivings towards the American government and the dominant historical narrative that has portrayed Native Hawaiians as compliant and supportive of American colonial power. Because of her ability to understand the Hawaiian language, Kalewanu‘u has given the Native Hawaiian community an incredible gift—an accurate account, from a Native Hawaiian perspective, of Native Hawaiian resistance to colonial power.

After sharing these hō‘ailona representing her academic journey from BA to PhD, Kalewanu‘u reflected on her experiences applying for tenure. Given her propensity for writing (as opposed to creative art), it is not surprising that Kalewanu‘u submitted an essay, entitled “Reflections on Getting Tenure,” as her hō‘ailona depicting her tenure experiences. In this writing, she discussed the hiring, promotion, and tenure process.
She mentioned some of the challenges she faced and expressed her hope for the next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars.

Kalewanu‘u said, “I was hired into the Hawaiian Language department in the fall of 1999 and began teaching classes before salary negotiations had been completed.” She explained, “Even though I had a PhD in hand, a journal publication, and written expressed interest in the dissertation from a publisher, I was offered a low salary.” With a teaching load of 18 credits a year, she found it difficult to keep up with her research but somehow she managed to do it. She got started on journal articles and also made some progress on her book. Although she received no mentoring at this time, she said, “I did have a lot of support from a wonderful colleague and the majority of the adjunct faculty.”

During the summer of her second year, she became the coordinator of Hawaiian Language (still a program at that time in the department of Hawaiian and Indo-Pacific Languages). She noted, “It was bigger than many departments, however.” She had also been given the task of planning for an MA degree in Hawaiian; but her journey was about to take a detour.

At the beginning of the fall semester, Kalewanu‘u faced one of the greatest challenges in her life; she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had surgery in September and started chemotherapy in late November. She recalled, “I had to give up the coordinator position. Work on the book was seriously delayed. But I did write a chapter for an edited volume and made some progress on the book while going through chemo and its after effects.”

Sometime later, she was invited to apply for a position in Social Sciences. Kalewanu‘u reflected, “It was a really hard decision to make once I was offered the
position. I had worked for years to get a position in Hawaiian (language). But this department promised me more time for research and seemed more respectful of my work than the Hawaiian language department.” She was also given summer research money, her own office (something she never had in Hawaiian language, even as coordinator), and a large salary increase. She now faced a new challenge having to teach in an entirely new discipline. Fortunately, she said, “I had constant mentoring and still maintained a good relationship with faculty in Hawaiian (language).” As part of the conditions for moving to Social Sciences, she convinced her new dean to agree that she could teach at least one class a year for Hawaiian. She also proposed two new undergraduate courses and recommended that they be cross-listed in the two departments. She explained, “This was because if I taught for Hawaiian, they would have to pay for my time—but if the courses were cross-listed, they wouldn’t have to pay.” During this time, Kalewanu’u became actively involved with a Hawaiian advisory council that was instrumental in getting funding for Hawaiian programs along with securing several permanent positions for Native Hawaiian faculty.

By 2003 she had completed the manuscript for her book and had received the final commitment from the publishing press. With a book contract in hand, her department chair encouraged her to apply for tenure one year early, which she did. At this time, Kalewanu’u was teaching and advising students from two departments. She observed, “The population of Hawaiian graduate students in my department had exploded,” demanding increased efforts on her part. She felt a great sense of kuleana to her students and noted, “The next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars is doing some solid work in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. They are relying less on Western theory and English and
are able to produce Hawaiian academic work, written in Hawaiian, using Hawaiian theories.”

Reflecting on the experience of writing her tenure dossier, Kalewanuʻu said, “I had the usual anxieties because if one is denied tenure, there is only one more year of employment; then the person is out of a job. But I also had so much support that it wasn’t too bad.” She faced yet another challenge shortly after submitting her dossier (but before the department personnel committee had completed their assessment). While she was away at a conference, she learned that an anti-Hawaiian activist had submitted a letter to the department making unfounded accusations and demanding that she be denied tenure. She affirmed, “The accusations were obviously false (one being that I had done no research other than the 1897 petitions) so the committee was not swayed by his letter.” She added that a colleague became aware of the letter and mobilized people to write letters of support that she said, “far outnumbered and outweighed his one letter.” Although this incident caused her to feel somewhat anxious, she was not overly worried because she had good course evaluations, a book contract with a publishing press, and several journal articles. Moreover, she said, “I had faculty support in my own department, Hawaiian (language), and Hawaiian Studies.” Happily, her application for tenure was approved.

As she reflected on her academic experiences, Kalewanuʻu recalled her tenacious unremitting pursuit of learning ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi. Many people questioned how a woman in her 30s could work full-time and attend college full-time. Kalewanuʻu explained, “It was such a gift to be able to do it. I found something that I loved and had the talent to do.” She continued saying, “I never had any role models of anyone who did that.”
Admonishing young women who are seeking a profession, she said, “Go for what makes you really happy—the thing you don’t want to stop doing.” She added, “For those who are pursuing a graduate degree, I want them to know it is okay to be an intellectual. We don’t diminish our Hawaiianess by becoming an intellectual.”

Kalewanuʻu reflected on yet another hōʻailona—the assistance she continually receives from her kūpuna (elders and ancestors) as she pursues her research. She said, “I constantly get positive feedback from my kūpuna. This can be in the form of some research or publication being handed to me, or receiving a personal contact from a family member.” Despite the many challenges she has faced on her journey to become an academic, Kalewanuʻu continues to be guided by kūpuna who want their voices heard. Perhaps as she gazes up at the clouds, her kūpuna will share their knowledge and wisdom with her as she watches the clouds float by, moved with the wind.

MAKAʻALA  
Vigilant and Watchful

“The journey to tenure had moments of darkness, like turbulence in the water; but also moments of light.”

Characterizing her academic experiences, Makaʻala shared three hōʻailona: pōhaku (smooth river stone), a pakalana lei (floral lei made from fimo), and wooden roses. Holding the pōhaku in her hand, she pointed out the various colorations and markings in the stone. Makaʻala explained, “The pōhaku has been shaped and smoothed by the forces of water over many years. Each of these markings represents layers of the stone and symbolizes the layers in my life from the baccalaureate to the doctorate degree.” The pōhaku, because of its durability, reminds Makaʻala of her family’s challenges. “My family was not unlike many Hawaiian families in the kind of challenges we had with
income and access to education,” she said. The pōhaku also represents her own resilience in the face of great personal challenges as she temporarily suppressed her Hawaiian identity in pursuit of her doctorate degree. Just as the stone became smooth after being tossed about in the river bed for many years, so has Maka'ala become polished as a Native Hawaiian leader by dealing with adversity.

While the pōhaku is strong and enduring, shaped by the forces of water, the pakalana lei (made from a polymer clay known as “fimo”) becomes firm when baked and is able to hold any shape without distortion. Once baked, it can be cut, drilled, painted, and sanded. Maka’ala’s mother fashioned each delicate pakalana blossom out of fimo, then painted each one and strung them together to create several strands of a pakalana lei along with matching earrings. The pakalana lei and earrings remind Maka’ala of her mother’s love for flowers. Surrounded by tropical flowers as she grew up, this hōʻailona is symbolic of her parents’ unconditional love and support for her and also represents her parents’ strengths and vulnerabilities.

Most fragile, but surprisingly long lasting, was a cluster of woodroses that Maka’ala picked in Kāneʻohe over 10 years ago. She explained, “These woodroses have lasted all these years in my house, but if you were to touch the leaves, they would break. These delicate flowers came from the ‘āina, and they will disintegrate back into the ‘āina.” Known in Hawaiian as pilikai, the woodrose is actually a seedpod from the morning glory vine. Heart-shaped leaves resembling a rose surround the seeds. Maka’ala explained, “The woodrose represents my parents’ love for the ‘āina.” Describing how she found the woodroses, she said, “We were on our way to visit my sister when we saw this huge tree covered by these vines. So, we stopped and picked these flowers.” The
woodroses remind Maka‘ala that her ‘ohana provided her with the greatest support as she pursued her academic degrees. Fragile, yet durable, the woodrose also symbolizes her personal struggles with her Hawaiian identity complemented by her resolve and endurance.

Providing one of the most original and creative hō‘ailona representing her tenure experiences, Maka‘ala created a large poster board (measuring about 30” x 36”) of her huaka‘i (life’s journey). On this poster, she captured the essence and significance of ‘ohana, mo‘okū‘auhau (family genealogy), ‘āina, spirituality, and career. The first thing one notices upon looking at the poster is the background transition from darkness (on the left) to light (on the right). Maka‘ala remarked, “The journey to tenure had moments of darkness, like turbulence in the water; but also moments of light.” Describing the darkness she said, “Darkness is not necessarily a bad thing for me; it’s just something I had to struggle with and get through.” Describing how the darkness could be something internal, she stated, “Going up for tenure, I had moments where I doubted myself and how smart I was. Could I really do this? I doubted if I was keeping true to who I was.” Fortunately, throughout the tenure process she observed, “There were also moments of light in that darkness.” The transition from darkness to light is highly symbolic of her internal struggle with her Hawaiian identity and the struggle of the Native Hawaiian people who have survived a period of coerced darkness and are now emerging in the light breaking free from the shackles of oppression and colonization.

Black and white blurred images of the Hawaiian Islands overlay the background transition from darkness to light. Maka‘ala explained, “I love this ‘āina, just as my parents did. The islands are deliberately blurred to represent eternity. Even though I will
pass, the islands are forever.” Interestingly, the oldest islands emerge from the darkness while the newer islands bask in light representing hope and promise for Native Hawaiians.

A black and white picture of her father as a young man, dressed in a plaid shirt and hat, appears in the upper left-hand corner. Below his picture is a photo of her mother as a young woman in a skirted suit seated next to a coconut tree. Makaʻala emphasized, “My parents were essential in my quest for tenure. They were always there for me. I dedicated my book to them.” Next to her mother’s picture is a photo of her nieces and below that a photo of Makaʻala and her husband.

In the lower left corner of the poster, Makaʻala listed ten generations of her moʻokūʻauhau. She proudly states, “We have documented 10 generations in our family. I’m the 8th generation. My nephew is the 9th and his daughter is the 10th generation.” Makaʻala pointed out that knowing her genealogy was critical in forming her self-identity as a Native Hawaiian woman.

In addition to the importance of her ‘ohana, Makaʻala affirmed the importance of Ke Akua (God). Pointing to a framed printing of the Lord’s Prayer (Ka Pule a Ka Haku) in the upper right corner, she said, “This is a pule (prayer). It represents spirituality. It means being grateful to a spiritual realm.” Below the pule is a photo taken behind her home in the forests of Nuʻuanu. A reddish blur appears in the foreground. Makaʻala declared, “Even though I'm Catholic, this (blur) is a symbol of ‘uhane (spirits or ghosts) in Nuʻuanu.” Pointing out that this ‘uhane doesn’t appear in any other photo, she said, “We took three pictures in a row of this same spot, and this is the only one where ‘uhane came out.” She described her sense of spirituality as a “combination of Hawaiian spirituality, which is being in touch with nature, but also believing in Ke Akua.” She
acknowledged that her spirituality, along with her moʻokūʻauhau, were extremely important throughout her tenure journey.

In the lower right corner, she reprinted the covers to three journal articles. She said, “These are the first three journal articles that I published. These were the biggest journals in my discipline with the largest distribution.” Crediting her department, she said, “This school is critical. It is a significant part of my huakaʻi to tenure.”

At the center of the poster is a large picture of interlocking hands forming a circle. The hands are deliberately blurred. Makaʻala explained, “Everything we do here relates to helping people so we (she and her husband) printed the picture of the hands in black and white, and we blurred the hands to represent eternity.” She added, “The hands also symbolize my huakaʻi because I got a lot of help from many people.”

Referring back to the pictures of her parents, Makaʻala pointed out her intentional use of black and white versus color. The pictures of her parents are printed in black and white because they are deceased. Black and white images of the islands and the interlocking hands were intentionally blurred to depict continuity and eternity. The verdant photo of Nuʻuanu and the illustration of her journal articles are in color indicating the present. Photos of Makaʻala, her husband, and nieces are also in color representing the living and the future of her moʻokūʻauhau.

Metaphorically, Makaʻala related her life to the ocean with its ebbs and flows. Describing the journey from baccalaureate to doctorate she remarked:

It was like the ebbs and flows of the ocean. There were moments when I felt like I was riding the crest of a wave. But there were also moments when the wave crashed and I had to rebuild that momentum.
Reflecting on the ebbs and flows of struggling with her Hawaiian identity, she stated, “I think it has been my Hawaiian identity, not my gender identity, that has been the greatest challenge because I let other people define (for me) what it meant to be Hawaiian.”

The combination of these hōʻailona embody Makaʻala’s journey from a child, loved and supported by her ‘ohana and comfortable with being Hawaiian, to a graduate student conflicted about her Indigenous identity. They represent her growing consciousness as a Native Hawaiian woman, firmly grounded in Native Hawaiian values, and an ever-present sense of kuleana to support her school, university, and community. These hōʻailona exemplify a leader concerned about the success of all Native Hawaiians, particularly Native Hawaiian women. For example, on her office wall is yet another hōʻailona, a painting of beautiful Hawaiian women with the caption, “Caring for Native Hawaiian Women,” symbolic of her life’s work.

MAKALIʻI
Little Eyes or Eyes of the Chief
Cluster of stars signaling the Makahiki season

“Aloha, aloha ʻāina—love the land.”

A poster that hangs in Makaliʻi’s office reads, “Kahoʻolawe: Ke Aloha Kupaʻa i Ka ʻĀina,” which means “A Steadfast Love of the Land.” While Makaliʻi did not specifically identify this as one of her hōʻailona, it epitomizes and aptly summarizes the focus of her political activism and scholarly research. The poster was used in the 2002 Smithsonian exhibition about Kahoʻolawe developed by the Bishop Museum with assistance from the Protect Kahoʻolawe ʻOhana. Resting on a table in front of the poster was a large gray and black bag. Makaliʻi explained, “Years ago, I carried my old laptop computer to Kauaʻi in that bag to write my dissertation.”
While seated in her office, I was surrounded by hōʻailona of her scholarly endeavors—stacks of academic journals and shelves overflowing with books, research papers, university documents, and students’ work. This is so much a part of her academic experience that when I asked her to produce an artifact that is symbolic of her academic experiences, Makaliʻi thought of her Master’s thesis. She explained, “My thesis focused on the Wilcox Rebellion, documenting a prominent armed resistance by Native Hawaiians to the many changes that were forced upon them in the 19th century.” Not surprisingly, “resistance” has served as a major theme throughout her career.

In the same year that she earned a master’s degree in Pacific Island Studies, she began her doctoral program in Hawaiian and Pacific History. Her dissertation, entitled “Kupaʻa Ka ʻĀina” (Persistence on the Land), serves as another hōʻailona, one that demonstrates her steadfast and continual love for the ʻāina. Whether protesting unlawful evictions, conducting research with kuaʻāina, rebuilding Kahoʻolawe, or documenting the resistance of Native Hawaiians throughout history, Makaliʻi remains connected to the ʻāina. She embodies the saying, “Ke aloha o ko kakou ʻāina, ʻola ka mana ku paʻa,” meaning “The love of our land, is the power for us to stand fast.” It is her love for the ʻāina and for the Native Hawaiian people that compels her to continue researching, writing, and teaching about issues critical to Native Hawaiians.

For our third meeting, we met in the loʻi (an irrigated terrace for kalo) alongside the Mānoa stream on a beautiful sunny afternoon with a gentle breeze blowing. In such a serene venue, surrounded by thriving kalo, Makaliʻi seemed the most relaxed and began to share a particularly challenging experience that was linked to the loʻi. She shared how a group of Mānoa students in the early 1980s rediscovered the ʻauwai (irrigation ditch)
and the terraces that allowed the water to flow from one lo‘i to another. Under the
guidance of skilled kūpuna, the students restored the traditional ‘auwai and lo‘i and
constructed a beautiful hālau (meeting house). She pointed out, “The same ‘auwai feeds
all the lo‘i here and goes through the ditches and exits back into the stream.” Makali‘i
recalled, “I was there on the day the ‘auwai was reopened to allow the water to run
through the lo‘i,” as a revered kūpuna declared, “Ho‘okahe wai ho‘oulu ‘āina,” meaning
“When the water flows, the land will live.”

Numerous stones of various shapes and colors line the Mānoa stream. As she
reflected on the challenging experiences of tenure, she said, “Tenure is much like picking
up a stone, turning it over, and seeing bugs crawl out. Sometimes it’s best to just let it lie
there.” But, of course, Makali‘i was never one to let things lie. She purposefully selected
the lo‘i as our meeting place to discuss tenure because her application for tenure was
threatened because of the position she took for this lo‘i. She observed, “The process of
tenure is like kalo with its growth and rooting and its need for water and nurturing by
many people to ensure its survival.” She added, “The kalo is a symbol of the kind of
nurturing I received from my own department to get tenure.” Describing her personal
challenges with tenure she explained, “I think that’s why it was hard for me to do
something creative (regarding a tenure artifact) because tenure was really hard for me.”

In opposition to most of the Native Hawaiian faculty at the time who were less
cconcerned about the lo‘i and more focused on the construction of a new Hawaiian Studies
building, Makali‘i took a strong position to preserve the lo‘i as an integral part of
Hawaiian culture and learning. “At the time,” she said, “the lo‘i was supported through
grants and volunteers.” In 2007, the lo‘i, known as Ka Papa Lo‘i O Kānewai, was
officially designated as a cultural garden and center under the Hawai‘inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. That same year, Makali‘i published a book about traditional Hawaiian culture as practiced by those living in rural communities.

Throughout her career, Makali‘i has actively resisted social injustice and challenged the dominant historical narrative that portrayed Native Hawaiians as passive and compliant regarding the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy. Acknowledging that Native Hawaiians are genealogical descendants of the great gods of Hawai‘i, Makali‘i feels a profound sense of kuleana to protect the ‘āina and all its resources. With a deep love and respect for the ‘āina, she actively fought to protect the sacred island of Kaho‘olawe from continued military bombing and worked to heal the land through erosion control and revegetation projects. Both her political activism and her scholarly research have centered on issues pertaining to the ‘āina. So great is her love for the land, that in signing a copy of her book for me, she wrote not her name but, “Aloha, aloha ‘āina,” meaning to “love the land.”

**MELEMELE**

Yellow; golden; healing.
Female navigational star in Orion’s Belt

*“The kukui represents who we are as a people; the knowledge of our ancestors, old traditions, and new knowledge.”*

Providing a lovely venue for our first two meetings, Melemele’s office was meticulously clean and organized, yet very comfortable. One wall, washed in a warm yellow, features Indigenous art. The opposite wall hosts a large bookshelf, artistically arranged with unique pieces of art, a colorful assortment of books, and a photograph of herself and her grandmother. Melemele selected this photo to serve as her first hōʻailona.
As described in her moʻolelo, her grandmother was a major influence and inspiration in her life and served as her educational muse. She explained, “My grandmother grew up in Kohala; she only went to the 8th grade. I think she always wished she had more education. And that had a big influence on my academic journey.” Despite her grandmother’s limited education, she said, “My grandmother used to collect those old calendars from the general store, and that is what she used to do my math homework.” A devout Mormon, her grandmother also spoke fluent Hawaiian and was extremely supportive of her granddaughter’s educational endeavors. According to Melemele, “When I think about all the things I’ve been able to achieve, I know it’s because of my grandmother and mother and how they raised me and what they wanted for me.” Being raised in a loving, supportive family gave Melemele the skills to help those less privileged and those suffering from alcoholic, drug, or domestic abuse.

Over the last ten years, Melemele has concentrated her efforts on developing a Hawaiian domestic violence intervention program. Originally established on Hawaiʻi Island, she eventually brought the program to Oʻahu. As a woman who has dedicated her life to helping victims of domestic violence, her pseudonym, Melemele, becomes deeply symbolic and meaningful and serves as her second hōʻailona.

The word “melemele,” meaning “yellow” in Hawaiian, is symbolic of Oʻahu’s official island flower (golden ilima) and represents the color of the aliʻi. It is also the color of the sun signifying hope and healing. Referring to the use of the sun as a metaphor in her domestic violence curriculum, Melemele said, “I love the sun; it’s bright, yellow, healing, golden. I think it’s just great.” She added, “No matter what happens, the sun is going to rise every day. Each day is the beginning of something new. The sun
symbolizes beginning a new life, a new day, a new time.” As she meets with her participants, she reminds them, “No matter what happened yesterday, today is a new day for you. You can begin again.” Addressing the men in the program she tells them, “You beat up your wife or partner yesterday; but you are here with us today. You can start your life anew.” To the women, she says, “No matter what you were told yesterday, no matter what your partner did to you, today you’re here in our program. You begin a new life today.”

Melemele is also the name of a star. Melemele and Polapola are said to be the twin stars, the kane (male) and wahine (female) in Orion’s belt. According to Melemele, “These twin stars are important navigational stars. Not only did these stars guide ancient navigators, they also provide direction and comfort for participants in our domestic violence program.” She explained, “When participants lose their way, they can look up and see Melemele and Polapola watching over them. It’s like the heavens are always watching over them.” She continued, “The stars, Melemele and Polapola, being male and female, also complement the men and women in the program and provide a balance.” She is hopeful that Native Hawaiian women will understand that they are strong, empowered, and deserve to be respected. She also works to help Native Hawaiian men learn to respect and honor women.

For our third meeting, we enjoyed breakfast at a favorite local restaurant. Melemele arrived wearing casual attire and a kukui nut necklace that she made herself. Regardless of the venue, Melemele has a way of making one feel relaxed and comfortable. Blessed with the gift of storytelling, she shared a brief story about her domestic violence program. At a ceremony held for participants who completed the
domestic violence intervention program, Melemele presented them with a kukui nut, yet another hōʻailona. She collected the kukui nuts from the forest, drilled a hole in each nut, and carefully extracted the meat. She then polished each nut with a natural wax. Melemele remarked, “The women received a kukui necklace and the men got a kukui key chain.”

“The kukui is a symbol of ‘ike (knowledge and enlightenment)” she said, “and has many uses.” She explained:

In ancient Hawai‘i, the kukui nut kernels, which contained large amounts of oil, were used as light sources. Hawaiians could tell time based on how long it took for the light to go out. Because of its use as a source of light, the kukui is often associated with learning, knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment.

Describing other uses for kukui, she shared, “It is used for everything from waxing surfboards, to cleansing the hair, to clearing the surface of the water for fishing.” She continued, “The oil is used in la‘au lapa‘au (Hawaiian healing) for skin treatments, lomi lomi massage, and as a laxative, while the leaves are used as bandages for swellings and infections.” When roasted, the kernels can be mixed with salt to make a relish called ‘inamona. Melemele added, “The ashes from burnt kernels can be made into a dye for tattooing and to dye kapa cloth.”

For Melemele, the kukui symbolizes her life-long quest for knowledge (inspired by her mother and grandmother) and the importance of Indigenous knowledge to all Native Hawaiians over many generations. She explained, “The kukui represents who we are as a people, the knowledge of our ancestors, old traditions, and new knowledge.” Relating this to the dilemma imposed by the tenure process, she asked, “How do we honor the knowledge of our ancestors and still be part of the process of seeking new knowledge in the academy?”
In preparing the kukui nut, she explained, “This is something I took from nature and carved into something that preserved its original form and metaphoric meaning. But it’s not the same as before I cleaned and polished it.” She added, “I had to put a lot of myself into shaping something that’s old to make something that is new-old.” Melemele noted that cleaning and polishing kukui is a lot like the tenure process. She explained, “Tenure was about taking old knowledge, and old ways of knowing and being, to create a new pathway and a new symbol for who you were going to be.” She felt the tenure process created tension between presenting herself to a Western academy and retaining her identity as a Native Hawaiian woman. In choosing to be promoted and tenured in a Western institution, Melemele pointed out, “Tenure symbolizes the tension between old and new knowledge. It’s a light, a pathway, and a creation. It was a pathway built for me that I chose to become a part of.” For Melemele, the kukui (like tenure) symbolizes preserving the old and moving ahead with the new, while keeping her eyes focused on the past—to her roots, moʻokūʻauhau, and ancestral knowledge.

**NĀHIKU**

Constellation of Seven Stars

“I am being challenged to step up as the poʻo (leader) of the group.”

Nāhiku shared several hōʻailona symbolizing family, mentors, academe, and her personal and professional pathway. The first hōʻailona was a cherished photograph of her tūtū, father, and herself. As she discussed in her moʻolelo, her father was a figure larger than life around which her entire family revolved. He was a major influence in her life and the muse for her dissertation topic on her family’s migration and that of other religious Polynesians from Hawaiʻi to the continent. As an “off-island Hawaiian” growing up on the continent with a Hawaiian father and a haole mother, Nāhiku adopted
Western ways. Fortunately, her tūtū (who lived with Nāhiku’s family on the continent) imparted Native Hawaiian culture and values through various moʻolelo. As Nāhiku explained, “Listening to tūtū, my consciousness of myself as a Hawaiian began to open; I was just having these amazing experiences with my tūtū.” From Nāhiku’s perspective, tūtū’s passing, which occurred shortly after her move home to Hawaiʻi, was a way for her tūtū to continue to be with her and guide her path.

The second hōʻailona was a photograph of Nāhiku and Janis, a favored mentor and lifelong friend, at one of their infamous sushi parties. Janis was instrumental in creating networking opportunities for Nāhiku from the BA to PhD. As Nāhiku’s undergraduate advisor and mentor, she encouraged Nāhiku to present one of her papers at a sociology conference. At the conference, she introduced Nāhiku to a group of faculty, one of whom would later invite her to apply to a Master’s program at her university, which Nāhiku did. On another occasion, Janis invited Nāhiku to have lunch with a group of doctoral students who had a major influence on her choice of discipline for the PhD. Janis would later become the co-chair for her dissertation committee. Nāhiku commented, “She has just always been there for me; she is that constant in my life.”

Symbolic of her political journey through the academy, Nāhiku shared a third hōʻailona—a metal bra attached to a metal hangar in the shape of a woman’s torso. Nāhiku calls this sculpture her “Tits of Steel,” recalling her experiences as an undergraduate when a woman professor advised her that if she were going to be a feminist in the academy, she would need tits of steel. The image stuck. Nāhiku commented, “When you do research in a feminist area or with colonized groups such as Hawaiians, you’re always going to get that backfire from other faculty.” Her “Tits of
Steel,” along with a postcard of a metallic bra stuffed with cotton (Figure 5.2), remind her not only to be on top of her game so that she does not get blind-sided by disparate faculty, but also to realize that she does not need any “padding” to be accepted as a respected scholar in the academy.

![Metallic Padded Bra Postcard]

Figure 5.2. Metallic Padded Bra Postcard

Another unusual, but significant, hōʻailona is the cedar rose given to her by a First Nations Coast Salish elder at the close of a ceremonial meeting. Nāhiku said, “I had just learned that my tenure application had been approved but I was still grieving over the recent loss of my father.” She was also in the midst of finishing her book, essentially about her father’s life journey. The cedar rose, fashioned similar to a rose made from Hawaiian lauhala, came to symbolize many things for Nāhiku. First, it represented continuity from one generation to the next. The Elder who presented her with the rose told her that her dad and her family loved her and would always be with her. This comforted Nāhiku knowing that her tūtū, father, and other kūpuna would always be present in her life. Second, it symbolized the end of a long and arduous journey to attain tenure. Although she was still working on the manuscript for her book, the cedar rose
signified a tremendous accomplishment in her life. Third, because the cedar rose is used for healing among the Coast Salish tribe of British Columbia, it suggested that all would be well with her. She would heal from the loss of her father and her tūtū. She would receive tenure, complete her book, and continue with her teaching, research, and community service as a Native Hawaiian scholar.

While each hōʻailona was deeply symbolic, perhaps none was more meaningful than Nāhiku’s painting of the shark cloud over Kahoʻolawe (Figure 5.3). This island was originally called Kanaloa, for the god of ocean, and served as a training venue for kahuna (priests) and navigators. Prior to her trip to this sacred island, Nāhiku said, “I began to see images of sharks everywhere.” Sharks are considered to be a powerful ‘aumākua or family guardian among Native Hawaiians. For example, while traveling over the Koʻolau Mountains to attend a conference on a beautiful cloudless day, Nāhiku commented, “I noticed a single cloud in the sky resembling a shark fin.” It appeared to her as if the shark were swimming toward the ocean. Later, when she escorted a group of exchange students to Kahoʻolawe, she said, “All of these shark images kept coming up.” While sitting on the beach waiting for the next boat of students to arrive, she noticed a rock shaped like a shark fin. The following morning, as the group chanted to E Ala E, the sun slowly rose over the eastern horizon illuminating a widening pattern of clouds stretching out over the island. To Nāhiku, the cloud pattern symbolized an ala kipapa, a pathway paved with stones. Pointing to her painting, she explained, “I chose to represent the clouds in my painting as shark fins. It’s a path laid out before us. As the sun rises it illuminates our path.”
Below the cloud pattern of shark fins and the rising sun, Nāhiku painted a series of waves descending in size from left to right. The waves represented the turbulent ocean waves that greeted her upon her arrival in Kahoʻolawe that gradually became calmer mirroring the progressively relaxed mood of the students in her group. Nāhiku reflected, “The waves got calmer and the tension among the students seemed to disappear.” While the painting clearly captures her experiences on Kahoʻolawe and her intended pathway, Nāhiku explained, “I think the waves relate to my tenure experience because it has been a rough year. After working so hard for tenure, I expected to enjoy a post-tenure honeymoon. Instead, this year started out really turbulent.” In her first post-tenure year, Nāhiku observed, “Even before the semester began, things started churning. We took care of one problem and another problem was right behind it. And behind that one was yet another problem.” No longer feeling “protected” as a junior faculty member, she stated that she is now chairing dissertation and university-wide committees. These committees are now her kuleana; she can no longer delegate these responsibilities to senior faculty. Explaining the unforeseen expectations of tenure, she said, “I am expected to take on new leadership roles in a cultural context which is something new for me. I am being challenged to step up as the poʻo (leader) of the group.” She continued,
“The expectations are totally amping up and I don’t feel completely prepared. It is just hitting me so fast.” Relating this to Kaho‘olawe, she said, “It’s just like when we got off the boat. I know I can swim, but I just swallowed so much salt water that day; the ocean was so rough. The waves just kept pounding me.” Although her first post-tenure year started out rough, she was able to weather the rough waters and both she and the ocean waves grew calmer as time passed.

Similar to the way in which she handled the turbulence among her graduate students on Kaho‘olawe and gradually made things ho‘omalie again, Nāhiku will continue to learn to balance increasingly challenging responsibilities as a tenured faculty member. While her tenure experience was dictated by the Western structure of the academy, Nāhiku is committed to engaged scholarship framed by Native Hawaiian values. She described engaged scholarship as “extending the resources of the university to the community so that the skill sets we have here are available to the community to help them do what they need to do.” She mentioned that engaged scholarship is also about being accountable to the community. Nāhiku explained, “It’s important that my work is relevant to the community. Being accountable to the community is connected to my kuleana, recognizing my responsibilities as an academic.” Indeed, Nāhiku is driven by kuleana—a responsibility to follow the pathway laid out for her by her predecessors and kūpuna, a pathway she feels compelled to maintain and keep clear for the next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars.
In response to my request to provide artifacts representing her academic and tenure experiences, Pi‘ikea replied that most of her artifacts were very personal because the artifacts in her life were objects that served as metaphors, symbols, and intimate moʻolelo that had significantly shaped her life along with myriad relationships and decisions she had made since her earliest memories. She stated, “There’s a Hawaiian belief that the mana is within the artifact. The few that I have kept are like that. They are not something I would feel comfortable sharing or talking about.” Respecting and honoring her wishes, I did not press her any further. At our third meeting, however, she displayed a beautiful hōʻailona—a handcrafted ceramic bowl that she received as a gift.

A few years ago, Pi‘ikea was asked to be the keynote speaker for a college commencement ceremony. The college asked one of their art professors to create a special piece to honor Pi‘ikea. To gather background information, the college trustees hosted a lunch meeting to get to know her and requested a biographical statement. The art professor used this information, and that which he gathered from some of the deans and professors who had worked with Pi‘ikea, as his source of inspiration.

Pi‘ikea said, “The art professor chose a bowl because a bowl is a receptacle of warmth, love, healing, and infinite wisdom.” In creating the base of the bowl, he used clay mixed with sand from her home island. He left this lower portion of the bowl unpainted to represent the ‘āina on which she was born. The sides of the bowl are blue representing the ocean rising up from the sea floor. Rather than using a smooth, glassy surface, the artist embedded fissures and spewing lava to represent the formation of the
islands. Pointing to the bowl where the ocean rises up from its sandy foundation, Piʻikea explained, “This represents the Kumulipo (an ancient Hawaiian chant describing the creation of the world, the origin of the islands, and the birth of the first humans) rising up from darkness, creating the ‘āina, creating me and my foundation.”

Under the lip of the bowl, the artist strung kukui nuts and shells to form a lei. The kukui remind her of the mountains surrounding her childhood home. She explained, “When you find kukui in the mountains, you will find fresh water underneath. That’s why it is called the tree of life. It is the hōʻailona of Kāne, who is the god of water, light and life.” Piʻikea added, “The kukui is also a symbol of light and enlightenment.” The shells, which the artist gathered from the beach on her home island, form the shape of a flower representing Piʻikea’s Hawaiian name. Cords of fiery colors spew over the edges of the bowl symbolic of Pele, goddess of the volcano. Piʻikea pointed out, “Notice the red and yellow fibers representing the fiery lava of Pele. The darker fibers represent the lava as it cools; the dark lava that cools and creates land.” Finally, the lip of the bowl is rounded without edges symbolizing an infinite flow in and out of the bowl.

This magnificent bowl is Piʻikea’s hōʻailona. It represents her native land, the ‘āina on which she was born and raised. It serves as a moʻolelo, a story about the origin of the world, humanity, and her moʻokūʻauhau. In this way, it connects her to all of her ancestors. The bowl symbolizes the ‘ike, or knowledge, she learned from her parents and grandparents about Hawaiian culture. It serves as a reminder to never lose sight of who she is as she continues her academic and professional pursuits. This beautiful hōʻailona reminds her to remain firmly grounded in her Native Hawaiian cultural values.
The Native Hawaiian values upon which she was raised are posted in her workplace for all to emulate. These three values (aloha, ʻohana, and lōkāhi) are not merely attractive wall hangings; they serve as the core of her foundation, her work ethic, and her personal philosophy. They serve as hōʻailona, symbols of her life and way of being.

The first sign visible as one enters her department is “aloha.” The poster reads:

ALOHA—the self-less giving without the expectation of reciprocity…the ability for us to empathize with others and treat our colleagues and those we serve with the sensitivity and respect that brings out their (and our) best qualities and strengths to define, then complete our tasks with excellence.

Piʻikea learned the meaning of aloha from the teachings and examples of her parents and kūpuna. She explained that the concept of aloha goes deeper and broader than the dictionary definition of “love, compassion, or affection” to encompass the “ability to anticipate what someone needs and to give without any expectation of return.” As with ancient voyagers who had to anticipate the needs of fellow crewmembers and respond accordingly, Piʻikea anticipates and understands the needs of her colleagues and students and responds with selfless giving. Furthermore, she admonishes them to do likewise. Thus, the spirit of aloha is not mere lip service in her department; it “lives” because it is practiced and perpetuated.

Adjacent to this sign is one that states:

ʻOHANA—a family or team bonded by a continuous thread of ancestry, history, culture and/or aims. While the environment can alter the shape and operations of our Department, as an ʻOhana, these changes will not sever the fundamental moral, historical, and strategic threads that define who we are and how we will respond in an unknown future. Our ʻOhana faces adversity together, coalescing the sum of our diverse talents to create something new—to become something more than when we began. And, we savor and celebrate (without gloating or becoming complacent) our achievements.
Here again, Pi‘ikea’s concept of ‘ohana extends beyond the traditional concept of the nuclear, extended, or generational family, tied by ancestral threads, to include groups of people united by history, culture, or goals. This provides inclusivity to all ethnic groups that have emigrated to Hawai‘i and share a common history. It creates a special bond as diverse individuals use their unique talents to achieve strategic goals. This definition of ‘ohana moves beyond complacency in one’s accomplishments toward continuous improvement. Finally, Pi‘ikea used the cultural concept of ‘ohana as the contextual cross-cultural framework within which she framed the interpersonal relationships within her department’s faculty, students, and staff that then led to a shared professional and scholarly culture.

The third sign in the hallway reads:

LŌKĀHĪ—the ability for us to be Servant-Leaders who strive to establish a set of working relationships that builds a team or an ‘ohana. These relationships seek to achieve balance or harmony within ourselves and with others so that we are able to work smart, learn how to play and have fun while we work. It is balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of those we serve.

“For much of my life, since childhood,” Pi‘ikea said, “I was taught and expected to be a leader.” Her parents taught her that service was the most essential quality of a leader. From her parents and kūpuna she learned that a leader must provide a balance between times of peace and harmony and periods of struggle and challenge. Pi‘ikea expands this definition of lōkahi to balance the needs of each individual in her program with the needs of those she serves thus teaching people to look beyond their own needs to focus on the needs of others.

Unlike faculty who may post Hawaiian values on their walls, but do not practice or emulate them, Pi‘ikea embodies these Native Hawaiian values. As I sat and talked
with her, everything about her exudes aloha. She is innately kind, loving, respectful, and generous. Listening to her speak about her students and colleagues, it is evident she considers them ‘ohana and treats them accordingly–always anticipating their needs when she works with them to outline their individual faculty development plans that complement and support their department’s overall strategic performance plan. Discussing her professional goals, it is clear that she leads others through humble, selfless service. Here is a woman who has achieved tremendous professional success in the medical and academic community, not through acculturation or assimilation of Western values, customs, or attitudes, but precisely by practicing and living traditional Native Hawaiian values passed down from her ancestors. The cultural integrity of her Indigenous practices has built a framework within which she and those she leads have learned to culturally accommodate (via Hawaiian values of aloha, lōkahi and ‘ohana) and transcend ethnocultural boundaries of the Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians she leads.

**Chapter Summary**

As I considered the many hōʻailona that symbolized Nā Wahine’s academic and tenure experiences, I created a holistic hōʻailona (Figure 5.4) representing the collective experiences of Nā Wahine. At the center of this spiral image is kalo, revered as the elder sibling of the Hawaiian people. The kalo leaves form a spiral shape based on the koru, an unfurling silver fern frond symbolizing new life, renewal, enlightenment, strength, and change. The spiral-shaped koru symbolizes interconnectedness from one generation to the next forming an endless moʻokūʻauhau. I selected the koru design to represent new beginnings for Nā Wahine and Native Hawaiians, including the unfurling and birth of new ideas. Just as new shoots symbolize growth and rejuvenation, I envision a future for
Native Hawaiians full of endless possibilities. As leaders and educators in academe, Nā Wahine are at the forefront of many of these changes.

Nine hōkū form another spiral-shaped frond in this Indigenous design. These hōkū represent the nine Nā Wahine in their hōkū form shining brightly, illuminating the path for future generations. A pattern of dark triangles curves around the kalo pattern. The top point of each triangle represents Ke Akua (God or spirit); the left point, Hina (female goddess), representing women; and the right point, Kū (male god), representing men. The three points of the triangle also symbolize a balance between Ke Akua, people, and nature.

![Figure 5.4. Nā Wahine Collective Hō‘ailona](image)

In essence, this study is a story about my academic and tenure experiences and those of Nā Wahine. In an effort to unite and meld our experiences, I created a third hō‘ailona to reflect our combined experiences. This hō‘ailona (Figure 5.5) is a composite of my hōnū hō‘ailona (Figure 3.1) and Nā Wahine’s collective hō‘ailona (Figure 5.4). In this new image, the koru is superimposed over the hōnū. This composite hō‘ailona, inclusive of Tahitian design, connects and binds me emotionally, physically, spiritually, and intellectually with Nā Wahine. It represents the interconnectedness of all things and a perpetual path of knowledge passed from one generation to the next.
Figure 5.5. Composite Hōʻailona
CHAPTER 6
FINDINGS

“Kalo kanu o ka ʻāina.”
Taro planted on the land.
Natives of the land from generations back.
ʻOlelo Noʻeau (No. 1447, p. 157)

Overview

Three themes emerged from this study: 1) Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), 2) Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power), and 3) Pono (Indigenous Authenticity). The first theme, Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa, refers to the institutional and personal barriers that Nā Wahine faced in their voyage through academe. The term hoʻokeʻa means to hinder, obstruct, or block as a barrier. The word pōhaku means stone or rock. Using these two terms together, I visualize large pōhaku in the river acting as barriers, obstructing and impeding the flow of running water. These pōhaku represent the multiple barriers encountered by Nā Wahine. But, similar to a flowing stream, Nā Wahine flow over and around the pōhaku in their path becoming polished and refined in the process. The second theme, Mana Wahine, refers to the innate female power that Nā Wahine have genetically inherited. It is this inherent female empowerment that gives Nā Wahine the strength and ability to overcome multiple barriers. The third theme, Pono, refers to Indigenous authenticity. Pono means goodness, uprightness, proper procedure, excellence, well-being, and a true condition or nature. I use the term “pono” to represent the true Indigenous condition or nature of Native Hawaiians.

Described in the above ʻOlelo Noʻeau, Native Hawaiians are the Indigenous Peoples of the land—genealogically connected to kalo many generations back. As such, rather than using conventional diagrams to represent the themes of this study, I conceptualized the themes as kalo (Figure 6.1), something that proved to be highly
symbolic for Nā Wahine. The kalo is the corm or tuber that provides taro and poi—staple foods in the Hawaiian diet. It is important to remember that kalo grows from the ‘āina, which is female, again characterizing the inherent relationship between Native Hawaiian women and the ‘āina.

How does kalo depict the salient themes of this study? Kalo symbolizes the ‘ohana, the root of Native Hawaiian culture and identity, and one of the most significant values discussed by Nā Wahine. The huluhulu (roots) signify the mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) that connects Nā Wahine to their ancestors—a key source of female empowerment. The lau, or leaves of the plant, represent the three themes of the study: 1) Pōhaku Ho‘oke‘a, 2) Mana Wahine, and 3) Pono. The hā, or leaf stalks, denote ancestral knowledge flowing up from the ‘āina. The ‘ohā (young shoots) suggest future generations and new knowledge. In this chapter, I describe each major theme along with several sub-themes derived from the common lived experiences of Nā Wahine as reflected in their mo‘olelo and hō‘ailona.

Figure 6.1. Kalo
Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa

I describe the first theme in this study as Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (barriers). Throughout their academic voyage, Nā Wahine encountered numerous institutional and personal barriers. In this section, I describe the barriers that Nā Wahine faced on their journey to obtain a PhD and during the tenure process. The strategies and supports used to overcome these barriers will be addressed in the second theme, Mana Wahine.

Institutional Barriers

As Indigenous women of color, Nā Wahine experienced numerous institutional barriers including issues pertaining to racism, sexism, and patriarchy; the residual effects of colonialism; politics and power; tenure discourses; tokenism; cultural tensions; and native research.

Racism, Sexism, and Patriarchy

Nā Wahine described various experiences pertaining to racism, sexism, and patriarchy. For example, Atea first experienced racism as a child when she noticed that her teachers treated her differently. Although she was in the fastest reading group, she said, “I was not the right color.” Atea responded to this early challenge in life by excelling in her schoolwork. As an adult, she described a racial incident that occurred shortly after receiving her PhD in which a haole professor looked at her disparagingly and asked, “You’re a Hawaiian, so what are you going to do with a PhD?” As she silently contemplated this question, she thought, “I’m going to take your job!” Essentially, that is exactly what she did in becoming a tenured professor. Unfortunately, the number of Native Hawaiian professors is still relatively few.
Melemele affirmed, “UH Mānoa is still a bastion of White colonialism and until Native Hawaiians achieve a critical mass, little will change.” Despite the university’s professed goals to advance conditions for Native Hawaiians, Melemele is doubtful that UH Mānoa can ever become a Hawaiian place of learning because it remains firmly entrenched in patriarchal, Western conventions. Many Nā Wahine stated the urgency to hire more Native Hawaiian faculty to create a place for Hawaiian learning.

When asked about the central issue facing Native Hawaiian women faculty at UH Mānoa, Atea emphatically declared, “White racism.” She elaborated, “Outside of Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian Language, there are hardly any positions or spaces for Native Hawaiians.” When she informs haole (White) faculty that only 4% of the faculty at UH Mānoa are Native Hawaiian, she said, “They go, ‘oh well,’ because the underlying assumption is that everybody should be White.” Qualifying this assumption, she added, “There are some White people who are also incredibly supportive of Native Hawaiians.” However, Atea seriously questions the probability of more Native Hawaiians getting tenure, “How can Native Hawaiians even get tenure? How do they get a tenure track position if the place is White and going to stay White?”

While other Nā Wahine were less direct, many described a racist behavior in which the dominant group on campus demonstrates a lack of respect for Native Hawaiian protocol and culture. For example, describing a situation with a recently tenured Native Hawaiian woman, Atea stated, “She was the first Native Hawaiian to ever get tenure in her department in more than 100 years” (the university was founded in 1907). “What is that, if that’s not racism?” According to Atea, this Native Hawaiian female faculty
member was told, “She should not chant at the beginning of her presentation and that she shouldn’t talk about Native Hawaiian things.”

Racism was problematic for Native Hawaiian faculty working in Hawai‘i and for those working in institutions on the continent. For example, early in her teaching career, Hōkūao experienced gender and race politics at a mostly Hispanic elementary school in California. The superintendent, a Hispanic male, discriminated against women, and oddly enough, against people of color. He threatened his subordinates with a plethora of racial slurs to intimidate teachers and principals and presented Hōkūao with a sexist departing gift inferring that only a man could do the job. Hōkūao responded to these discriminatory practices with courage and with a profound love for teaching and learning. She explained, “My passion for learning, teaching, and leading was strengthened by this really bad experience.”

Hōkūao described another experience working at a Midwestern state university surrounded by prolific White male scholars who literally wrote the textbooks on leadership in education and teachers’ standards. She described them as an “all White, male, boy’s club.” As a woman of color, she clearly did not fit in. She felt intimidated much of the time due to gender tension and particularly because of her position as a junior faculty member. Senior White male professors often pulled the “rank and tenure card” on Hōkūao causing her to feel overwhelmed and discouraged. She overcame these obstacles by learning the expectations of promotion and tenure (along with the politics of academe), understanding the culture of her discipline, following the “recipe” for tenure (but doing it her own way), and by receiving guidance from wonderful mentors.
While most Nā Wahine shared similar personal experiences dealing with racism, sexism, or patriarchy, Piʻikea’s situation was somewhat different. She pointed out that each of her medical professors (composed of diverse genders and races) saw it as their responsibility to ensure the success of all students. As a Native Hawaiian medical student, she said, “I felt continuous support and guidance from the faculty and administration.” Later, as a faculty member, she experienced tremendous support from colleagues and supervisors regarding promotion and tenure. Piʻikea mentioned that in a particular field of medicine, White women—not women of color—get passed over in the upper echelons of leadership. She noted, “If you’re a woman of color, you have an advantage over them.” Piʻikea attributes her unique experiences in the academy to the supportive culture and environment of JABSOM.

While Nā Wahine experienced multiple layers of racial and sexual/gender discrimination, they addressed these adverse conditions through love and power. Instead of taking a combative stance, Nā Wahine chose to embrace their adversaries with aloha while exercising their mana. For example, Hōkūao endured years of discriminatory practices by developing a passion for learning and teaching that circumvented and overpowered her oppressive working conditions. She increased her power as a junior faculty member by learning the expectations of promotion and tenure, yet infusing the process with Native Hawaiian values. Makaliʻi’s lifelong love for the ‘āina was paramount in her struggle to attain tenure and gave her the strength to persist. After her voyage on the Hōkūleʻa, Atea switched her focus from political activism to a love for learning and teaching ancestral knowledge. Increasing her understanding of ancestral wisdom empowered her as Native Hawaiian woman warrior. As Nā Wahine expanded
their ability to love (in spite of adversity), they magnified their mana as Native Hawaiian women. Their mana was strengthened by the love they demonstrated for people and places, by the Native Hawaiian values that shaped their lives, and by their growing consciousness and acceptance of their Native Hawaiian identity.

Colonialism

According to Nā Wahine, the dominant colonial narrative about Hawaiian history is so pervasive that it is viewed as natural and legitimate. Nā Wahine discussed how American colonizers have used language and education as colonizing tools to persuade Native Hawaiians that the Western way of doing things is morally and intellectually superior over native or non-Western ways. They spoke emphatically of how colonizers coerced and manipulated Native Hawaiians to renounce their lands and language.

More than 100 years following the contested annexation of Hawai‘i to the U.S., Nā Wahine reported that Native Hawaiians continue to experience the residual effects of colonialism involving economic, political, social, and cultural issues—many of which are directly linked to poverty. Expounding on this idea, Atea exclaimed, “Americans stole our land; that’s why we’re poor.” Makaʻala regretted that higher education was never accessible or probable for her father. In an effort to reclaim and rewrite Hawaiian history, Makaliʻi said, “I chose to become a historian to document how our land was stolen and to authenticate the armed resistance of Native Hawaiians in the 19th century.” Similarly, Kalewanuʻu documented the resistance of Native Hawaiians to annexation and the overthrow of the monarchy by reviewing original texts written in Hawaiian.

Colonialism has left many Native Hawaiians without land, language, or power. Many Native Hawaiian families (including those of Nā Wahine) have been shackled by
poverty, poor health, and a lack of educational opportunities. Despite the devastating effects of colonization, Nā Wahine strive to empower Native Hawaiians with knowledge of their ancestors, culture, history, and language. In doing so, they endeavor to rewrite history and right social, political, and economic conditions for Native Hawaiians.

Nā Wahine observed that while some Native Hawaiians continue to fight for sovereignty, most must contend with the daily challenges of living in a postcolonial world. In the aftermath of U.S. colonial policy, Postcolonialism opens the way for Indigenous Peoples to rework their own histories to reveal the truth about imperialism, colonialism, and oppression. Atea, Makaliʻi, and Kalewanuʻu have helped disrupt the dominant historical narrative by rewriting Hawaiian history from a Native Hawaiian perspective. Since Atea’s initial voyage on the Hōkūleʻa, she has relinquished her political activism to focus on learning and teaching ancestral knowledge. She stated, “Traditional knowledge should be taught in the academy—knowledge from our kumu hula (hula teachers), lawaiʻa (fishers) and our mahiʻai (farmers).” Nā Wahine are rooted in Native Hawaiian values, moʻolelo, and moʻokūʻauhau as reflected in their scholarly and community endeavors. Acknowledged as scholars, teachers, authors, and leaders, Nā Wahine are animate and active in empowering Native Hawaiians.

Politics And Power

Nā Wahine discussed the oppressive effects of university politics and power. For example, as an undergraduate, Nāhiku got her first taste of political power in the academy when she was charged with threatening the academic freedom of particular women faculty. “They were threatening to expel us from school,” she said, “because one person who we recommended not to teach (for our program) was a close friend of the chair. The
chair initiated a process to sanction us for doing this.” Nāhiku commented, “Looking back, I see how the politics in the university work and why.” From this experience, she learned that women in the academy need to be strong and have “tits of steel” to handle the many challenges they experience.

University politics created other problems for Nā Wahine. For instance, after eight years teaching and advising students in her discipline, Melemele said, “There were many tensions, conflicts, and hardships both philosophically, ethically, and politically between me and the dean at that time.” This tension became so unbearable that Melemele—already a tenured associate professor—requested a change of tenure locus to another department. Several other faculty members exited the department at the same time. Reflecting back on this experience, Melemele said, “I don’t think it was about being Hawaiian or anything like that but I think it may have been about homophobia. In my heart, I don’t feel that’s what it was but it may have been.” As the university administration negotiated her line position and funding for another department, Melemele reminded them, “I am Hawaiian and I am a woman. I am a productive teacher, scholar, and community servant. I have already been tenured and promoted. Why wouldn’t you find a place for me in this university?” In this situation, Melemele stood her ground, confirming her position as a tenured faculty member with outstanding teaching evaluations, research grants, and national and international publications.

**Tenure Discourses**

Tenure is a longstanding androcentric discourse inscribed into academic culture by White, Western faculty. The discourse ensures conformity and constancy as opposed to diversity and innovation. According to Nā Wahine, the tenure process privileges
several things: 1) a single scholarly focus, 2) conformity to patriarchal Western academic conventions, 3) publishing over teaching and service, 4) ample department resources, and 5) faculty without family care obligations.

First, Nā Wahine reported that the tenure process privileges a single scholarly focus. With a broad area of scholarly interests, Melemele soon learned that the university did not value pursuing a diverse research agenda. Instead, she was advised to narrow her research focus to a single area. As she noted, “Doing many different things is not valued in academe.” Hōkūpa‘a added that in addition to encouraging a single scholarly focus, “tenure privileges that one way of thinking.” Describing the “ivory towers” of the academy, Melemele explained that faculty are intentionally socialized to conduct their research independently (rather than collaboratively) in academic silos. She said, “They are expected to be “that tower of knowledge, information, experience, and research.” Maka‘ala observed that faculty who spend solitary time writing and getting their work published are more valued than those faculty who excel at teaching and community service. She recommended the tenure process be changed “to respect women’s ways of knowing and being.” Reflecting on her tenure experience, Makali‘i added, “Things were much more hostile and politically active when I went through tenure.” As research interests have shifted, she encourages senior faculty to support new Native Hawaiian faculty whose interests lean more towards “culture, language, art, and literature, rather than politics.”

Second, the tenure process privileges conformity to established Western academic conventions. Nā Wahine observed that tenure is typically awarded to faculty who demonstrate their value to their department, discipline, college, community, and
university. By design, the tenure process clones faculty to perform according to customary conventions. For example, Melemele explained, “Faculty members who prescribe to academic conventions and play by the rules usually get tenure.” She pointed out that faculty must “perform service, teach, and do scholarly work in a prescribed manner” to get tenure. Hōkūao added that she learned to “follow the recipe” to get tenure, but did it in her own way. Melemele shared that when Native Hawaiian faculty do not get tenure, “They claim we are not smart enough.” Rather than looking at what is wrong with the tenure system, she said, “We are blamed and victimized.” According to Kalewanu‘u, tenure privileges those who research, publish, and teach, while being able to “handle way too much work.”

Third, the tenure process privileges publishing over teaching and community service. As Nā Wahine learned the culture of their respective disciplines, the pressure to publish was tacitly understood. Nā Wahine described a conflict between teaching and community service (both of great value to Native Hawaiians) and the pressure to publish. For example, Melemele explained that Nā Wahine “must establish a scholarly reputation on a national and international level.” She stressed, “It is not sufficient just to publish, you have to publish in the best journals.” Makaliʻi added, “If we lack research and publications, we do not get promoted or tenured.” Atea confirmed, “To become a full professor, it is not enough to secure grants and conduct innovative research; faculty must publish.” Makaliʻi pointed out that writing and publishing can be particularly challenging for some Native Hawaiian faculty saying, “In academia, scholars are expected to pontificate, whereas in Hawaiian society, you are expected to be respectful and communicate in language everyone can understand.” This creates a dilemma for Nā
Wahine who value being haʻahaʻa (humble) but are expected to boast about their accomplishments in their tenure dossiers.

Fourth, Nā Wahine noted the tenure process privileges those disciplines and departments with sufficient resources and infrastructures to support faculty in conducting research and preparing dossiers. While larger units, typically in Natural Sciences, provide many levels of support to tenure-track faculty, in smaller units Makaʻala said, “Faculty must seek out their own grants, design and conduct their study on their own, request letters of support, and complete the necessary paperwork.” This situation is particularly troublesome because few Native Hawaiian faculty are situated in the natural sciences.

Fifth, along with ensuring conformity, the tenure process discriminates against tenure-track women responsible for childcare or eldercare. Most Nā Wahine stressed the importance of having a childcare center on every campus in the UH Mānoa System. Nāhiku noted that childcare becomes particularly problematic when the female faculty member is the primary income earner in the family. With no family leave plan, women faculty must carefully plan for the birth or adoption of their children in early summer or apply for sabbatical or a post-doctoral fellowship. Eldercare also poses a unique problem for Nā Wahine. For instance, Atea juggles writing, teaching, research, and other academic responsibilities around the care of her elderly mother.

While most Nā Wahine found the tenure experience to be challenging and stressful, they found a great deal of support from their department, colleagues, mentors, and the Native Hawaiian academic community. Makaliʻi’s experience, however, was somewhat different from that of other Nā Wahine. Comparing the tenure experience to a
stone, she observed, “Tenure is much like picking up a stone, turning it over, and seeing bugs crawl out.” Clearly, one never knows what to expect. Unlike other Nā Wahine who received support and guidance from mentors and colleagues, Makali‘i experienced resistance and struggle—surprisingly from other Native Hawaiian faculty. The conflict centered on the use of the land near the Hawaiian Studies building. At the time, faculty and administration were more interested in creating a place for teaching and learning than in maintaining the lo‘i. As we visited in the lo‘i, Makali‘i affirmed, “My tenure was threatened because of the stand that I took for this lo‘i when the Hawaiian Studies building was built. Remaining steadfast in her resolve to maintain the lo‘i (with support from her department), Makali‘i eventually received tenure and the lo‘i became a permanent part of Hawai‘inuiākea (School of Hawaiian Knowledge). This experience demonstrates the diverse aims of Native Hawaiian faculty who are unique individuals with distinct perspectives and goals.

**Tokenism**

With relatively few Native Hawaiian women faculty at UH Mānoa, tokenism tends to be prevalent. Nā Wahine are often the only Native Hawaiian in their department; thus, they serve on a number of committees requiring diverse ethnic representation. Speaking about her experience as the only Native Hawaiian in her department, Melemele said:

> For those of us who are the only ones in our departments, it’s harder, because we’re trying to navigate our place as the only one. I’m the only Hawaiian ever in the 100-year history of this department! They’ve never had a Hawaiian faculty member; I mean, lecturer, nothing. They’ve never had an instructional faculty member who’s Hawaiian–male or female. And they’ve never had tenured Hawaiian faculty–male or female.
Atea expressed her concern over the “psychological, emotional, and physical problems” for Nā Wahine who are the only natives in an otherwise “all White department.” Describing her experience with tokenism, Nāhiku commented, “We are asked to serve to fulfill the need for Native Hawaiian representation. We’re all pulled in a thousand different directions.” Kalewanu’u added that as more students write their theses and dissertations in Hawaiian, there is a greater need for faculty fluent in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. This, of course, contributes to an already heavy workload.

**Cultural Tensions**

Many Nā Wahine deal with cultural tensions (imposed by the Western conventions of the academy) through a process of cultural dissonance; a phenomenon that occurs when an individual participating in multiple cultures is faced with situations where she perceives conflicts between a set of rules or conventions from one culture and those of another. In dealing with this cultural conflict, Nā Wahine straddle both worlds by learning the rules to play the game. Similar to Hōkūao’s experience, Na Wahine learned the expectations of tenure, followed the recipe—but did it in their own way. Early in their careers, some felt obliged to “jump” when asked to do so by subscribing to Western academic and research conventions. But as they developed and nurtured their Native Hawaiian identity, they learned to manage this cultural dissonance. While Nā Wahine identify most strongly with their Native Hawaiian ethnicity, they are of mixed ethnicities. Most are part White or part Asian. This multiplicity allows them to contextually adapt to situations characterizing themselves as Hawaiian, Haole, Japanese, Portuguese, etc. In Kalewanu’u’s case, it allows her to “code haole” in one situation and speak ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in another.
While Nā Wahine identify themselves as members of an Indigenous group, the U.S. federal government legislates native identity based on blood quantum. Similar to the way in which the government defined American Indians as having a 25% blood quantum, the Hawaiian Homestead Act of 1920 defined native Hawaiians (small “n” is part of the federal definition) as those with 50% or more aboriginal blood (Wright, 2003). Only those Hawaiians with a blood quantum of 50% or more are eligible to lease lands allotted by the federal government for homesteading or agricultural activities. This speaks to who has authority to define whom and illustrates the power of the colonizer to shape the collective identity of Native Hawaiians. By defining Native Hawaiians strictly by blood quantum, it is not difficult to see that in coming years, Native Hawaiian beneficiaries will no longer qualify for Hawaiian Homestead land—further dispossessing Native Hawaiians from their ʻāina.

Tensions between Native Hawaiian and Western culture often centered on service and teaching. While some Nā Wahine noted greater acceptance in the academy for innovation in teaching, they pointed out that innovative teaching will not warrant tenure. As Nāhiku affirmed, “It’s the research, it’s the writing” that qualifies one for tenure. Many are torn between their desire to perform community service and the need to conduct research and publish. For example, despite her publishing and teaching credentials, Hōkūpa’a said, “A lot of people told me that I had too much service. It was unbalanced.” She responded to this concern by securing a book contract before applying for tenure. Maka’ala pointed out, “Tenure privileges those who publish, not those who serve.” Hōkūao added that service is inherent for Native Hawaiians and believes that the best leader is one who diligently works to serve others. Tenure not only privileges
research over teaching and service, it also privileges Western-centered positivist research over studies pertaining to native issues.

Native Research Issues

In selecting a native research agenda, many Nā Wahine feel they have to justify their Indigenous position pertaining to their scholarly work. As Nāhiku observed, non-Hawaiian faculty sometimes feel “we are being too Hawaiian.” Hōkūao described a situation in which a respected scholar warned her that she would never become a star in the academy if she did native work. Hōkūao, nonetheless, continued with her Indigenous research agenda and published three articles in respected peer-reviewed journals.

A particular challenge is to support junior faculty whose research interests focus on Native Hawaiian issues. For example, Kalewanuʻu feels a great responsibility to support Native Hawaiian students, many of whom are engaged in “Hawaiian centered scholarship,” based on Hawaiian theories and language. As more Native Hawaiian students write their theses and dissertations in Hawaiian, it will become increasingly imperative to have more tenured Native Hawaiian faculty who can speak, read, and write Hawaiian to serve on students’ committees. This will create a stronger demand for faculty fluent in Hawaiian.

Personal Barriers

In addition to barriers imposed by the institution, Nā Wahine experienced many personal challenges during the tenure process. As demonstrated in the literature, women faculty, in general, encounter numerous obstacles. Women of color and Indigenous women face additional challenges confounded by race, ethnicity, and culture. Nā Wahine’s subjectivities are further complicated through issues of colonial oppression.
Personal barriers identified by Nā Wahine involved issues pertaining to death/loss, Native Hawaiian identity, class, gender, and family care.

**Death/Loss**

Nā Wahine experienced the death of many loved ones—particularly parents and kūpuna. For example, despite losing her mother at the age of six, Hōkūao was surrounded by a wonderful father and loving grandparents. Her grandparents were poor and lived a simple life, yet, she said, “They were very clear on the path I would take in life—I would follow in my mother’s footsteps and become a teacher of teachers.” Melemele recalls losing her beloved grandmother (her educational muse), “She died when I was 16. It was a long time ago, but you know, I think of my grandmother everyday.” In Kalewanuʻu’s case, she experienced losing her mother twice. She explained, “I was removed from my mother’s custody at age 12 and sent to live with my aunt in Nevada,” essentially uprooting her from everything and everyone she had ever known. Later, while preparing for her dissertation defense, Kalewanuʻu’s mother passed away. When I asked how she focused on her dissertation while grieving the loss of her mother, she said, “I just sublimated everything into the dissertation. I came to work everyday and worked on my dissertation. Once it was over, I grieved. It would hit me in waves. It still comes and goes. Mom is home.” Despite the many challenges her mother faced, Kalewanuʻu said, “She gave me unconditional love.” Hōkūpaʻa also experienced several losses. At the age of 20, her favorite uncle passed away unexpectedly. Hōkūpaʻa recalled, “He was definitely a father figure.” Shortly after returning to Hawaiʻi, her beloved tūtū passed. More recently, Hōkūpaʻa suffered the loss of her father. In his honor, her newborn daughter carries her father’s middle name.
Despite these devastating losses, Nā Wahine persisted in achieving their goals. I surmise that they were able to do so because of their Indigenous perspective that all things in the universe are interconnected and because of their strong Hawaiian values pertaining to their ‘ohana, kūpuna, and ancestors. These familial values, passed down from one generation to the next, connect Nā Wahine to their ancestors and help preserve Hawaiian history, language, and culture while strengthening cultural identity. With humility and respect, Nā Wahine recognized that who they are today is due to all those who came before them. They acknowledged that in life and in death, relationships matter.  

Native Hawaiian Identity

Nā Wahine noted that their Native Hawaiian identity has been shaped and established through intergenerational relationships and a sense of connectedness to people and places. For some, being Hawaiian was just the way they lived; for others, maintaining a sense of Hawaiian identity was particularly problematic. As described in their moʻolelo, the repressive arm of colonialism reached deep into the homes and lives of many Nā Wahine, subduing their Hawaiian identity. 

The suppression of her native identity was a particular challenge for Makaʻala who said, “It’s been my Hawaiian identity (not my gender or geographical identity) that has been the greatest challenge.” In other examples, Piʻikea’s father discouraged her mother from speaking Hawaiian to the children. Melemele’s father felt embarrassed about being Hawaiian and advised her, “Don’t go to Kamehameha; don’t speak Hawaiian.” Makaʻala surmised that her father’s drinking problem “may have come in part from being a Hawaiian man living in a world that was ever changing and unwelcoming to Hawaiian men.” With the exception of two Nā Wahine who were raised
on the continent, the other women were raised in Hawai‘i in families with one or more Native Hawaiian parents and/or grandparents. For some, Hawaiian was spoken in the home; for others, they learned Hawaiian in high school or college. Those who attended college on the continent faced new experiences.

Melemele left for college on the East Coast immediately after graduating from high school. Attending an elite college, she found herself primarily among White and Black students. Reflecting on this experience she said, “No one looked like me. I just didn’t feel like I belonged up there.” She also encountered her first experience with social class. “These students were rich,” she said. “I had never been around rich haoles like that.” Astonished at seeing such disparity between Black and White students at the college, Melemele said, “I think I was a little overwhelmed by that exposure to so many new things.” While attending a doctoral program on the continent, Maka‘ala explained, “It was important to be White.” There was no openness at the time for ethnic perspectives in research methodologies. Feeling uncomfortable with her Native Hawaiian identity, Maka‘ala temporarily suppressed her Indigenous identity while acclimating to Western culture, values, and conventions.

Growing up in a Hawaiian family, Maka‘ala said, “Being Hawaiian was just the way we lived. There were no labels at home to describe Hawaiian behaviors or actions.” At Kamehameha Schools, however, she learned to label certain behaviors as Hawaiian and others as non-Hawaiian. She developed a great sense of pride in being Hawaiian. Things shifted in her master’s program at UH Mānoa, when instructors and program directors defined what it meant to be Hawaiian causing Maka‘ala to feel that she did not meet that definition. She explained, “In my master’s program, I did not feel Hawaiian
enough.” While attending a doctoral program in California she again experienced cultural dissonance. Makaʻala remarked, “I did not feel White enough. I was not accepted as a Hawaiian.” Throughout her doctoral program, she suppressed her Native Hawaiian identity while assimilating Western theories and research methods. She recalled, “Being a minority—a Hawaiian woman—didn’t resonate with the way theories and methods were being taught at the time.” She continued, “When I look back at that suppression of who I was for that four year period, I realize it was really tough.” After completing her doctorate and being hired at UH Mānoa, she continued to experience a cultural dissonance. Working with mostly White male faculty, Makaʻala commented, “At that time, there wasn’t even that openness to think about how you would do things the Hawaiian way. If you were in the academy—this is the way!” She learned to teach, research, and publish according to the prescriptive recipe established by White male faculty in her department, most of whom were middle class professors.

Class

Most Nā Wahine grew up in working class families. Many of their mothers worked as homemakers while their fathers worked as teachers, accountants, mechanics, welders, and car salesmen. Melemele’s mother worked as a nurse while Pi‘ikea’s mother was a farmer, fisherwoman, and homemaker. Atea and Hōkūao were raised by a single parent, Hōkūpaʻa grew up with divorced parents, and Kalewanuʻu and Hōkūao lived with other relatives. Kalewanuʻu stated, “I came from a working class family who grew up during the depression. They didn’t believe in college. It was a pretty dysfunctional family.” For many Native Hawaiian families, the oppressive effects of colonialism have manifested themselves in poverty and other social class issues. For example, Atea recalls
her mother covering holes in her bedroom walls with newspaper and recycled wallpaper to keep the wind from blowing through the holes. Maka'ala concluded that her father’s subliminal depression was because her father did not have the same opportunities available to him as did the colonizer group who had access to money and education, and therefore, more upward mobility. The families of Nā Wahine made many sacrifices to send their daughters to college.

Gender/Sexual Orientation

Many Nā Wahine experienced some form of sexual discrimination. For example, in her struggle to define her own feminine consciousness, Nāhiku learned that to become a feminist in the academy, a woman needs “tits of steel.” They were excluded from all male networks and forced to comply with tacit patriarchal structures, policies, and procedures. Among the nine participants, two described themselves as lesbian. Of these two women, only one discussed issues of homophobia. Makaʻala observed that gender does not appear to negatively influence the tenure process, but acknowledged there is still a gender bias at the leadership level. The leadership of this university is still predominantly White. As a Native Hawaiian leader, she has also observed that White male deans do not appear to take Native Hawaiian women seriously. Makaʻala elaborated, “There is still a gender difference in how women are regarded as leaders with less appreciation for women’s style of leadership.” Discrimination against women was particularly evident when it came to family care issues.

Family Care

Family care was an issue discussed by many Nā Wahine, particularly those who serve in dual roles as “motherscholars.” For example, because UH Mānoa does not offer
a family leave plan, Nāhiku had to apply for a post-doctoral fellowship when her second child was born. Hōkūpa’a planned the birth of her first child while on sabbatical. During her sabbatical, she was tasked with writing a book while caring for a newborn. While many Nā Wahine have already lost their parents or grandparents, Atea continues to care for her elderly mother who suffers from a number of medical issues. This requires extensive coordination between her busy academic schedule and her mother’s medical needs. As Melemele contemplated family care issues, she said, “We have to figure out a way to help Hawaiian women (students and faculty) who face so many barriers because of their care giving roles.” To encourage more Native Hawaiian women to enter the academy, Nā Wahine agreed that the university must provide greater support for faculty with family care obligations. Suggestions included sharing benefits for faculty parents, paid parental leave, a peer-support group for new parents, and expanded infant and child care centers. Of course, implementation of these suggestions does little to change the entrenched culture of higher education that tends to look unfavorably on tenure-track women who take time off for family care.

**Mana Wahine**

The second and most powerful theme in this study is Mana Wahine. Mana refers to spiritual power or strength. Wahine means woman or female. Thus, Mana Wahine reflects the innate strength and power of Nā Wahine. As descendants of 200,000 female goddesses, Native Hawaiian women emanate from a strong female culture. Nā Wahine pointed out that Mana Wahine existed from the beginning—with Pō (cosmic female night)—long before the dawn of Western feminism. Although Mana Wahine may embody certain feminist concepts, it differs from the Western notion of feminism because it
includes an innate genealogical strength inherited from Papahānaumoku (earth mother) and Wākea (sky father). Rooted in traditional native concepts and values, Mana Wahine embodies physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual characteristics.

**Characteristics of Mana Wahine**

Based on the data in this study, Mana Wahine consists of four characteristics mirroring the four concepts central to Indigenous epistemology. Physically, Mana Wahine is derived from Nā Wahine’s DNA, through the koko (blood) running through their veins, from the strength of their ‘ōiwi (bones), and from kalo (progenitor of the Native Hawaiian people)–all of which tie them directly to native ancestors, 200,000 Native Hawaiian female goddesses, and to the ‘āina that sustains and nourishes them. Knowing that they are descendants of powerful female ancestors empowers Nā Wahine to think, speak, and act in uncommon ways. It is this inherent strength and power that has enabled them to overcome daily challenges and serve as leaders in the academy. As women warriors, they are empowered with strength and knowledge through their moʻokūʻauhau to effect positive changes in the Native Hawaiian community.

Emotionally, Mana Wahine embodies a holistic kuleana to ‘ohana, community, society, future generations, and to the world. This explains Nā Wahine’s strong desire to be of service to their community. Mana Wahine is emboldened by Native Hawaiian values such as ‘ohana, aloha, malama ‘āina, and lōkāhi that demonstrate Nā Wahine’s compassion for people and places and their desire to work cooperatively with others. For example, traditional Hawaiian values such as malama ‘āina connect Nā Wahine to the ‘āina physically and emotionally and underscore their understanding that land is female
from which all living things are born. Thus, native land is an ancestor (not a commodity); it is family. The land, which is female, provides food and sustains life.

Mentally, Mana Wahine involves respecting and perpetuating Indigenous epistemology (including ancestral memory and knowledge) attained through the senses of mind, body, emotions, intuition, and dreaming. It involves linking these ancient ways of knowing with new knowledge. Nā Wahine (and other Native Hawaiian scholars) manifest Mana Wahine by challenging and rewriting ubiquitous historical narratives from a Native Hawaiian perspective. These counter-narratives provide an Indigenous view for understanding the world.

Spiritually, Mana Wahine acknowledges all life forms to be sacred and interconnected. It recognizes the spiritual life force in all things–humans, plants, animals, and the earth. Given the spiritual connection to all things, it is not surprising that Nā Wahine feel such a strong connection to the ʻāina. Mana Wahine recognizes the innate intelligence and cultural endowment that Nā Wahine have inherited from their Native Hawaiian ancestors.

Sources of Mana Wahine

As Nā Wahine shared their experiences through moʻolelo and hōʻailona, they described this innate female power emanating from three primary sources: 1) ancestors, 2) mothers, and 3) ʻāina. First, Nā Wahine acknowledged the overarching influence of their ancestors (recent and ancient) in guiding their life’s journey. They recognized the presence and influence of their ancestors helping them to make key decisions, prodding them to take a particular action, and directing their course. Second, Nā Wahine described their mothers as the most influential people in their lives providing continuous guidance
and inspiration. From their mothers, Nā Wahine learned Hawaiian values and cultural practices. They learned to be independent and self-reliant while continuing to care for the ‘ohana and community. Through selfless sacrifice, their mothers encouraged and supported Nā Wahine in their educational pursuits and often served as their education muse. Third, every Nā Wahine spoke of their love and respect for the ‘āina. This love goes back to kalo, their first ancestor. Many Nā Wahine grew up in rural settings harvesting their food from the ocean and the land. Several Nā Wahine have devoted their scholarship to issues pertaining to the ‘āina. For example, Hōkūpa‘a focused her doctoral research on Hawaiians’ sense of place and their relationship to the land. Atea examined issues of land tenure in the Hawaiian Kingdom, while Kalewanu‘u and Makali‘i investigated the illegal annexation of Hawaiʻi and the ensuing loss of lands. A connection to the ‘āina (and hence, to their ancestors) empowers Nā Wahine to overcome the lingering effects of oppression and colonization.

Nā Wahine are strong, empowered scholars, educators, and leaders who have utilized innate and acquired strengths and skills to overcome challenges and adversity. They challenge the racist, patriarchal, and ethnocentric policies and practices of the university by rewriting colonial narratives from the perspective of Native Hawaiians. They write curriculum and conduct research for and about Native Hawaiians, and they continue to advocate for the advancement of all Native Hawaiians.

Hō‘ailona of Mana Wahine

Nā Wahine’s hō‘ailona (discussed in Chapter 5) speak to their innate female power. For example, Atea’s woman warrior statue embodies her rebellious spirit as a native woman who spent many years as a political activist and continues to champion the
cause of Native Hawaiians. She described her persistent struggle to secure more faculty positions for Native Hawaiians, “Every once in a while we win a few positions. Noke, noke, noke–I just keep on struggling; keep on pushing along.” Guided and inspired by ancestral wisdom, Atea continues to advocate for Native Hawaiians. She acknowledges the mana of her female ancestors, particularly Haumea, Pele, and Hi‘iaka.

In Maka‘ala’s case, the pōhaku (stone) symbolizes the resilience that her family demonstrated in the face of many challenges. The pakalana lei made by Maka‘ala’s mother represents her parents’ unconditional love and symbolizes an intergenerational connection to her ancestors. The delicate woodrose which Maka‘ala has kept for many years connects her to the ‘āina. Both fragile and durable, Maka‘ala explained, “The woodrose represents my parents’ love for the ‘āina.” It also symbolizes her internal struggle with her Hawaiian identity. The poster that Maka‘ala created to represent her tenure experiences provides a holistic picture of her life including her connection to ‘ohana, ‘āina, mo‘okū‘auhau, ‘uhane (spirit), and her career. It encompasses that which she values most—relationships. Collectively, these hō‘ailona represent her growing consciousness as a Native Hawaiian woman dedicated to helping others.

Hōkūao’s painting of the Kiwi bird floods her spirit with memories of her mother and emboldens her to continue learning, teaching, and leading. Describing the painting, Hōkūao said, “It was my mother–flying into the sun with all these rays of power and story.” The “Council of Women” painting keeps her grounded in Native Hawaiian culture and reminds her of the energizing power she receives when she is surrounded by women whom she loves and respects. Hōkūao adds, “And it’s because of the experience around my grandma’s table.”
Another hōʻailona symbolic of Nā Wahine’s power is the kukui. Melemele explained, “Because of its use as a source of light, the kukui is often associated with learning, knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment.” For Melemele, the kukui represents the importance of Indigenous knowledge (including old traditions and new knowledge) for current and future generations.

One of the most powerful hōʻailona exemplifying Nā Wahine’s innate power is Nāhiku’s original painting of the shark clouds. Inspired by a unique cloud formation over Kahoʻolawe, Nāhiku represented the clouds with shark fins. She explained, “I chose to represent the clouds in my painting as shark fins because I began to see images of sharks everywhere.” The shark fins appeared to be laying out a path for Nāhiku that was illuminated by the rising sun. Nāhiku feels a sense of kuleana to follow the path established by her ancestors and to keep that path clear for future generations.

Lastly, Piʻikea’s ceramic bowl serves as a powerful hōʻailona representing the Kumulipo, an ancient chant describing the creation of the world and the origin of the Native Hawaiian people. Piʻikea explained, “This (bowl) represents the Kumulipo rising up from darkness, creating the ‘āina, creating me, and my foundation.” It symbolizes Hiʻiaka and Pele, two of the most powerful female goddesses and represents the ‘āina where Piʻikea was born. More importantly, the bowl serves as a moʻolelo about the origins of the planet, and the succession of humanity—including her own moʻokūʻauhau. Thus, the bowl connects Piʻikea to her ancestors, culture, traditions, history, and to Indigenous knowledge systems. These hōʻailona serve as examples of Nā Wahine’s innate female power.
Strategies and Supports

Nā Wahine successfully navigated the treacherous waters of the academy by incorporating several important strategies and support systems: 1) developing and strengthening pilina (relationships), 2) engaging in mentoring, 3) integrating Native Hawaiian values and culture, and 4) following the recipe for promotion and tenure.

Pilina (Relationships)

The first strategy/support employed by Nā Wahine was a focus on pilina, meaning the importance of relationships. True to their Indigenous identity, all Nā Wahine stressed that relationships with people (living and deceased), places, and the planet are central components of their Native Hawaiian culture and identity. Hawaiian epistemology maintains that all things in the universe are connected and interrelated. Relationships offer Native Hawaiians opportunities to practice cultural values such as aloha, malama ʻāina, lōkāhi, and pono. These relationships begin within the ʻohana and extend outward into the community. In all contexts, relationships matter. In the Hawaiian way of thinking, a solitary individual is unthinkable in the context of Hawaiian relationships because everything is interconnected. Through their moʻolelo and hōʻailona, Nā Wahine discussed the importance of pilina in all areas of their lives. In this section, I describe some of the significant family and social relationships in the lives of Nā Wahine.

Family Relationships

Most Nā Wahine grew up in women-centered families (including those who lived with both parents). Not surprisingly, they each had a special story to share about their mothers. Without a doubt their mothers were the most significant influence in shaping their attitudes, behaviors, values, and beliefs. These mothers empowered their daughters
with ancestral wisdom, Hawaiian values, traditional cultural practices, and pride in their Hawaiian heritage. From their mothers, Nā Wahine learned to fish and farm, garden, cook, sew lei, dance hula, and to love and serve others. For instance, Atea’s mother, despite many economic hardships, was an enterprising self-employed woman who created a comfortable home for her children with limited resources. Through her mother’s inspiring example and indomitable spirit, Atea learned that chiefly behavior means to serve others and strive for the best because anything is possible. Melemele’s mother served as her educational muse—disrupting notions of a woman belonging in the home by leaving her family temporarily to earn a nursing degree. Melemele remarked, “I idolized my mother. She was kind and generous—always helping others.” She attributes all the things that she has achieved to her mother and grandmother and how they raised her. Mothers of Nā Wahine taught their daughters traditional Hawaiian values and cultural practices, guided their daughters to be leaders, and inspired them to serve others. Piʻikea’s mother, for example, raised her daughter to be a leader. She encouraged Piʻikea to complete her medical education before considering the ministry to serve as an example for other Native Hawaiians to achieve their goals.

Grandparents were the second most significant influence in the lives of Nā Wahine. Growing up on the continent, Nāhiku’s tūtū played an invaluable role in opening Nāhiku’s consciousness as a Native Hawaiian woman. Even after the death of her tūtū, Nāhiku said, “I feel her presence guiding my path.” Likewise, Melemele feels her grandmother’s powerful influence every day. Sitting around her Grandma’s table and spending time with her paternal and maternal grandparents, young Hōkūao learned about the importance of relationships. Everyone was welcomed at her grandma’s kitchen table
regardless of kinship or ethnicity. Here, Hōkūao learned to converse, network, and solve problems—key elements in establishing relationships. She learned the importance of social gatherings and the need to feed people—physically, spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally.

Several Nā Wahine expressed their gratitude for having wonderful parents. Pi‘ikea praised her parents for supporting and encouraging her intellectual curiosity. Reflecting on her idyllic upbringing in a rural community, Melemele commented, “I grew up in a beautiful home that my father built. My mother was a professional nurse and my dad sold cars so we had a new car every year. None of us kids ever got into any trouble.” She said it was precisely because of the wellness within the walls of her home that contributed to her ability to help others. Makaʻala observed, “I was blessed in having the family that I had. My parents were committed to their children in regards to access to education.” Despite having fathers who were working alcoholics, both Melemele and Makaʻala praised their fathers for their ability to provide for their families. In particular, Makaʻala noted, “He never missed a day of work. He was an unbelievable provider.” These strong family relationships provided Nā Wahine with the skills necessary to form positive social relationships outside of their ‘ohana.

Social Relationships

Nā Wahine discussed the importance of social relationships including friends, mentors, teachers/professors, colleagues, and advisors. They stressed that relationships matter in all social contexts. For example, having learned the importance of relationships sitting around her grandma’s table, Hōkūao developed many positive relationships with kumu (teachers) at Kamehameha Schools, with professors in her undergraduate and
graduate programs, and with higher education faculty. When faced with challenges and discriminatory practices, she learned to network and establish constructive relationships with mentors, teachers, colleagues, and administrators. Hōkūao acknowledged the importance for all Native Hawaiians to remember their foundation, their connections to kūpuna, and their kuleana to future generations. “These relationships or connections through one’s moʻokūʻauhau are forever,” she said.

In these examples, Nā Wahine described the importance of family and social relationships in all areas of their lives. Mothers and grandmothers had the most significant influence in shaping Nā Wahine’s Indigenous identities, followed by grandparents and fathers. As Nā Wahine navigated through academe, mentors played a key role in guiding their journey.

Mentoring

A second strategy/support that Nā Wahine used to steer their way through the mysterious waters of academe was the support and guidance of critical peer mentors. Nāhiku credits her mentors with inspiring her to become an academic, opening the way for her to attend graduate school, and with modeling the expectations of a professor. Similarly, Hōkūpaʻa described three women who served as muses and guides throughout her academic journey. Developing a strong relationship with these women helped her to learn the expectations of promotion and tenure in the academy. Piʻikea credits her positive experiences in medical school and as a tenured faculty member to the wonderful relationships she developed with her mentors. Applauding the actions of her political activist friend, Atea said, “She really got me through the experience because she is a warrior. She was always in a political struggle and I admired her tremendously.”
Nāhiku credits her decision to become a professor to her mentor who invited Nāhiku to present her undergraduate work at a conference and introduced her to other academics. “She’s fabulous at mentoring,” Nāhiku said. “She understands how the system works.” Nāhiku learned about the promotion and tenure process through tenured colleagues and mentors and a well-established network outside of the university. In medical school, Piʻikea lauded the persistent guidance of two male mentors who provided their “support and authority” for her to be Hawaiian and to learn the way she been taught at home. Standing on the shoulders of their kūpuna, Nā Wahine credited their wonderful mentors for facilitating their journey through promotion and tenure. Atea speaks highly of her female mentors saying, “I had two strong Hawaiian women to guide and protect me.” She added, “Hawaiian women need to have a great Hawaiian woman protecting them...but also demanding that they do work and publish.”

Mentors understood the need to secure grant money for junior faculty to attend conferences where they could present their work. Hōkūpaʻa explained that her mentor “applied for grant money to allow other faculty members to pursue professional development opportunities and present their work at conferences.” Another mentor provided professional development activities for junior Hawaiian faculty and introduced Hōkūpaʻa to publishers. Hōkūpaʻa explained, “Each year the topic is different. Last year, it was about publishing and the year before, we talked about what a dossier should look like.” Citing the need for more mentoring on grant writing, Nāhiku added, “We also need more mentoring on how to get grants so that we can do program development and build capacity in our subfields.”
Nā Wahine agreed that more mentoring is needed for Native Hawaiian women. For example, Maka’ala emphasized, “We need to do a better job of mentoring Native Hawaiian women on what it takes to be successful in this academy and not lose their Hawaiian cultural identity.” She added that it is vital for administration to provide Native Hawaiian women with the necessary resources to do their jobs well. As she considered the need for Nā Wahine to help one another, Melemele asserted that the lack of peer mentoring “is a form of internalized oppression, where sometimes we don’t even help our own.” This situation may worsen as more Native Hawaiian faculty enter the academy looking for Native Hawaiian advisors and mentors. Reminding Native Hawaiian faculty to seek out professional development and mentoring opportunities, Kalewanuʻu stated, “This is where we decided to be. It’s our responsibility to figure out how the university works and then work it.”

**Integrating Native Hawaiian Values**

A third strategy used by Nā Wahine involved integrating Native Hawaiian culture and values into their scholarly work. For example, posted along the walls in Piʻikea’s department are the values she learned as a child and that she cherishes most—aloha, ʻohana, and lōkāhi. These values are not merely attractive décor; they guide and shape her way of being. In another example, while applying for promotion at MSU, Hōkūao skillfully wove Native Hawaiian values and culture into her annual review documents. In Atea’s classes, students chant to request permission to enter, learn, and invite the presence of their ancestors. In her domestic violence program, Melemele presents those who complete the program with a kukui necklace or keychain symbolizing Indigenous knowledge and enlightenment. For their dissertations, several Nā Wahine focused on
native issues including the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the status of Native Hawaiians during the first three decades following annexation, and an anti-missionary analysis of the privatization of native lands. As tenured faculty, Nā Wahine continue to infuse Native Hawaiian values into their scholarly work and academic activities and into their interpersonal relationships.

Following the Recipe

A fourth strategy discussed by Nā Wahine was the importance of learning the expectations for tenure and following the “recipe.” Working in Western institutions, they learned the rules by which to play the game. For example, as a young junior faculty member working primarily with White, male professors, Maka‘ala recalled, “When they say jump, you jump!” As she matured and gained a stronger Native Hawaiian consciousness, Maka‘ala became more assertive in her desires to conduct research by, for, and about Native Hawaiians. Hōkūao strategically interviewed each senior faculty member in her department to learn the tacit expectations of tenure. Melemele noted that faculty have to “prescribe to the formula.” She added, “Tenure privileges being able to fit into the academic box. You play by the rules, you serve, teach, and do scholarly work and you do it in the way they want you to.” As Nā Wahine learned the implicit expectations of tenure, they did so by remaining true to their native culture.

Pono (Indigenous Authenticity)

The third theme in this study, Pono, refers to Indigenous authenticity. I use the term, Pono, to describe the collective cultural traditions and practices of Nā Wahine which involve adhering to Native Hawaiian values; perpetuating the Hawaiian language; preserving and creating mo‘olelo and hō‘ailona; serving their ‘ohana, university, and
community; acknowledging ancestral wisdom; and honoring their moʻokūʻauhau. Pono can best be understood as remaining true to one’s native culture, history, and traditions. It involves serving as a conduit to Indigenous ancestors. An ‘Olelo Noʻeau reads, “I maikaʻi ke kalo i ka ‘ohā,” meaning “The goodness of the taro is judged by the young plant it produces” (‘Olelo Noʻeau, No. 1232, p. 133). Just as the goodness of the taro is judged by the young shoots it produces, the Indigenous authenticity, or cultural integrity, of Nā Wahine can be measured by the depth to which they remain true to Native Hawaiian culture, values, and traditions. In the next section, I describe four sub-themes of Pono: language, cultural practices, Indigenous knowledge, and Native Hawaiian values.

**Language**

Most Nā Wahine in this study understand the Hawaiian language to some degree and some are fluent speakers and writers of ‘Ōlelo Hawaiʻi. Melemele admits that despite having a grandmother who spoke Hawaiian, she does not speak Hawaiian. Piʻikea and Hōkūao grew up hearing Hawaiian at home from parents and grandparents who were manaleo (native speakers) and kuaʻāina (traditional cultural practitioners). Unfortunately, Piʻikea noted, “My father asked my mother to stop speaking Hawaiian to us because he was afraid that when we went to school here (in Honolulu) we would be punished. So, we stopped speaking it.” Other Nā Wahine learned Hawaiian in high school or college and a few majored in Hawaiian Language. For example, although Hōkūao grew up hearing her grandparents and ‘ohana speaking Hawaiian, she did not begin learning the language until high school when she took three years of Hawaiian, based primarily on translating text rather than speaking. Likewise, Atea learned Hawaiian in college and now speaks, writes, and chants fluently. Kalewanuʻu, who grew
up on the continent, returned home to learn Hawaiian as an adult, and is now an eloquent speaker and writer of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i.

Another issue pertaining to language for some Nā Wahine was recognizing the language of imperialism and colonialism. As Nāhiku described, “During my PhD program, I was starting to recognize this language of empire building, imperialism, and colonialism. I saw Hawaiians as a racialized identity, but not in the Indigenous colonial framework until now.” Kalewanu‘u felt that she fared better than many Native Hawaiians because she “coded haole” and could speak the language of the colonizer. Having grown up on the continent, she adopted many speech patterns and mannerisms of the dominant White culture. Perpetuating the Hawaiian language was one of many cultural practices maintained by Nā Wahine.

Cultural Practices

Nā Wahine grew up living their culture; it was part of their everyday life. Describing her Indigenous identity, Hōkūao said, “I never had to learn to be Hawaiian because I grew up being Hawaiian (a sentiment echoed by many Nā Wahine) which was deeper than language or culture–it was how we lived.” Her grandparents were manaleo and lived a Hawaiian lifestyle. One of the ways in which she infused Hawaiian culture into the tenure experience was to incorporate Native Hawaiian culture and values in her annual reviews. She selected a theme for each annual review and utilized a corresponding illustration for the cover of the document. For example, on one cover she placed a picture of a keiki hula hālau representing her theme of working collaboratively toward a common goal. On another cover, a wa‘a, or voyaging canoe, symbolized her journey through the promotion and tenure process.
Although her mother had promised her father that she would not speak Hawaiian to the children, Piʻikea’s mother spoke Hawaiian to them when she was trying to explain a Hawaiian cultural concept. She did so by telling her children a moʻolelo. Within the context of the moʻolelo, her mother infused Hawaiian history, values, moʻokūʻauhau, cultural practices, and Indigenous knowledge.

Indigenous Knowledge

As Native Hawaiian scholars and educators, Nā Wahine embrace and promote Indigenous knowledge. For example, Atea’s experience onboard the Hōkūleʻa shifted her paradigm from political activism to understanding and teaching ancestral knowledge. She explained, “Education is about empowering ancestral identity. It’s about making sure our culture stays alive when we are so Americanized.” Writing Hawaiian curriculum allows her to fulfill her dreams in sharing ancestral knowledge with her students. With great enthusiasm, she declared, “Ancestral wisdom is most important; it’s a gift. I love my job. I never stop working because I don’t want to do anything else.”

In her work as a Native Hawaiian scholar, teacher, and leader, Hōkūao acknowledges that she stands on the shoulders of her kūpuna. She used the stories of her kūpuna to tell her own story about her journey through promotion and tenure. When Melemele returned to Hawaiʻi and accepted a job at UH Mānoa, her aunty told her, “Your ancestors have called you back because you’re a blessed person who has come to help our community. This is what you’re supposed to do.” As Melemele reflected on her career, she affirmed, “My ancestors delivered this to me. I think it was a calling for me to do this work.” In giving Melemele a Hawaiian name, her aunt said, “I’m giving you a
name that represents what you are supposed to be. You were supposed to be this from a long time ago. Now you have a name that goes with that.”

**Native Hawaiian Values**

Nā Wahine did not have to learn Native Hawaiian values; they lived them. Parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles infused Native Hawaiian values through their examples, moʻolelo, and daily practices. Raised by parents who were manaleo, Piʻikea grew up hearing Hawaiian spoken at home. Native Hawaiian values, beliefs, and practices were a way of life. From her grandparents who lived the culture and spoke ‘Olelo Hawai‘i, Hōkūao learned firsthand about Native Hawaiian values such as pono (live righteously), kūlia i ka nuʻu (strive for the top), hana lawelawe (lead through service), kupaianaha (be open to serendipity), noiʻi (explore every angle to gain a deeper understanding), ʻohana (care for family members), and ola hāloa (strive for a life that is far-reaching). However, as the only female, woman of color, junior faculty member at MSU, she learned that dealing with discrimination and adversity can dwarf one’s spirit. Working in a White, patriarchal environment, Hōkūao explained that she compromised many of her Hawaiian values (temporarily) because the culture of academe was so foreign to her. Unprepared for the life of an academic, she said, “I was not breathing or anything because I was in very different water and I didn’t know how to swim in it.” Her experience at a women’s conference helped her to remember her experiences sitting around her grandma’s table where she learned about Native Hawaiian values, leadership, and communication.

Similar to Hōkūao’s experience, Makaliʻi learned much about Native Hawaiian values from her grandparents. In particular, she learned to love and care for the ʻāina.
Her grandmother reminded her, “As long as you have land, you are not poor.” In describing a Native Hawaiian value that most influenced the tenure process, Makaliʻi said, “It would be “aloha ‘āina” because of my scholarship of the land and the people.” Melemele reflected, “I think my academic trajectory is so much bound up in the values that my mother and grandmother had about education. They taught me to help, to serve, and to enjoy life.” Native Hawaiian values are an integral part of Nā Wahine’s identities, passed down through moʻolelo and moʻokūʻauhau.

**Moʻolelo / Moʻokūʻauhau**

Another way by which Nā Wahine have maintained their Indigenous authenticity is through moʻolelo and moʻokūʻauhau. Passed orally from one generation to the next, moʻolelo preserve Hawaiian history, culture, values, language, and family traditions. For Nā Wahine, these stories reinforced Native Hawaiian ways of thinking and being. Learning their moʻokūʻauhau reaffirmed their Native Hawaiian identity and connected Nā Wahine to their ancestors.

Most Nā Wahine were natural storytellers who used descriptive and metaphoric language to describe their experiences. For example, Atea compared Native Hawaiian women to “water falling from the sky, dripping down the mountains into the rivers, aquifers, and the ocean.” Explaining the constancy of Native Hawaiian women she said, “This is who we are as Hawaiian women. No matter how you try to change the course of water, it prevails.” Through her moʻolelo, Atea created vivid pictures. One example is the rickety house she lived in as a child that her mother rented for $2 a month. Atea recalled, “The wood was old and the house would shrink leaving a puka (hole) between the boards. Mom covered the walls with old wallpaper from Salvation Army so the wind
wouldn’t blow through our bedrooms.” In another example, Atea remembered how her mother saved her meager earnings to buy a Christmas gift for each child in the valley, reminding her own children not to behave like common people.

Hōkūpa’a compared her diverse academic experiences to the ‘ōhi’a lehua flower that adapts and evolves according to its environment. Both Hōkūpa’a and Makali‘i likened their tenure experiences to the kalo—considered the elder brother of Native Hawaiians. Pi‘ikea’s descriptive stories of her childhood invite readers to join her catching ‘ōhua in the tide pools or role playing Madame Curie’s scientific experiments. In Hōkūao’s case, readers can visualize her as a little child, sandwiched in between two adults sitting at her grandma’s table—listening, observing, and learning.

While all Nā Wahine spoke about the importance of mo‘okū‘auhau, Kalewanu‘u described her place in the academy and her research interests as part of a mo‘okū‘auhau. She said, “Mo‘o is a succession; a genealogy.” Praising her predecessors who nurtured and mentored her through graduate school, she noted, “I'm in the middle of the mo‘okū‘auhau. I'm training undergraduate students up to PhD students. They are becoming teachers. It just keeps going.” In another example, Maka‘ala cited the critical importance of mo‘okū‘auhau in shaping her Indigenous identity and forming significant relationships.

While most Nā Wahine eagerly shared their mo‘olelo and hō‘ailona, it is important to note that not all Nā Wahine were comfortable with disclosing personal events and life experiences. One participant experienced “a level of trepidation” to having her life story set in print. Long after the other Nā Wahine had returned their edited mo‘olelo, she held on to her manuscript. She wrestled with the process of “letting
it go” to me and to those who will read her story. Some women were concerned with anonymity and confidentiality, but most admitted that with such a small population, complete anonymity might not be possible. Another Nā Wahine seemed constrained by the fixed boundaries of her office space—as if the walls restricted her ability to speak about her experiences. When the meeting venue shifted to an open garden of thriving green kalo alongside a stream, this woman opened up (clearly receiving her strength from the ‘āina) and shared a particularly challenging experience.

The reluctance of Nā Wahine to share personal details and experiences in their lives and the manner in which one or more may have wrestled with the process of “letting go” dispel any conclusion that these women, despite having a common oral historical narrative, are equally comfortable in the oral traditions of their ancestors. Although the interviews were conducted in a conversational format, a few Nā Wahine were reticent about sharing private, and often deeply emotional life events. Many of the artifacts were very personal serving as metaphors, symbols, and intimate mo‘olelo that had significantly shaped the lives, relationships, and decisions of Nā Wahine.

**Chapter Summary**

The major themes emanating from this study are Pōhaku Ho‘oke‘a (barriers), Mana Wahine (innate female power), and Pono (Indigenous authenticity). While the three themes may appear to be distinct, they are actually interdependent and interconnected. First, like water flowing over pōhaku in the river, Nā Wahine became polished as they overcame the rigid barriers of academe. Their ability to handle adversity came from their innate female power and Indigenous authenticity. Second, their mana grew stronger as Nā Wahine successfully overcame challenges and became more attuned
to Indigenous cultural practices. Third, Nā Wahine became more pono by learning, practicing, and teaching the Hawaiian language and living Native Hawaiian culture and values. As their Indigenous authenticity expanded, they become empowered with ancestral knowledge and capable of handling greater challenges. Nā Wahine came to understand that they do not walk alone; they always have the protection, guidance, and wisdom of their ancestors.
CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

“Hoʻokahi ka ‘ilau like ana”
Wield the paddles together; work together
ʻOlelo No‘eau, No. 1068, p. 114

Overview
This study, Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty, provides valuable information from an Indigenous interpretation for faculty and administration within higher education on issues pertaining to promotion and tenure for Native Hawaiian women in the academy. As I near the end of my voyage, I thrust my paddle into the water and press forward to present the results and implications of this project. I begin this chapter with a brief summary of the study and the theoretical framework guiding this inquiry. Next, I summarize the results in the context of the research questions and extant literature. I present implications for theory (addressing the models proposed in the review of the literature), followed by implications for practice and future research based on my findings. Lastly, I discuss my conclusions for this study.

Summary of Study
This is a story about the experiences of tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. As a tenured Tahitian American woman, my primary purpose in conducting this study was to understand the academic and tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian women as they journeyed through academe. I was particularly interested in learning what, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process.

Using multiple theoretical lenses (Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory), this qualitative study employed narrative inquiry and arts-informed research
methodology and two Indigenous methods of moʻolelo (storytelling) and hōʻailona (symbolic artifacts) to explore Nā Wahine’s lived experiences and the cultural values contributing to the tenure experience. Nine tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty participated in this study. Participants held the rank of Associate Professor or Professor. I conducted three or more interviews with each Nā Wahine in various settings over a period of six months and gathered hōʻailona representing their academic and tenure experiences. Three major themes emerged from this study including: 1) Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), 2) Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power), and 3) Pono (Indigenous Authenticity). As a form of data analysis, I composed a moʻolelo and interpreted the hōʻailona for each Nā Wahine. I also created hōʻailona (Figure 5.4) symbolic of the collective experiences of Nā Wahine and another hōʻailona (Figure 5.5) representing a composite of my academic and tenure experiences and those of Nā Wahine. This combined hōʻailona connects me to the women in this study on a physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual level. The composite image of the hōnū and koru demonstrates our shared experiences.

Theoretical Framework

I selected a qualitative research paradigm to study Nā Wahine in their natural setting, using narrative inquiry and arts-informed research methodologies to describe and interpret phenomena in their social context. Indigenous theory and Native Hawaiian epistemology informed this project while Moenahā provided the overarching structure for this study. Within this structure, I used Poststructural Feminist Theory to examine the social construction of realities and the oppression of women of color in contemporary society and formal organizations. This theoretical framework validated personal
experiences and narrative inquiry while allowing for multiple truths. Indigenous Theory placed group and culture at the center of inquiry. An Indigenous research framework maintained that all knowledge is interconnected and inseparable from place, land, spirit, language, and moʻolelo (Smith, 1999). Native Hawaiian epistemology (Meyer, 1998) provided a way of thinking about the world that is fluid, dynamic, and cyclical based on the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things.

Summary of Results

The use of narrative inquiry and arts-informed research methodologies and the Indigenous methods of moʻolelo and hōʻailona provided rich data and yielded many common experiences and themes on the voyage to tenure, with one notable exception that will be discussed later in this chapter. Results were pleasing and sometimes, revelatory. I present the results in the context of the research questions that shaped this study and the major topics elicited from the review of the literature.

Addressing the Research Questions and the Literature

Research Question 1

The first research question broadly addressed the academic and tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty. I was interested in identifying the barriers and sources of support experienced by Native Hawaiian women during the tenure process. The findings (presented in Chapter 6) revealed three primary themes that situate Nā Wahine within particular discourses and describe their collective experiences. The three interrelated themes are: 1) Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), 2) Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power) and 3) Pono (Indigenous Authenticity). As expected, Nā Wahine experienced multiple barriers. These challenges mirrored the issues found in the
literature concerning the contextual experiences of women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty.

**Institutional Racism/Sexism**

Consistent with Butler’s (1997) argument that race is central to the experiences of women of color; several Nā Wahine cited institutional racism as a major barrier to the advancement of Native Hawaiians. Atea, for example, claimed that White racism is still the central issue facing Native Hawaiian faculty, while Melemele described UH Mānoa as a “bastion of White colonialism.” St. Pierre and Pillow (2000) point to the oppressive structures of patriarchy and racism for women of color who are situated on the wrong side of social binaries. Nā Wahine noted that racism is particularly problematic for those who serve as the only Native Hawaiian faculty in a particular department and who often find themselves undervalued yet overused as ethnic tokens. Having both a PhD and tenure enables Nā Wahine to confront gendered discriminatory practices. For example, Atea stated that her degrees in higher education allow her to work as a Native Hawaiian scholar “against White people who think they have a right to write about us, control us, and tell us what to do.”

Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) assert that European cultures have considered Indigenous people to be inferior or primitive. Nā Wahine’s experiences with disparaging attitudes toward Native Hawaiian women in the academy support this finding. Several Nā Wahine discussed incidents of sexist language and gifts, condescending attitudes toward Native Hawaiian women faculty, and various forms of sexual harassment. For instance, Hōkūao discussed the sexist nature of the “silver balls” she received as a
departing gift from a racist supervisor, while Atea shared an experience in which a White male professor attempted to usurp her graduate work and claim it as his own.

Nā Wahine described incidents involving repressive political power along with racial and gender discrimination from White men, White women, and people of color as well. This supports the claim by Maori scholar Awatere (1984) who argues that White women (even self-defined feminists) remain loyal first to their White culture, then to women’s issues in general. Awatere surmises that this occurs because it is easier for White feminists to deal with issues pertaining to White women, than for them to admit the role they have played in the oppression of Indigenous peoples (Boler, 1999). Discrimination among people of color also dispels any notion that people of color maintain a collective or homogenous discourse in terms of their thoughts, beliefs, actions, or cultural practices. It also refutes the binary Black/White model of discrimination. In other words, discrimination is pervasive within and across racial and ethnic boundaries. One participant actually experienced resistance to tenure from the Native Hawaiian academic community.

According to Armenti (2004) and Cooper et al. (2007), institutional sexism marginalizes women in less appreciated and less recognized activities such as teaching, advising, and college/community service. Nā Wahine confirmed that they have more committee work, larger teaching loads, and greater amounts of time devoted to advising and community work than their male colleagues. This results in less time available to conduct research and publish. Achieving tenure under these conditions can be particularly challenging for Nā Wahine working in departments with limited resources.
The situation is exacerbated for Native Hawaiian faculty (proficient in Hawaiian) who are asked to serve on committees for theses and dissertations written in Hawaiian.

**Male Dominated Disciplines**

In most cases, Nā Wahine entered academic disciplines dominated by White male professors. While serving as junior faculty, Nā Wahine recalled there was no space for Indigenous approaches to research or teaching. The Western approach was the only way to conduct research. Expected to comply with Eurocentric practices and policies in regards to teaching and research, a few Nā Wahine not only lost their voice, but in some cases, their Native Hawaiian identity. This confirms Calhoun’s (2003) claim that Indigenous faculty pay a high price to become tenured faculty by silencing their native voice and identity.

Nā Wahine acknowledged that while gender does not appear to influence the tenure process at UH Mānoa, there appears to be a gender bias at the leadership level confirming extant literature that women have yet to achieve parity with men in positions of academic leadership (June, 2007; Moltz, 2011; Townsend & Twombly, 2007). Makaʻala noted, “Although we’ve had a woman chancellor and president, the leadership of this university is still predominately male.” Serving as leaders in academe, Nā Wahine feel challenged by White males who tend not to take their leadership seriously. As a young Native Hawaiian leader, Hōkūpaʻa encountered barriers related to gender and age. To gain the respect of senior White faculty, Hōkūpaʻa relied on her solid work record.

**Rank**

Beyond the issue of institutional sexism was the issue of rank. In their study on Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women leaders, Youngberg, Miyasato, and
Nakanishi (n.d.) found that race, culture, and gender-based discriminatory practices posed significant challenges to AAPI women desiring leadership positions and tenure. Nā Wahine’s experiences in the academy underscore these assertions. In some departments, senior colleagues (most of whom were White males) were quick to point out their higher rank, tenure status, and publishing credentials. Na Wahine countered by learning the tacit expectations for promotion and tenure, while maintaining their indigenous authenticity. In other words, they learned the recipe for tenure. Getting tenure was about knowing the expectations of the academy and getting things done. While Nā Wahine respected the culture and politics of their discipline, many conducted Indigenous research that resisted the White, colonial framework of the academy.

**Notable Exception**

Serving as a consistent outlier, Piʻikea provided a notable exception to the discriminatory practices experienced by Nā Wahine. As a medical student, she described being “completely supported by faculty and administrators.” She said that every faculty member (regardless of gender or ethnicity) was committed to her success. Her mentors were White male faculty who created the context and environment in which she could learn and succeed. They mentored her through medical school and continued to serve as her mentors and colleagues when she joined the faculty. She credits her male mentors with not only guiding her through medical school, but also creating numerous professional and leadership pathways for her to pursue. Acknowledging that the environment at JABSOM is very supportive of Native Hawaiians, Piʻikea admonishes UH Mānoa administration to replicate this model throughout the UH System.
Culture of Academe

Nā Wahine find the culture of academe, with its emphasis on individuality, rationality, masculinity, and whiteness, to be antithetical to many women of color and to Indigenous culture that emphasizes the communal, intuitive, and feminine (Butler, 1997). This supports numerous findings in the literature regarding cultural conflicts in the academy (Calhoun, 2003; Cooper et al., 2002; Hune, 1998; Young, 2006). Nā Wahine’s experiences confirmed Carriuolo’s (2003) assertions that colonized groups, such as Native Hawaiians, often feel undervalued and disregarded by the majority group, acknowledging that their scholarship is less valued and less supported if the research is related to Indigenous or women’s issues. Hōkūao experienced this when she was cautioned that her work on native issues might not get published. Nā Wahine expressed concerns about constantly having to prove themselves in the White, patriarchal world of higher education. The tension between Native Hawaiian and Western culture was so intense for Maka‘ala, that while pursuing a PhD at a prestigious California university, she temporarily suppressed her Native Hawaiian identity. She pointed out, “It wasn’t cool to be Hawaiian. It was important to be White and to acclimate to Western culture, values, and conventions.” Entering the university at a time when the approach to research maintained a largely positivist view made it especially challenging for Maka‘ala to conduct the type of qualitative research that she deemed to be more appropriate for Native Hawaiians.

Butler (1997), Calhoun (2003), and Hune (1998) point out that dominant Western cultural norms of the academy often conflict with the values and ethics of women of color. Melemele observed that Western standards of scholarship and ethical conduct
create tension between Native Hawaiian values and behavioral expectations. Having been involved in community work for 20 years, she expected the academy to observe the same values of kindness, service, compassion, and being pono (behaving correctly) to which she had been accustomed. Instead, she experienced many tensions and conflicts philosophically, ethically, and politically. Despite the conflicts and barriers imposed by the structure of the academy, Melemele claimed she never experienced any tension or barriers as a woman, or as a Native Hawaiian when applying for promotion and tenure.

**Tenure Process**

Cultural tensions affect every aspect of Nā Wahine’s academic lives—research, teaching, and service. The tenure process, in particular, is inherently antithetical to Native Hawaiian culture, lauding individual rather than group efforts. In her study of women desiring tenure and parenthood, Armenti (2004) demonstrated that the tenure system overvalues research and publication while undervaluing teaching and service. This is particularly problematic for Native Hawaiian women faculty who value teaching and community participation. According to Thorton (2005), the tenure review process is a highly subjective process with members of tenure review committees serving as gatekeepers. Reviewers have the discretionary authority to discredit an applicant who has not published in esteemed peer-reviewed journals. Cognizant of this finding, Nā Wahine published their research in approved refereed journals in their respective disciplines and sub-fields. Nā Wahine discovered that receiving tenure is not about teaching or service. Instead, tenure comes to faculty who do research and get published. Although growing numbers of Native Hawaiians are being hired as permanent FTE faculty at UH Mānoa, not many of these positions are tenure-track. Williams June (2012)
revealed that 70 percent of the instructional faculty at all colleges and universities is off the tenure track. Following this national trend to hire part-time and contingent faculty, Atea reported, “Most Hawaiians are (being hired) in APT positions, not permanent faculty positions.” Nā Wahine described the lack of tenure-track positions available to Native Hawaiians as a major barrier. Citing the need for change at the macro level, Melemele stated, “As long as universities are the way they are, it doesn’t matter how many changes you make in individual departments. At some point, Native Hawaiians must have enough of a critical mass so that we can totally overhaul the system.” While the trend for hiring more Native Hawaiians is moving in the right direction, more must be done to ensure that Native Hawaiians have permanent tenurable positions to foster significant change at UH Mānoa.

According to Ah Nee Benham and Heck (1998), Native Hawaiian women faculty face racial, gender, structural, and cultural discrimination along with a history of silence and marginalization in the academy. These factors contribute to the cultural tension between Hawaiian and Western values experienced by Native Hawaiian women faculty during the tenure process. For example, many Nā Wahine struggled with the Western expectation to boast about their accomplishments which conflicts with the Hawaiian value of haʻahaʻa. They responded to this dilemma by ensuring they had strong curriculum vitae detailing a solid record of research, teaching, and service credentials. To bridge this cultural tension, Piʻikea’s mentor encouraged her to write the dossier as though she were telling a story, which she did. Piʻikea wrote her dossier in such a way as to draw her readers into the narrative to understand who she was and what she did. Sharing a story rather than bragging about her accomplishments was a more Indigenous
approach to accomplish her objectives. Nā Wahine noted the tenure process tends to favor men, particularly in the natural sciences. Similar to the ʻōhiʻa lehua that adapts to diverse environments, they have had to acclimate to each new environment, culture, and situation throughout the tenure process.

**Courage**

A study undertaken by Youngberg, Miyasato, and Nakanishi (n.d.) to identify the leadership skills, perceptions, and insights of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women, established that experienced AAPI women turn challenges into opportunities by viewing challenges as invitations to make change. The study recommended that AAPI women be courageous, stating that it takes courage to produce change and to integrate its lessons. In accord with this recommendation, Nā Wahine demonstrated numerous examples of courage. For example, it took tremendous courage for Hōkūao to deal with senior White male faculty steeped in patriarchal traditions, or for Atea to confront her committee chair who refused to sign off on her dissertation. Piʻikea echoed the sentiments of many Nā Wahine when she said, “I have never been afraid to do something someone said I could not do.” Similar to a skilled lei maker who must haku (or weave) together diverse materials to create beautiful lei, when Nā Wahine encounter a barrier or limitation, they usually find a way to accomplish their goal. It seldom occurs to them that something cannot be done. I surmise that their courage comes from their inherent female power passed down through the generations.

**Walking in Both Worlds**

Many Nā Wahine chose not to assimilate, preferring to live in a bicultural world described by Sadao (2003) in which they selectively silenced their native voice in their
journey through academe. They purposively straddled the culture of the university (predominately White, male, and Western) and their Native Hawaiian culture. As they progressed through the academy, Nā Wahine developed various bicultural skills to deal with the cultural conflicts imposed by two distinct cultures. Developing this set of bicultural skills allowed them not only to survive academe, but to thrive. As Sadao (2003) argues, a bicultural model allows faculty of color to function in both the academic world and within their ethnic community by learning to successfully code switch between the two cultures as the situation requires. Nā Wahine and other women of color who are successful at code switching have learned to adapt (Calhoun, 2003; Sadao, 2003). In other words, they do what it takes to gain tenure. Walking in both worlds, Nā Wahine have become proficient in the culture of the dominant group while retaining proficiency in their Indigenous culture (Kim & Omizo, 2006). For example, as a part Hawaiian who “codes haole,” Kalewanuʻu epitomizes diversity and complexity. With her fair complexion, she surprises people with her gift for speaking and writing Hawaiian. Basically, if no one asks about her proficiency in Hawaiian, no one gets to know. Her small stature belies her well-documented resistance to annexation. Having grown up on the continent, she speaks English well and easily minglest with professional colleagues and people in power. She notes this ability to “talk haole” provides her with advantages not experienced by junior colleagues who may speak with a heavy Pidgin inflection.

Achieving a Balance

Similar to other women faculty of color at public four-year institutions, Nā Wahine struggle to balance conflicting service, research, and teaching demands (Grant et al., 2000; Morrissey & Schmidt, 2008; Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Twombly, 2007).
Kalewanu‘u described the competing demands to obtain teaching or research awards, publish regularly while teaching classes, advise students, and serve on numerous committees. To provide ethnic diversification on university committees, Na Wahine are likely to have additional community and service duties as compared to White professors (Ponjuan, 2011). These additional duties (including advising Native Hawaiian graduate students and participating on thesis and dissertation committees for Native Hawaiian students), place a heavy burden on Nā Wahine trying to navigate the promotion and tenure process. While these service commitments are highly valued among the Native Hawaiian community, they are of lesser value to tenure, promotion, and review committees.

Morrissey and Schmidt (2008) point out that women faculty often struggle to achieve a balance between their professional and personal lives. Contributing to this conversation, Wolf-Wendel, Ward, and Twombly (2007) affirm the challenge is particularly great for tenure-track women with young children. Nā Wahine acknowledged that while their male colleagues are seldomly encumbered with child care issues while conducting research or writing scholarly papers, child-bearing and child-rearing women faculty experience gender tension as they struggle with the larger share of domestic and family care issues. According to Tintiangco-Cubales (2010) and Trujillo (2011), women scholars with children (known as motherscholars), find the duality of their roles to be exhausting, yet rewarding. As tribute to their abilities as motherscholars, several Nā Wahine either wrote their dissertations or produced other scholarly work while nursing a baby or tending to young children. Armenti (2004) found that many women, fearful that maternity leave might harm their chances for promotion or tenure,
plan to have their babies in May. Hōkūpa‘a was quite resourceful in planning to have her first child while on a post-doctoral fellowship. Undoubtedly, writing a scholarly book while caring for a newborn is a daunting task. This inherent tension between professional and personal demands often results in physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion. The demands of academic life often compete with cherished family time.

**Family Commitments**

The ‘ohana, or family, is highly valued among Nā Wahine since Native Hawaiian culture, values, history, moʻolelo, and moʻokūʻauhau are transmitted through the ‘ohana. As tribute to the incredible resilience, courage, and determination of Nā Wahine, some gave birth and others buried their loved ones while preparing for their dissertation defense or while serving as junior faculty. Nā Wahine, such as Atea, Hōkūao, Makaliʻi, Nāhiku, and Hōkūpa‘a serve dual roles as mothers and scholars; thus, their work is never done. As motherscholars, they agreed with Trujillo (2011) and Tintiangco-Cubales (2011) that the tenure process tends to discriminate against women of childbearing and childrearing age. Given that the university has no family leave plan, the tenure process by design privileges men. Wolf-Wendel, Ward, and Twombly (2007) noted the challenges for women scholars with young families. Women, who tend to have primary childcare responsibilities, are severely disadvantaged in the tenure process. For example, Hōkūpa‘a created her own maternity leave by taking a sabbatical to write a book based on her dissertation and give birth to her first child. Nāhiku secured a post-doctoral fellowship when her second child was born. While on academic leave, these women had the double burden of caring for a newborn along with the pressure of producing scholarly work. In contrast, male professors who take sabbatical or apply for a post-doctoral
fellowship, can usually focus on their academic work without the additional responsibility of family care. Family commitments also involve eldercare. For example, Atea (who loves her work as a scholar) schedules academic duties around caregiving responsibilities for her elderly mother. The competing demands imposed by academic work and family care may limit Nā Wahine’s ability to serve the community.

**Community Service**

Tintiangco-Cubales (2011) described the tug on women faculty of color regarding community service that is expected and valued by communities of color but goes unrecognized in the academy. Supporting this observation and Turner’s (2002) findings that women faculty of color often feel pressured to sacrifice family and community commitments to concentrate on their careers, Nā Wahine described feeling torn between their professional workload, family commitments, and their desire to serve their community. For instance, Melemele, who has devoted her career to serving her community, must limit community work to teach, conduct research, and serve as a department chair. Reflecting the sentiments of Nā Wahine on how service is undervalued in the academy, Kalewanuʻu said, “Tenure favors publishing over political activism and community service.” This is often a site of conflict for many Native Hawaiian faculty who feel a strong kuleana to serve their communities. Kalewanuʻu noted, “We have these pressures in the community that others do not experience. It presses on Hawaiian women a lot.” Illustrative of Nā Wahine’s commitment to the community, Makaliʻi added, “We must not mistake our own accomplishments as indicators of success; the true indicator is the extent to which we have improved the living conditions of others.” Despite the conflicting pressures that Nā Wahine encounter, they are dedicated to
advancing and enlarging discussions regarding Native Hawaiian issues. For example, Nāhiku is committed to “engaged scholarship,” framed by Native Hawaiian values, by extending the resources and skill sets of the university to benefit the community. She highlighted the importance of being accountable, saying, “It’s important that our work is relevant to the community. Being accountable to the community is connected to kuleana and recognizing my responsibilities as an academic.”

Research Question 2

The second research question focused on Native Hawaiian values that may have influenced the tenure process and those that may have conflicted with Western values. Given that Nā Wahine graduated from and are employed by a Western institution, I expected that a few might have completely assimilated to Eurocentric ways by absorbing the culture of the dominant group while denying their Indigenous culture. At the very least, I expected that some might have acculturated to the White, Western ways of the institution by adapting to the norms of the dominant group, particularly in regards to the tenure process. Instead, I found that Nā Wahine used a process of enculturation, described by Kim and Abreu (2001), whereby they retained the norms and values of their Indigenous group. Moreover, they developed bicultural behaviors wherein they became proficient in the dominant White culture while retaining proficiency in Native Hawaiian culture (Kim & Omizo, 2006). Adopting a bicultural stance suggests that Nā Wahine effectively walk in both worlds while remaining true to their Indigenous culture and values.

Native Hawaiian values are deeply rooted in traditions, language, storytelling, history, and recent political issues of sovereignty (Young, 2006). Revealed in their
moʻolelo and hōʻailona, Native Hawaiian values clearly permeate the lives of Nā Wahine. Their ways of thinking, acting, and being in the world are largely influenced by the native values they learned as children from makua and kūpuna. These values played a significant role in shaping their Indigenous identities. While some Nā Wahine struggled with being Native Hawaiian and temporarily suppressed their native identity, they eventually accepted and defined for themselves what it means to be Native Hawaiian. For Nā Wahine, understanding and practicing Native Hawaiian values has shaped their worldview and their interactions with others. For instance, with a strong love for the ʻāina, Makaliʻi and Kalewanuʻu have devoted their scholarship to caring for the ʻāina and documenting the resistance of Native Hawaiians to the illegal appropriation of the land. Piʻikea infuses the Indigenous values she learned as a child into everything she does, while Atea has dedicated her scholarly work to understanding ancestral wisdom. I believe Na Wahine have been successful in retaining Native Hawaiian norms and values through their innate female power and the meaningful relationships they have developed and cherished throughout their lives.

According to Nā Wahine, the Native Hawaiian values that most strongly influenced the tenure process include: aloha (love, compassion, affection), ʻohana (family), malama ʻāina (care of the land), kuleana (responsibility to ʻohana, kūpuna, and future generations), lōkahi (harmony/balance), haʻahaʻa (humility), and laulima (cooperation). Other Native Hawaiian values discussed by Nā Wahine include alakaʻi (leadership), hana lawelawe (servant leadership), hoʻomanawanui (patience), kōkua (helpfulness), kūlia i ka nuʻu (strive for the top or summit), kupaianaha (serendipity), lōkōmaikaʻi (generosity), naʻauao (intelligence), ola hāloa (strive for a life that is far
reaching), and pono (building positive networks and relationships). In many cases, these Native Hawaiian values conflicted with the White, Western, patriarchal values of the academy. In this section, I describe the Native Hawaiian values (as defined by Nā Wahine) that most significantly influenced the tenure process.

**Aloha (love, compassion, and affection)**

Nā Wahine demonstrated a profound aloha for Ke Akua (God), ʻohana, and their scholarly endeavors. Beyond the common definition of “love, compassion, and affection,” aloha can be interpreted as the presence of divine breath (alo = presence/face; and hā = breath). Given this interpretation, aloha recognizes mana, spirit, and wisdom in others. Aloha is more than just a value; it is a way of life. In their daily interactions with others, Nā Wahine embodied aloha, the ability to give of themselves without any expectation of reciprocity. Andrade and Bell (2011) described aloha as “the living essence or spirituality of mana” (p. 26). Aloha is the light that radiates from within an individual. Many Nā Wahine shared a deep love and respect for Ke Akua or some other form of spiritual intelligence. In particular, Piʻikea took a 2-year hiatus from medical school to pursue a calling to restore a Native Hawaiian church in her community. Love for their ʻōhana was paramount. For example, Makaʻala and Piʻikea credit their success to their parents’ unconditional love and support. Other Nā Wahine acknowledged the love and support of grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Many Nā Wahine expressed passion for their creative and intellectual work and for the privilege of serving others. Sadly, the spirit of aloha often conflicts with the self-serving Western culture of the academy.
ʻOhana (family)

ʻOhana, meaning family, is derived from the word ʻoha (the bulb of the taro plant) and the word na (belonging to). Thus, ʻohana, a central theme in Native Hawaiian values, symbolically ties Hawaiians to kalo (their first ancestor) and to the ʻāina from which kalo emerged (Meyer, 2004). Andrade and Bell (2011) maintain that the ʻohana is the major influence on Native Hawaiians from birth to old age. Lee (2005) adds that the ʻohana is nurturing and transfers knowledge of culture, tradition, and values to it members. Every Nā Wahine in this study discussed the importance of their ʻohana. Most Nā Wahine were raised in women-centered families, with the mother or grandmother playing a central role in transmitting culture, values, and moʻolelo. I believe this contributed in large measure to the empowerment, Indigenous authenticity, positive relationships, and resolute courage of Nā Wahine. In some cases, fathers, grandfathers, and uncles also played a pivotal role in shaping their Indigenous identities. The ʻohana was of greatest significance among Nā Wahine. As academic units strive to build effective teams, they often imitate the concept of ʻohana. If done successfully, as in the case of Piʻikea’s department, ʻohana is accompanied and practiced along with other Native Hawaiian values. Merely posting Native Hawaiian values on an office wall is simply window dressing. Native Hawaiian values must be lived.

Mālama ʻāina (to care for, serve, and honor the land)

As genealogical descendants of kalo and the great gods of Hawaiʻi, Nā Wahine spoke fondly of their intimate connection to the ʻāina and the importance of caring for the land. The land, according to Meyer (2004), is “that which feeds” (p. 97). McGregor (1989) explained, “The Hawaiian related to the land as an ancestor and dear
friend…nurturing it with loving care” (p. 93). Having learned to love the ‘āina as children, several Nā Wahine have devoted their scholarship to caring for the land. In particular, Makali‘i, a strong activist for Native Hawaiian rights, has been actively involved in protecting the ‘āina and its natural resources. Similarly, as part of her “engaged scholarship,” Nāhiku works with graduate students to clear the pathway that once encircled the island of Kaho‘olawe. She explained, “I feel a great sense of kuleana to make sure the path remains clear for future generations.” Atea wrote her dissertation about land and capitalism in Hawai‘i looking specifically at the moment in history when native lands moved to private ownership. She explained that commoners received less than one percent of the total lands. This land revolution quickly led to other dramatic rebellions including the resistance to annexation documented by Kalewanu‘u. Maka‘ala aptly summarized Nā Wahine’s love for the ‘āina, “I love this ‘āina. Even though I will pass, the islands are forever.” Their love of the ‘āina sometimes placed Nā Wahine in direct opposition to other members of the academy, but did not deter their research efforts to resist Western narratives and research methodologies.

Kuleana (responsibility, right, concern, privilege)

For Native Hawaiians, kuleana is a fundamental value (Wright, 2003). According to Pukui and Elbert (1986), kuleana means “right, privilege, concern, responsibility” (p. 179). Nā Wahine expressed a strong kuleana to care for ‘ōhana, kūpuna, ‘āina, and future generations. Atea voiced the opinion of all Nā Wahine when she said, “The ‘ōhana is most important.” As described by Nā Wahine, the ‘ōhana consists of immediate members (parents and siblings), and extended members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins) along with community and genealogy. Kuleana is a responsibility to the ‘ōhana,
community, and one’s moʻokūʻauhau that guides many Native Hawaiian beliefs and practices. In traditional times, the term “kuleana ʻāina” referred to a plot of land, a common term in wills of the 1860s (Kameʻelehiwa, 1992). This implied that the individual or family was charged with the privilege of caring for and maintaining the ʻāina. This value of kuleana is historically grounded and deeply imbedded into the cultural identity of Native Hawaiians. Driven by kuleana, Nā Wahine feel compelled to honor their ancestors, kūponu, and ‘ohana by excelling in their scholarly endeavors and by continuously striving to serve the Native Hawaiian community. The kuleana that Nā Wahine feel to serve others is generally at odds with promotion and tenure policies that places greater emphasis on research and teaching.

Lōkahi (harmony/balance)

Serving in various leadership capacities, Nā Wahine expressed the importance of developing and maintaining harmonious relationships at home, work, and in the community. Nā Wahine described lokahi as being open to coworkers and colleagues while finding the best way to work together. As tenured servant-leaders, Nā Wahine have learned to balance increasingly challenging duties with their family and community responsibilities. While lōkāhi means to bring about unity, to make peace, or to be in agreement, this not does infer that Nā Wahine acquiesce to the will of others. On the contrary, they fight vigorously for the rights of Native Hawaiians, but do so in a way that invites harmony rather than conflict. For instance, in response to a senior administrator’s comment that Piʻikea and other Native Hawaiians in the room were thinking “too bold, too large,” Piʻikea responded, “You’re asking us to settle for less. We will never settle
for less.” These words symbolize the manner in which Nā Wahine take a firm stand on academic and community issues pertaining to Native Hawaiians.

**Haʻahaʻa (humility)**

Although Nā Wahine are powerful and capable women, they have not lost sight of the importance of remaining haʻahaʻa. Despite their esteemed accomplishments, most are uncomfortable showing off or assuming an attitude of preeminence. Youngberg, Miyasato, and Nakanishi (n.d.) found that many Pacific Islander women leaders who do not seek recognition for their accomplishments are seen as less effective than more assertive leaders. Confirming this finding, Nā Wahine described incidents in which they felt that certain colleagues and administrators did not take them seriously as leaders. As servant-leaders, Nā Wahine exhibit humility and sensitivity along with an ability to nurture and listen. Unfortunately, these leadership qualities are not valued as highly as other attributes typically associated with effective leadership (Youngberg, Miyasato, & Nakanishi, n.d.). Undaunted by these findings, Makaliʻi stressed the importance of remaining haʻahaʻa as a servant-leader, “We must not mistake our own accomplishments as indicators of success; the true indicator is the extent to which we have improved the living conditions of others.” Described in their moʻolelo, Nā Wahine have achieved excellence while remaining “among the clumps of grasses” and avoiding self-aggrandizement. Not surprisingly, applying for tenure provided the greatest internal conflict for most Nā Wahine as they struggled with boasting about their accomplishments.

**Laulima (cooperation)**

Working cooperatively with others is highly valued in Hawaiian culture (Serna, 2005). Nā Wahine work for the collective good by serving as leaders, department chairs,
deans, and program/department directors. They chair committees for theses and dissertations (some of which are written in Hawaiian), and for many campus- and system-wide organizations and they participate in various community activities. However, contrary to the hierarchical leadership model typical in higher education, Nā Wahine lead by serving others. This practice of servant leadership, known as hana lawelawe, involves working cooperatively with others, building community, and valuing people and place. While still in high school Hōkūao learned that the best leader is one who works diligently to serve others. She said, “I learned that leadership is service; it’s working hard to serve.” As a Native Hawaiian leader, a profound sense of aloha for those she serves and a passion to improve the conditions for all Native Hawaiians characterizes Makaʻala’s leadership style. Piʻikea advocated that leadership requires a consistent effort to serve her people. Unfortunately, this cooperative, servant-style leadership is still not widely respected in the university arena.

From my discussions with Nā Wahine, it is clear that Native Hawaiian values play a fundamental role in both their personal and professional lives. Native Hawaiian values shape their Indigenous identities and their ways of being in the world. These native values underpin their work ethic, scholarship, pedagogy, and worldview.
Implications

“E ala! E alu! E kuilima!”
A call to come together to tackle a given task.
‘Olelo Noʻeau, No. 258, p. 32

In this section, I present implications for addressing the issues that have been highlighted in this study. The above ‘Olelo Noʻeau indicates that it is time to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what I learned from the research with my thoughts and suggestions. It is time to bring together all that I have learned and tackle the task of suggesting implications for theory, practice, and future research. In other words, what should be done and how should it be done?

Implications for Theory

This is the only study I am aware of that made use of multiple theoretical lenses (Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory), methodologies (narrative inquiry and arts-informed research), and Indigenous methods (moʻolelo and hōʻailona). At the onset of this study, my dissertation committee was concerned with the complexity of this approach and how it might obscure or clarify emerging issues and themes. While using multiple theoretical lenses, methodologies, and methods may appear inordinately complex, it actually helped to clarify my perceptions and see and hear things I might not otherwise have seen or heard.

Conceptualizing Theoretical Models

In Chapter 2, I proposed four models for conceptualizing how these seemingly disparate theories might intersect, co-exist, merge, or sit next to one another in this study. In the first model, considering that the goal of Poststructural Feminism is disruption and the goal of Indigenous Theory is balance or equilibrium, I described the point at which these divergent theories intersect as “disruptive equilibrium.” This theoretical model
allowed me to critically examine conventional Western ways of thinking, acting, and being in the world. Through moʻolelo and hōʻailona, this model positioned Nā Wahine’s voices at the center of inquiry and in the production of knowledge. Nā Wahine shared the tension they experience straddling between Western and native worlds. The second model conceptualized a common area between the two theories. In this space, I considered how feminist discourses about White, Western, middle-class women have ostracized Native Hawaiian and other Indigenous women from the literature (Fitzgerald, 2010). As Nā Wahine peruse books and journals about women’s experiences in higher education, nothing connects with their experiences, struggles, and ways of knowing and working because their story is absent from the literature. This study was an effort to fill the lacuna in the literature about the experiences of Native Hawaiian women. The third model provided a confluence or flowing together of these two theories. In this model, Native Hawaiian women challenge normalcy and power through Indigenous ways of knowing by connecting to the ʻāina and their ancestors. Many Nā Wahine have actively resisted, reworked, and rewritten Native Hawaiian history from an Indigenous perspective. They conduct Indigenous research, write curriculum about Native Hawaiian issues, and promote Indigenous ways of knowing. Reflecting on their familial relationship with the ʻāina, all Nā Wahine spoke of their love and respect for the land. The fourth model conceptualizes how Poststructural Feminist Theory and Indigenous Theory might contribute to the co-creation of a new feminist Indigenous understanding by sitting alongside one another. This model suggests a third (in-between) space that disrupts and displaces dominant colonial narratives (Bhaba, 1994). In this unstable third space, Native Hawaiian women moved beyond the limitations of colonial binary thinking.
to become political advocates and leaders. In this space, Nā Wahine gained respect for multiple ways of knowing and producing knowledge. This model described a form of culture hybridity wherein Nā Wahine successfully straddled Western and Native Hawaiian culture. Belonging to multiple cultures, Nā Wahine continuously negotiated their identities. Examining these theoretical models for how these theories might work together provided powerful insight into this study and contributed to a new theoretical understanding.

**Multiple Theoretical Frameworks**

This study contributes to theory by demonstrating that Poststructural Feminist Theory and Indigenous Theory worked powerfully and beautifully together to examine the experiences of tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty. This is an important implication to theory because it substantiates that two widely diverse, and seemingly conflicting theories, can be used synchronously to examine complex social phenomena. Viewing the experiences of Nā Wahine from a single lens might have produced myopic results. Instead, the use of multiple theoretical lenses produced a more comprehensive and panoramic view. The marriage of these two theories confirmed the issues found in the literature regarding the experiences of women of color and Indigenous women in academe (Butler, 1997; Calhoun, 2003; Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005; Cooper et al., 2002; Grant et al.; 2000; hooks, 1994; Hune, 1998; Koch, 2002; Lavalée, 2009; Morrissey & Schmidt, 2008; Townsend, 2008; Turner, 2002; Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Twombly, 2007; and Young, 2006) particularly with respect to eradicating discrimination, challenging hegemonic discourses, advocating for social change, resisting Western patriarchal knowledge, and disrupting social boundaries (Absolon & Willett,
2004; Anderson & Damarin, 2001; Barrett, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2010; Foley, 2003; Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006; Louis, 2007; Rigney, 1999; St Smith, 2009; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000; Trujillo, 2011). Along with barriers experienced by women of color, Indigenous and Native Hawaiian women faculty deal with the lingering effects of oppression and colonization living in a postcolonial world (Awatere, 1984; Boyd & Braun, 2007; Carriuolo, 2003; Ah Nee Benham & Heck, 1998; Fitzgerald, 2010; Hokowhitu, 2009; Kaomea, 2006; Lavalée, 2009; Meyer, 2001; Mokuau & Tauili‘ili, 2004; Trask, 1996). The use of multiple lenses contributed to a new understanding about Nā Wahine as women imbued with genetically inherited power or strength that provided them with specific strategies and supports to overcome the many barriers they experienced while maintaining their Indigenous authenticity.

Using Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous theory allowed me to view the experiences of Nā Wahine from different perspectives, to examine multiple truths, and to understand various ways of knowing. The Poststructural Feminist lens opened the way for me to disrupt and challenge structures of normalcy contributing to the oppression of Native Hawaiian women including racism, sexism, patriarchy, and the androcentric process of tenure. It focused my attention on the ways in which Nā Wahine challenge Western patriarchal concepts of knowledge production through opposition and resistance and how they continue to rewrite and reright their history by redefining what is truth and knowledge from a Native Hawaiian perspective (Smith, 1999). Multiple lenses clarified the many ways in which Native Hawaiian women advocate for social change and the advancement of Native Hawaiians while striving to eliminate oppressive practices.
An Indigenous theoretical lens allowed me to see the power of oral traditions (particularly moʻolelo and hōʻailona) and Indigenous values and culture in the lives of Nā Wahine. This lens focused my attention on the interconnectedness and interrelationship of all things (Allen, 1992; Lavalée, 2009; Loiselle & McKenzie, 2006). Nā Wahine acknowledged their interconnection and interdependence with the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental aspects of their lives. They gave thanks and tribute to their predecessors and kūpuna who paved the way for them and upon whose shoulders they walk. While noting their many struggles in academe, Nā Wahine also championed Native Hawaiian ways of doing, thinking, and being.

Contributing to the Literature

A second way in which this study contributes to theory is by adding to the limited body of knowledge regarding the lived experiences and cultural values of Native Hawaiian women. Perhaps the only study to use moʻolelo and hōʻailona as forms of data analysis, this study succeeded in giving voice to the voiceless and in centering the experiences, values, and epistemology of Nā Wahine. It exposed the multiple barriers that Native Hawaiian women face, described their innate female power, illuminated their strategies and supports, and affirmed their Indigenous authenticity. It provided readers with insight as to which Native Hawaiian values were most influential in the tenure process. Lastly, this study demonstrated how Nā Wahine learned to walk successfully in both worlds straddling between Western and Hawaiian culture.

Native Hawaiian Female Empowerment

A third way this study contributes to theory is by illuminating the power of Native Hawaiian women. This study examined ways in which Native Hawaiian women
exercised power ancienly as female goddesses; and in more recent history, as female rulers in the Hawaiian Kingdom. This centers Native Hawaiian women in a discourse of Indigenous power inherited from powerful female ancestors who continue to guide and influence the lives of Nā Wahine (as do their male ancestors). Other sources of Mana Wahine include the influence of Nā Wahine’s mothers and their powerful familial connection to the ‘āina. An important point to make here is that Nā Wahine’s power comes from within. Genetically transmitted through their moʻokūʻauhau, it is internal, emanating from their naʻau (guts, heart, or mind).

Native Women’s Theory

Fourth, considering the effective use of Poststructural Feminism and Indigenous Theory in this study, I propose a feminist Indigenous theory that I call Native Women’s Theory (NWT). In this blended theoretical construct, NWT seeks to expose and eradicate structures (e.g., higher education) and discourses (e.g., hiring, promotion, and tenure policies) that oppress native women. It aims to promote research about, by, and for Indigenous women. This perspective opens the ways to consider various discourses, research methods, and multiple ways of knowing in academic scholarship, particularly Indigenous epistemology. For example, NWT validates and encourages the use of moʻolelo, hōʻailona, chanting, talking circles, dream work, and other forms of Indigenous knowledge in scholarly research. It invites a native women’s perspective to the study of math, oceanography, meteorology, navigation, botany, aquaculture, political science, history, linguistics, etc.

Native Women’s Theory opens the way for native narratives reclaimed, renamed, and rewritten from Indigenous women’s perspectives. It encourages native researchers to
trust their na‘au, cultural traditions, and Indigenous authenticity to guide the inquiry process. This suggests that Indigenous researchers must be courageous and creative as they consider innovative Indigenous methodologies. NWT supports the use of Indigenous languages in scholarly research as a way of recovering native languages, histories, cultures, traditions, and ancestral roots. This theoretical lens acknowledges and celebrates women’s complex subjectivities and the widely diverse cultures and peoples represented in the term “Indigenous.” NWT works to promote Indigenous knowledge systems, native women’s power, Indigenous values and culture, and cultural integrity. It seeks to centralize native women’s experiences in academe.

In proposing this new theory, I invite current and future Indigenous researchers to use, expound, and rework NWT with the intention of serving the Indigenous community. I encourage native scholars to be respectful of cultural protocols, values, traditions, and beliefs as they design and conduct their research and to be open and creative in imagining new Indigenous methods and frameworks.

How did theory drive the findings of this study? Poststructural Feminist Theory directed my attention to issues of discrimination, discourse, social change, patriarchal knowledge, and social boundaries. It allowed me to examine social structures, such as tenure, that have reproduced a politics of oppression and domination for Native Hawaiian women faculty (hooks, 1994) that is evident in the hiring, promotion, and tenure practices at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. This theoretical lens also directed the way in which I worded the interview protocol by inquiring about the structures and privileges supported by the tenure process. Indigenous Theory drove the findings of this study by highlighting the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things from a native
perspective (Lavalée, 2009). With its emphasis on maintaining a balance between the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of a person’s life, Indigenous Theory clarified why Native Hawaiians place such value on their relationships with people and places (Louis, 2007). In the lives of Na Wahine, people and places matter.

**Implications for the Native Hawaiian Community**

According to Momaday (1976), Indigenous research necessitates accepting and advocating for Indigenous knowledge systems, being respectful of Indigenous cultures, and giving back to the Indigenous community. In conducting this study, my intention was to conduct a study for and about Native Hawaiian women and then share the implications with the Native Hawaiian community. The implications of this study for the Native Hawaiian community include the following: 1) exposing multiple institutional and personal barriers faced by Native Hawaiian women faculty, 2) describing successful strategies and supports used by Na Wahine to overcome challenges, 3) highlighting the innate power of Native Hawaiian women, 4) confirming the importance and influence of Native Hawaiian values in the journey to tenure, 5) validating the cultural integrity or Indigenous authenticity of native women, 6) centering mo‘olelo and hō‘ailona as authentic Indigenous research methods, 7) giving voice to Native Hawaiian women, grounded through place and context, through mo‘olelo and hō‘ailona, 8) clarifying the Indigenous perspective that all things are interconnected and interdependent, 9) centering the experiences of Na Wahine in scholarly research, and 10) proposing Native Women’s Theory (NWT) as an Indigenous feminist theory.
Implications for Practice

The Native Hawaiian women of this study shared their academic and tenure experiences through storytelling and by reflecting on artifacts that symbolized their unique experiences. Given what I have learned about the experiences of Nā Wahine, what suggestions can I offer for the way institutions should be working with Native Hawaiian women? In the next section, I suggest ways to improve mentoring practices, support Native Hawaiian women, and provide a more welcoming environment for Native Hawaiian women faculty.

Mentoring Practices

This study has implications for mentoring practices on university campuses. Throughout their academic voyage, it was important for Nā Wahine to have a strong support network. Nā Wahine recognized that they were not the sole paddlers in their waʻa; it took an entire team. For example, as Kalewanuʻu reflected on the completion of her PhD, she acknowledged, “I know it was brought about by many hands…(who) share in this accomplishment with me.” In some cases, this support came from a colleague or mentor who served as a constant source of encouragement and guidance. In other cases, the support came from friends and ʻohana. Piʻikea expressed the sentiments of Nā Wahine saying, “The most important thing about who I am as a professional stems from the nurturing, support, and guidance I received from my parents, professors, mentors, and colleagues.” The support from family (who did not always understand the arduous tenure process) was nonetheless vital to the successful completion of their voyage. Not only did Nā Wahine receive support from their living ʻohana, many noted the presence of their ancestors in guiding them along the journey. With humility and gratitude they
acknowledged that they walk on the shoulders of their ancestors, kūpuna, and predecessors. I, too, have felt the presence of their ancestors (and mine) guiding and inspiring me as I wrote the moʻolelo and hōʻailona for each Nā Wahine.

A common and successful practice among Nā Wahine was to seek the guidance of critical mentors. This was an informal process that occurred more by chance than by design. The institution did not provide any formal mentoring or collaborative assistance. In most cases, Nā Wahine developed a one-to-one mentoring relationship with a professor, advisor, or colleague who guided them through the promotion and tenure process. In a few cases, they developed a positive relationship with a dean or department chair. Nā Wahine usually developed a personal relationship first with these individuals before becoming their mentee.

Nā Wahine’s mentors provided two key functions: career advising and development (reviewing research, teaching, and service activities; assisting with grant writing; reviewing documents such as curriculum vitae, professional statements, grant applications, and annual reports; and creating professional networks with other faculty) and psychological support (developing friendships, connections, and relationships; enhancing visibility, offering role modeling, and providing protection from adverse or discriminatory practices). These mentors, most of whom were women, were instrumental in providing the ground rules and laying out the path to tenure. They became strong political allies and provided opportunities for Nā Wahine to network with other academics, attend professional development workshops and leadership training, apply for grants, present their research at conferences, meet potential peer reviewers and publishers, and connect with other female professors who guided them in preparing their dossiers.
and curriculum vitae. In other words, these mentors established a social and professional network for Nā Wahine linking them from one key individual to the next.

Unfortunately, Nā Wahine tended to network with other female scholars (rather than men) limiting their opportunities to acquire knowledge and cultural capital from male faculty and to connect with powerful male networks. In Piʻikea’s case, two male mentors were instrumental in nurturing her intellectual curiosity and considered it their responsibility to provide her with diverse opportunities for growth as a doctor, scholar, and leader. These men played a significant role in supporting and encouraging Piʻikea along her academic and professional journey. Interestingly, Piʻikea was the only individual who discussed having male mentors, and more importantly, the only woman who did not experience any form of racism or discrimination. It may be that these men (who both held powerful positions) afforded her some level of protection from racial or discriminatory practices. It is also important to consider the sociopolitical environment of JABSOM which tends to be supportive of Native Hawaiians.

**Mentoring Networks**

My suggestion is for universities to facilitate the development and expansion of mentoring networks, including Indigenous role models, to assist women of color and Native Hawaiian women faculty to understand academic culture and their unique role in the academy. Hōkūpaʻa voiced a concern echoed by Nā Wahine when she revealed, “We need to think more about mentoring. We don’t have a lot of internal help. This is an area in which we still need to grow.” The use of peer mentoring constitutes a collaborative effort of Nā Wahine to create a sense of community that can combat the isolation women faculty of color often feel (Driscoll et al., 2009; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Peer
mentoring and strategic collaboration can be effective strategies in helping Native Hawaiian women faculty navigate the murky waters of the tenure process. In contrast to the dyadic mentoring model of mentor and protégé, peer mentoring, or networking mentoring, involves building a community among several participants at a similar rank and level of decision-making who serve as both mentor and mentee, with the common goal of achieving tenure and success in academe. Peer mentoring provides participants with a flexible mentoring model emphasizing mutual interdependence among the members (Driscoll et al., 2009) and an opportunity to share advice, experiences, opinions, and perspectives as well as provide social support. This form of mentoring enhances an understanding of self, others, and the university environment (Driscoll et al., 2009) while enabling Native Hawaiian women faculty to overcome isolation and become self-reliant and confident tenure-track scholars.

I also recommend that Native Hawaiian women have a portfolio of mentors (both female and male) across disciplines. One mentor can advise a Native Hawaiian woman about research and grants, a second can teach her about university culture and politics, a third can help her with pedagogical challenges common to all instructors and those specific to women of color, while still another can serve as editor and/or advisor regarding curriculum vitae and tenure dossiers. Agathangelou and Ling (2002) advocate the need for women of color to construct coalitions to share their mutual struggles in the academy and build a critical mass (something lacking among Native Hawaiian faculty). In support of such collaborative efforts, Amey and Eddy (2002) propose adopting new models of collaborative, servant-style leadership that promote collegiality, strong interpersonal skills, and consensus building. Such collaborative strategies would be well
received among the Native Hawaiian academic community since these efforts correspond to Native Hawaiian values such as laulima (cooperation), hana lawelawe (servant leadership), and pono (building positive networks and relationships).

Notably missing among Nā Wahine’s mentoring efforts is a form of “Sista’ Network,” a term coined by Tuesday L. Cooper (2006) to describe the relationships between and among African-American women faculty (p. xii). The “Sista’ Network” provides a venue for African-American women to learn the formal and informal rules necessary to play the tenure game while gaining access to critical information and social networks. At their roundtable meetings, members of the “Sista’ Network” discuss the tenure process, seek peer mentoring, build collegiality, and strengthen social networks. The benefits of the Sista’ Network, which can be applied to all women of color, include establishing strong supportive relationships with other women faculty of color, learning about the tenure process from one another, and providing a means to fight institutional racism and sexism.

Nā Wahine Hālau

Similar to the “Sista’ Network,” I suggest that Native Hawaiian women faculty consider a Nā Wahine mentoring network fashioned after the hula hālau wherein Native Hawaiian women can discuss research, teaching, and community activities; review the promotion and tenure process; provide peer and multiple mentoring; build collegiality; and strengthen social and professional networks within and across disciplines at UH Mānoa. Nāhiku offered this description of a hula hālau, “The hula hālau is a space where women support each other in deep nurturing kinds of ways.” Following this model, a Nā Wahine Hālau would be particularly important for Native Hawaiian women situated (and
isolated) as the only Native Hawaiian in disciplines such as science, engineering, nursing, and technology.

Supporting Native Hawaiian Women Faculty

A second implication for practice is to consider how the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and other institutions can support Native Hawaiian women (and men). As a Native Hawaiian serving institution, UH Mānoa must move beyond aligning mission statements, strategic plans, and budgeting to support Native Hawaiians. They must actively and aggressively hire Native Hawaiian faculty (women and men) in tenure track positions. Only when permanent Native Hawaiian faculty reach a critical mass will any real change take effect. Second, I recommend hiring a Native Hawaiian chancellor (a woman would be great!) who is supportive of Indigenous research. A Native Hawaiian chancellor will provide a positive role model and send a message to students, faculty, staff, and community that the institution is serious about serving Native Hawaiians. A Native Hawaiian chancellor will signal a strong paradigm shift in the academy and promote conversations about policies, procedures, and processes (such as tenure) to remove barriers to Native Hawaiian women and men. Third, I encourage faculty to develop and incorporate Indigenous research methodologies and practices into their research, teaching, and community activities and their promotion and tenure documents. Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers can work to situate Indigenous epistemologies, methodologies, and practices at the center, not the periphery, of academic discourse. So, rather than discuss causal relationships that can be measured, categorized, and predicted, scholars can discuss holistic and circular relationships in a multidimensional and interdependent world. Acknowledging the Indigenous principle
that knowledge comes from within—from being, living, and doing—academic discourses might soon recognize that knowledge is not “out there,” it is “in here.”

Creating a Welcoming Environment for Native Hawaiian Women

A third implication for practice is for universities to consider providing a more welcoming environment for Native Hawaiian women faculty. This can be accomplished in several ways. First, I suggest expanding childcare services on campus. At the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Children’s Center, space is extremely limited with costs averaging about $3,000 per semester. Expanding childcare services by building additional childcare facilities and/or supporting faculty with childcare stipends sends a message to faculty that families are important. To help faculty save on childcare expenses, UH Mānoa might consider significantly staggering faculty work hours to allow at least one parent to be home with young children while the other parent works. Parents-to-be should be provided with paid parental leave upon the birth or adoption of a new child. Faculty should not have to exhaust medical leave to care for a newborn nor should women have to plan for the birth of a baby during a sabbatical or post-doctoral fellowship. Providing this benefit will attract many brilliant minds to the university and help to retain talented faculty at UH Mānoa. Nā Wahine also described the need for eldercare in the form of subsidized adult daycare or family leave time to care for aging parents and kūpuna.

Additional ideas for creating a welcoming environment for Native Hawaiian women at UH Mānoa include: 1) providing a college-wide commitment to research, teaching, and service for Native Hawaiians, 2) creating a visible presence for Native Hawaiian scholarship in the natural sciences and social sciences, 3) providing a one-
course buyout and sufficient resources to instructional faculty who mentor Native Hawaiian women faculty, 4) supporting Native Hawaiian students with scholarships to pursue a PhD, 5) creating places, opportunities, and resources for Native Hawaiian women to gather to socialize, mentor, and support one another, 6) expanding the scope of Hawai`inui`akea School of Hawaiian Knowledge beyond Hawaiian Studies and Hawaiian language to encompass a wide range of disciplines, 7) supporting a Native Hawaiian leadership/fellowship program in all schools/colleges, 8) hiring faculty and administrators from within the university rather than searching externally, 9) providing Native Hawaiian deans with the necessary resources and infrastructure to achieve their goals, 10) renaming buildings and roads in ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi, and 11) replicating the environment at JABSOM, which is supportive of Native Hawaiians, throughout the UH System.

**Implications for Future Research**

While this study may provide an important contribution to existing literature regarding the experiences of tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women faculty in academe, many questions remain unanswered and much work remains to be done. It is especially important for future research to examine issues not observed in this study.

**Native Hawaiian Male Faculty**

This study focused on the tenure experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty, and did not address issues of Native Hawaiian male faculty who represent only 1% of faculty at UH Mānoa. For UH Mānoa to truly become a Native Hawaiian serving institution, it must achieve a gender balance among Native Hawaiian faculty. Native Hawaiians will advance socially, economically, and politically only if both women and men are given opportunities to succeed in higher education and serve as permanent
faculty members. Further research is needed to understand how to increase the numbers of Native Hawaiian male faculty, to explore their unique experiences in the academy, and to discover ways to support them throughout their academic journey.

**Leadership**

With increasing numbers of Native Hawaiian faculty, further research is needed on ways to support and advance Native Hawaiians in leadership positions. This is important to prepare Native Hawaiian faculty to serve as program directors, department chairs, deans, and one day—as chancellor or university president. To assist Native Hawaiian faculty in developing their leadership acumen, I propose a Native Hawaiian faculty leadership/fellowship program, similar to the former UH Mānoa President’s Emerging Leaders program, to identify and develop future Native Hawaiian leaders. In a leadership/fellowship program, Native Hawaiian faculty would continue to do some teaching and research, but they would spend the majority of their time shadowing deans and other academic leaders to learn the intricacies and politics of university administration; the relationship of higher education with government, Native Hawaiian trusts, K-12 schools, and other institutions; and the kuleana connected to being a Native Hawaiian leader in higher education. Expanding on this idea, future researchers might investigate how Native Hawaiian women leaders can mentor junior Native Hawaiian women faculty in all facets of academic life, particularly in areas of research, publishing, teaching, service, promotion, tenure, and leadership.

**Indigenous Methods**

I encourage future researchers to continue working with moʻolelo and hōʻailona as Indigenous methods of both data collection and analysis. In my opinion, moʻolelo and
hōʻailona served not only as the distinguishing features of this study, but more importantly, as the heart and soul of this work. Future researchers might consider composing moʻolelo from stories told, sung, danced, or chanted. This will expand on the use of the narrative as a means for understanding human story. Knowles and Cole (2008) point out the growing use of arts-informed research in qualitative studies. I used hōʻailona as an arts-influenced method to evoke deep, holistic experiences and illuminate facets of Nā Wahine’s lives that might have remained obscured. These artifacts had no innate meaning–only the meaning ascribed to them by Nā Wahine. Researchers interested in expanding on the use of hōʻailona might consider native arts such as carving, weaving, lei making, feather work, canoe building, pottery, painting, tattooing, and other forms of visual arts.

**Research and Specialist Faculty**

This study focused on the experiences of tenured *instructional* women faculty at UH Mānoa and did not consider the experiences of tenured Native Hawaiian women classified as *research* or *specialist* faculty at UH Mānoa. Future investigators might examine the experiences of tenured research and specialist faculty to determine their specific barriers, strategies for success, and sources of support. The scope of the study could be expanded to include the experiences of *non-tenured* Native Hawaiian women faculty since this is a growing proportion of faculty.

**Other Locations**

While this study focused on Nā Wahine from the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, future research is needed to examine the experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty at other universities in Hawaiʻi and on the continent. Since Native Hawaiian faculty
work at colleges and universities throughout the nation, research at universities outside of UH Mānoa can provide valuable information as to how to support and advance Native Hawaiian faculty. This information might also be beneficial for faculty of color and Indigenous faculty. Future studies might focus on the ways in which Native Hawaiian women are situated in multiple discourses based on location and type of university.

In reviewing the literature and findings of this study, notably absent was any mention of feeling marginalized or silenced in the academy—a prevalent issue in the literature (Calhoun, 2003; Cooper et al., 2002; Koch, 2002; Townsend, 2008). This topic did not surface in any of my conversations with Nā Wahine. I suspect this may be due to their ability to bridge Western and Native Hawaiian culture and walk successfully in both worlds. However, in referring to the “academic silos” of university life, they discussed how the university intentionally socializes faculty to conduct research independently rather than collaboratively and how greater emphasis is placed on research as compared to teaching and service. Further inquiry into issues of marginalization and feeling silenced in the academy will provide a more holistic understanding of Native Hawaiian women’s experiences in the academy.

**Conclusion**

Indigenous scholars rarely write anything that is self-serving; we write for the collective good of people. While this dissertation is the culminating effort in my pursuit of a PhD, its main purpose was to give voice to Nā Wahine—those whose voices and stories were not present in the literature. In conducting this study, my intention was to make visible and loud that which has been invisible and silent for too long. The voices of Nā Wahine have now been heard. Their stories have been told.
In relating their tenure experiences, Nā Wahine articulated issues of patriarchy and institutional racism and sexism frequently mentioned in the literature (Chesler, Lewis, & Crowfoot, 2005; Turner, 2002). They described androcentric systems, policies, processes, and procedures. Nā Wahine discussed the oppressive effects of university politics and power, and the rigid, antiquated system of promotion and tenure inscribed into university culture (Armenti, 2004; Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey; 2010; Samble, 2008). While the rules for promotion and tenure were tacitly understood, Nā Wahine made a concerted effort to learn the expectations and follow them. In their respective disciplines, they each learned the requirements for publishing, teaching, and service. In essence, they learned to “follow the recipe” to get tenure without compromising their identity as Native Hawaiian women. Young (2006) described this process as learning to “play the game” to get tenure (p. 154). As Melemele described, “Faculty members who prescribe to academic conventions and play by the rules usually get tenure.” From her perspective, Native Hawaiian women faculty must fit into a restrictive “academic box,” by following conventional rules for research, publishing, teaching, and service if they expect to get tenure. Nā Wahine shared the tensions they experienced bridging Western and native culture and highlighted tokenism as a prevalent issue (Kanter, 1977; Turner, 2002). Several spoke enthusiastically about the opportunity they have to reclaim and rewrite Hawaiian history and to teach the next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars. Others spoke of their kuleana as teachers, researchers, and leaders in paving the way for the next generation of Native Hawaiian scholars.

Reflecting on the Native Hawaiian values that had the greatest influence on their tenure experiences, Nā Wahine mentioned aloha, ʻohana, malama ʻāina, kuleana, lōkahi,
haʻahaʻa, and laulima. These values permeate every area of their lives. These are not values they merely talk about; Nā Wahine live and breathe these values. The ʻohana was a central theme and significantly shaped Nā Wahine’s values, attitudes, and worldview. An interesting point about these Native Hawaiian values is how they are interrelated and interdependent. Aloha is a way of life that affects Nā Wahine’s interactions with family and others. From their ʻohana, Nā Wahine learned to love and care for land and family as a sacred responsibility. They learned the importance of developing and maintaining harmonious relationships and to lead through service. As leaders, they remain humble and work cooperatively to build community and advance issues pertaining to Native Hawaiians—all of which circles back to their aloha for people and places.

Nā Wahine’s innate female power and Indigenous authenticity emerged as the most salient themes in this study. As an Indigenous researcher, I expected to hear stories of adversity and challenges and I thought it highly probable that Nā Wahine might have assimilated to Western culture. I never imagined the genetic power and strength these women have inherited or the ways in which it is manifested in their lives. Nor did I anticipate how true these women have remained to Native Hawaiian culture and values. Despite the oppressive effects of colonization, Nā Wahine have overcome multiple and complex barriers in the academy. I believe they have accomplished this from genetically inherited female power and through their Indigenous authenticity.

I set sail on this voyage with the intention to learn how Nā Wahine navigated through academe. As a tenured Tahitian American woman, I was particularly interested in their experiences during the tenure process and wondered in what ways Native Hawaiian values might have influenced this process. My waʻa is now overflowing with
ʻike (knowledge) that I gained through their wonderful moʻolelo and hōʻailona. The three major themes in this study: Pōhaku Hoʻokeʻa (Barriers), Mana Wahine (Innate Female Power), and Pono (Indigenous Authenticity) contribute to my understanding of the multiple barriers that Nā Wahine have encountered and the innate strength and power they have exercised in overcoming these obstacles. A most pleasing discovery was learning how true they have remained in living, practicing, and perpetuating Native Hawaiian culture and values. In every way, these are exemplary women.

This has been an incredible voyage of discovery. Through Nā Wahine’s wondrous gift of story, I have learned what it was like for these Native Hawaiian women faculty to achieve tenure and positions of leadership in a Western, male-dominated institution. Many of their experiences—particularly in regards to institutional racism/sexism, tokenism, cultural tensions, and maintaining a balance between the demands of work, family, and community—parallel my own. Along the journey, I have discovered my own strength, courage, and ability to persevere despite incredible challenges. As I come to the end of this voyage, I am deeply indebted to these wonderful women for edifying me with their inspiring moʻolelo and hōʻailona. Kū holo mau!
Appendix A

Invitation Letter

Heipua Kaʻōpua
Street Address
City, State, Zip code
April 2, 2013

Dr. ________________
Department
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Street Address
Honolulu, HI 96822

Aloha e Dr. __________,

Perhaps like many Native Hawaiian women faculty, you think that if you read enough books and professional journals about women’s experiences in higher education, that they will connect with your own experiences, your struggles, and your ways of knowing and working. But then you realize that nothing connects with your journey because your story is absent from the literature.

I would like to change that by inviting you to share your story as a participant in my study on the “Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty.” This is an exciting opportunity for Native Hawaiian women, so long silenced and marginalized in the literature, to have their voices heard. You are invited to participate because several colleagues have indicated you would provide a valuable perspective.

My name is Heipua Kaʻōpua, a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. I am also a counselor at Windward Community College. My dissertation will examine the experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty at UH Mānoa leading up to tenure and the effect, if any, of Hawaiian values and culture on the tenure process.

You may be wondering what is involved on your part. Participation in this study involves three interviews (scheduled at your convenience) and will employ several approaches and activities including a semi-structured interview - a reflective process that I expect to be worthwhile to participants.

I hope you will give consideration to this proposal. I will follow up this letter with an email or phone call as the Spring 2012 semester gets underway. Should you require more immediate details, I can provide you with a copy of the participant consent form and a summary of my study. You may contact me on my cell: 808-255-0000 or by email: heipua@hawaii.edu.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Heipua Kaʻōpua
PhD Candidate: UH Mānoa, Educational Administration
Aloha e

I hope you have had time to review the letter I mailed you inviting you to participate in my study on the “Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty.” As promised, I am following up with some additional information about my study. I have attached the “Agreement to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study” and the “Consent Form.” I have also included the “Prospectus” which provides a summary of the study (including the theoretical frame and methods for data collection/analyses). I will be happy to explain more and answer any questions you might have at our first meeting.

The timeline for our meetings will look something like this:

1<sup>st</sup> meeting: 45 min: (February) To introduce myself and explain the study
2<sup>nd</sup> meeting: 1 ½ - 2 hrs: Interview (scheduled 2-3 weeks after 1<sup>st</sup> meeting)
3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: 45 min: Follow-up meeting (scheduled 4 weeks or later after 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting)

I hope you are excited about sharing your tenure experiences. I will call you sometime next week to confirm your participation in the study.

Mahalo nui loa!

Enclosures:
Agreement/Consent to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study
Prospectus
Original Invitation Letter
Appendix C

Agreement to Participate in a Native Hawaiian Study

The title of this research project is “Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty.” The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of Native Hawaiian tenured women faculty at UH Mānoa leading up to tenure and to determine what, if any, Hawaiian values influence the tenure process. I was asked to participate in this study because I meet the following requirements for eligibility:

1. I am Native Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian
2. I am female
3. I hold a doctorate degree
4. I have tenure at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

I will be issued this agreement form along with a consent form. I will sign the consent form and return it to the primary investigator.

Participation in this project will consist of an introductory meeting, a primary interview with the investigator, and a follow-up session during which the investigator will pick up the visual representation completed by the participant and clarify any questions that may have emerged from the interview. I will have the opportunity to review the transcription of the interview. Data from the interview will be summarized into broad categories. No personal identifying information will be included with the research recordings, field notes, or results. Participants will select pseudonyms from a list of stars used by Hawaiian navigators. Each interview will be approximately 1 hour with up to 10 individuals participating in the study. Interviews will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription.

The investigator believes there is little or no risk to participating in this research project. Participating in this project may be of no direct benefit to me. However, the results of this project may assist in explaining how Native Hawaiian tenured women faculty members balance Indigenous culture with the culture of academia.

Research data will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Agencies with research oversight, such as the UH Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review research data. All research records will be stored in a locked file in the primary investigators office for the duration of the research project. No identifiable data will be disclosed.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary and all information will be treated confidentially. If I am not comfortable with the discussion, I am free to withdraw from participation at any time during the project with no penalty, or loss of benefit to which I would otherwise be entitled.
Potential benefits from participating in this research project include gaining knowledge and insights into the experience of Native Hawaiian tenured women at UH Mānoa; contributing to the body of Indigenous research for the benefit of Native Hawaiians; and assisting university administration, faculty, and staff in providing supportive services to assist Native Hawaiian women faculty in the tenure process.

I am aware that if I have any questions regarding this research project, I may contact the investigator (researcher), Heipua Kaʻōpua at 255.0000.

If I have any questions regarding my rights as a research participant, I may contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at (808) 957-5007.

Participant’s Signature ______________________________ Date _________________

Researcher’s Signature _____________________________ Date _________________
Appendix D

Written Consent Form

I, ________________________________, have been informed about this study, and I agree to participate in this study with the researcher, Heipua Kaʻōpua. I understand that no harm will come to me. My identity will remain confidential and the information will be used for educational purposes and may be published. I understand I am free to withdraw from the study at any point in time.

Participant’s Signature ___________________________ Date ________________

Researcher’s Signature ___________________________ Date ________________
Appendix E

Prospectus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heipua Kaʻōpua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospectus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statement of the Problem**

Although women earn the majority of all college degrees (from the Associate to the Doctorate), White males continue to dominate hegemonic roles as deans, chancellors, and college presidents. Not only do tenured male faculty members outnumber women, they also earn more than women. Although Native Hawaiians comprise 20% of the population in the State of Hawai‘i, they constitute only 4% of the aggregated faculty at UH Manoa (IRO, 2011). As Indigenous women of color, Native Hawaiian women may have an even greater challenge in attaining promotion, tenure, and positions of leadership.

**Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to describe the lived experiences of Native Hawaiian women faculty leading up to tenure. The second purpose is to examine the effect, if any, of Native Hawaiian values and culture on the tenure process. Third, this study will explore the tenure experience including barriers and successful strategies and will contribute to the literature addressing the contextual experiences of women of color in higher education.

**Research Question**

1) How do tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty describe their experiences leading up to tenure?
2) What, if any, Native Hawaiian values influenced the tenure process?

**Epistemology**

Moenahā, a Native Hawaiian epistemology, serves as an overarching framework for conceptualizing and organizing my study. I plan to explore the tenure experiences and values of Native Hawaiian women faculty through an Indigenous manner, namely the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of each participant.

**Significance of Study**

While extant research describes the many barriers to tenure for women and women of color (Asher, 2010; Cooper & Stevens, 2002; Ryu, 2010; Trujillo, 2010), no research was found documenting the experiences of Native Hawaiian women who attain tenure at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. This study will contribute to the limited body of Indigenous research for the benefit of Native Hawaiians and will assist university administration and faculty in providing supportive services to assist Native Hawaiian women faculty in the tenure process.

**Definition of Terms**

Native Hawaiian—“any person who is a descendant of the aboriginal people, who prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawai‘i” (AhNee Benham & Heck, 1998).

Tenure—“...is an arrangement whereby faculty members, after successful completion of a period of probationary service, can be dismissed only for adequate cause or other possible circumstances and only after a hearing before a faculty committee” (AAUP, 2002).
### Values
The ideas, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, characteristics, and principles long cherished by Native Hawaiians (Lee, 2005) that drive our decisions, influence our actions and filter our view of the world around us (Rue, 2001).

### Colonialism
Foreign domination, subjugation, and exploitation of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people undermining the oppressed people’s national identity, language, and culture.

### Review of Literature
I organized the literature review around the four Indigenous learning processes of Moenahā, illustrated by four interlocking strips forming a mat, with each of the four quadrants representing one of the learning processes. The four quadrants are 1) hoʻolohe, to listen, observe, and reflect upon this topic and why it is worthy of study; 2) hoʻopili, to bring together and connect existing knowledge from key theorists and academic scholars; 3) hoʻohana, to practice, use, or apply strategies that facilitate social change; and 4) hoʻopuka, to produce or refine ideas and explore new possibilities. It is important to note, that while Moenahā is represented by a flat two-dimensional mat, I conceptualize Indigenous learning more as a three-dimensional, circular, and cyclical process.

In applying this model to the review of literature, the first section, Hoʻolohe, establishes why this topic is important in the academic community and identifies the key stakeholders. The second segment, Hoʻopili, describes what we already know from major theorists and academic scholars about feminist theory, women in academe, women of color, Indigenous women, and Native Hawaiian women faculty. The third section, Hoʻohana, explores how we can resolve tenure issues for women and women of color and how to promote social change. The final segment, Hoʻopuka, promotes “what if” inquiries, reveals the gap in extant literature, and illustrates how my study contributes to the literature on Native Hawaiians.

### Description of Participants
Using purposeful sampling, I will select tenured instructional Native Hawaiian women who hold a doctorate degree. My sample will not include tenured research or specialist faculty, as these individuals do not obtain tenure through the traditional three-prong process of research, teaching, and service.

### Description of Site
The study will take place at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa (UHM), the flagship campus of the University of Hawaiʻi system, and the state's sole public university system governed by a 12-member Board of Regents. UHM offers professional degrees through the doctoral level and carries out advanced research.

### Methodology
In this study, I will use narrative inquiry and arts-informed research methodology to understand the experiences of Native Hawaiian tenured women faculty in the form of moʻolelo (storytelling) and hōʻailona (symbolic reflection of artifacts).

### Data Collection
I plan to interview up to 10 tenured Native Hawaiian women faculty using a traditional method of data collection (a semi-structured interview in a talk-story format). The interview will incorporate a conversational style of interviewing in keeping with traditional Native Hawaiian culture. Each session will be audio recorded and transcribed. Indigenous methods of data collection include narrative interviewing (moʻolelo) and arts-informed reflection (hōʻailona). Each participant will bring an artifact to the first interview that describes her academic journey from the BA to PhD. Following the interview, I will ask participants to create a visual or textual representation of their tenure experience and to reflect on the meaning of this visual representation.
| Data Analysis | I will give participants the opportunity to review and edit the transcript as co-creators of knowledge to ensure an accurate interpretation. I will code the data to determine categories, patterns, or themes. The artifact, transcript, and the participants’ visual representation of their tenure experience will serve to triangulate the data and provide richer meaning to their experiences. Although traditional methods of data analysis are useful to arrive at general themes, they tend to reduce stories to bits of data. I will use mo‘olelo (storytelling) as a form of data analysis incorporating major themes for each participant. I will use hoʻailona (arts-based reflection) to develop a symbol representing the collective story of these Native Hawaiian women. This symbol will represent the overall themes of the study. |
| Limitations of the Study | First, the sample is limited to Native Hawaiian women faculty and does not include male faculty as this is not an area of interest. Second, the sample is limited to Native Hawaiian instructional women faculty and does not include faculty classified as researchers or specialists. Third, the sample is restricted to tenured Native Hawaiian women instructional faculty. Finally, the study is limited to ten Native Hawaiian women and cannot be generalized to a larger population. |
| Ensuring Quality and Reliability | In qualitative studies, credibility and trustworthiness are commonly used as criteria for quality (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of this qualitative study, I will disclose my background, biases, values, and experiences relative to this study and acknowledge that these factors may influence the findings of the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). The generalizability of this study will be limited to the population of Native Hawaiian women faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and cannot be generalized to a larger population. Certain themes, however, may emerge that have relevance to other peoples of color and Indigenous populations. |
Appendix F

Interview Protocol

1. Tell me about yourself. Where did you grow up and go to school?
2. Tell me about your ‘ohana (family). Who was/is a significant person in your family?
3. Tell me a story that illustrates some of the values you learned as a child. Having grown up with a particular system of meaning and values, in what ways have you been exposed to alternate ways of knowing and understanding the world (e.g., education, politics, religion, etc.)?
4. Tell me about your educational journey from high school to the Ph.D. What colleges did you choose to attend and how did these choices affect your educational experience? What stands out for you during this experience?
5. Tell me about what you do at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. How has higher education shaped or influenced your thinking, scholarship, attitudes, beliefs, and practices?
6. What conditions or barriers interfere with your personal growth as a scholar/professor?
7. Describe any tensions or conflict you have experienced between Native Hawaiian and Western values. Tell me a story about it.
8. As a tenured Native Hawaiian woman, how have you come to know what you know about promotion and tenure? What other ways of knowing about tenure might be possible (e.g., Indigenous or women’s ways of knowing, etc.)?
9. What structures and privileges does the tenure process support? What kind of knowledge does it privilege? Whom does it allow to succeed? For whom does it ensure failure?
10. What is the role of language in producing and maintaining privilege? In other words, how does the way we write, talk, and communicate affect the way we think and act in the world (e.g., as a woman, teacher, Native Hawaiian, mother, scholar, political activist).
11. What do you feel are the central issues facing Native Hawaiian faculty at UH Mānoa in regards to promotion and tenure?
12. What kind of support did you receive while applying for promotion and/or tenure (from your department, college, dean, colleague, mentor, family, etc.)? How can university administration, faculty, and staff support NH women in the tenure process?
13. What if life took on different patterns? What if our assumed truths and beliefs about the world were otherwise? How can we make things different for Native Hawaiians?
14. Provide a metaphor describing what we have discussed (i.e., your tenure experience).
Appendix G

Crosswalk Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-Structured Interview Questions</th>
<th>Theoretical Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ1</strong>: How do Native Hawaiian women faculty members describe their experiences leading up to tenure?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ2</strong>: What, if any, Native Hawaiian values influence this process?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RQ1</strong></td>
<td><strong>RQ2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell me about yourself. Where did you grow up and go to school?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tell me about your ‘ohana (family). Who was/is a significant person in your family?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tell me about your family? Who was/is a significant person in your family. Tell me a story that illustrates some of the values you learned as a child.</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tell me a story that illustrates some of the values you learned as a child. Having grown up with a particular system of meaning and values, in what ways have you been exposed to alternate ways of knowing and understanding the world (e.g., education, politics, religion, etc.)?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tell me about what you do at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. How has higher education shaped or influenced your thinking, scholarship, attitudes, beliefs, and practices</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What conditions or barriers interfere with your personal growth as a scholar and professor?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Describe any tensions or conflict you have experienced between Native Hawaiian and Western values. Tell me a story about it.</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. As a tenured Native Hawaiian woman, how have you come to know what you know about promotion and tenure? What other ways of knowing about tenure might be possible (e.g., Indigenous or women’s ways of knowing, etc.)?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What structures and privileges does the tenure process support? What kind of knowledge does it privilege? Whom does it allow to succeed?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For whom does it ensure failure?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What is the role of language in producing and maintaining privilege? In other words, how does the way we write, talk, and communicate affect the way we think and act in the world (e.g., as a woman, teacher, Native Hawaiian, mother, scholar, political activist).</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What do you feel are the central issues facing Native Hawaiian faculty at UH Mānoa in regards to promotion and tenure?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What kind of support did you receive while applying for promotion and/or tenure (from your department, college, dean, colleague, mentor, family, etc.)? How can university administration, faculty, and staff support NH women in the tenure process?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What if life took on different patterns? What if our assumed truths and beliefs about the world were otherwise? How can we make things different for Native Hawaiians?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Provide a metaphor describing what we have discussed (i.e., your tenure experience).</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H

IRB Approval Letter

TO: Heipua Kaopua
   Principal Investigator
   Educational Administration

FROM: Nancy R. King
       Director

Re: CHS #19745- "Tenure Experiences of Native Hawaiian Women Faculty"

This letter is your record of CHS approval of this study as exempt.

On November 21, 2011, the University of Hawai‘i (UH) Committee on Human Studies (CHS) approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CRF 46 (2, 4).

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in The Belmont Report, found at http://www.hawaii.edu/irb/html/manual/appendices/A/òeïrmolor.html

Exempt studies do not require regular continuing review by the Committee on Human Studies. However, if you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from CHS prior to implementing any changes. You can submit your proposed changes via email at uhirb@hawaii.edu. (The subject line should read: Exempt Study Modification.) CHS may review the exempt status at that time and request an application for approval as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Signed consent forms, as applicable to your study, should be maintained for at least the duration of your project.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify CHS when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact CHS at 956-5007 or ahirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.
## Nā Wahine Meeting Schedule

### NĀ WAHINE MEETING SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Meeting</th>
<th>Second Meeting</th>
<th>Third Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atea</td>
<td>2/25/12</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>Her Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hōkūao</td>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hōkūpa’a</td>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>Conf Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalewanu‘u *</td>
<td>2/11/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Starbucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maka‘ala</td>
<td>2/21/12</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makali‘i</td>
<td>2/27/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melemele</td>
<td>2/29/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nāhiku</td>
<td>4/10/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pi‘ikea</td>
<td>3/9/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Conf Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiwai **</td>
<td>4/11/12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Conf Rm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 4th meeting: 1.25 hours, 5/29/12, office
** withdrew from study after the first meeting
# Glossary of Hawaiian Terms

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| ahupua’a | land division | laulima | cooperation |
| ‘āina | land | lawelawe | service |
| Akua | god, deity | lo‘i | kalo garden; taro patch |
| alaka‘i | leadership | lōkāhi | harmony, balance |
| Aloha | love, compassion | lōkōmaika‘i | generosity |
| ‘aumākua | ancestral guardian spirit | M | H | a’aha’a | humility | mākua | parent |
| ‘auwai | irrigation ditch | mana | power; spiritual lifeforce |
| M | H | hālau | meeting house | manaleo | native speaker |
| H | Hanai | adopted | moana | ocean |
| H | Haole | Caucasian | moe ‘uhane | dream |
| H | haumana | student | mo’okū‘auhau | genealogy; succession |
| H | hikino | can-do attitude | mo’olelo | story, history, succession of talk |
| H | hō‘ailona | artifacts, signs, symbols | na’aau | guts, heart, mind |
| H | Hōkū | star | na’auao | intelligence |
| H | honū | green sea turtle | N | O | ēhī’a lehua | flower |
| H | ho’ohana | practice/apply | ‘ōhona | family |
| H | ho’okele | sailing master | ‘ōiwi | bones |
| H | ho’okipa | hospitality | ‘olelo | language, speech |
| H | ho’olohoe | listen/reflect | ‘olelo no’eau | proverb, poetic saying |
| H | ho’omalie | calm | oli | chant |
| H | ho’omanawanui | patience | onipa’a | stand strong; determined |
| H | ho’omau | steadfast | ‘ōpio | children |
| P | pilikia | problem or trouble |
| P | pilina | relationships |
| P | pōhaku | stone, rock, |
| P | pono | in harmony with Indigenous ways |
| P | po’o | leader |
| P | pule | prayer |
| P | punahele | favorite person |
| P | Kalo | taro; staple food | Tūtū | grandmother |
| P | Kalo | hidden meaning | U’uhane | spirit, soul, or ghost |
| P | kaona | hidden meaning | U | wa’a | voyaging canoe |
| P | Ke Akua | God | W | wahine | women |
| P | koko | blood | Waiwai | values |
| P | kōkua | helpfulness | Waiwai | waiwai | values |
| P | kua‘aina | traditional practitioner | Waiwai | waiwai | values |
| P | kuleana | responsibility | Waiwai | waiwai | values |
| P | kumu | teacher | woman |
| P | kupaianaha | serendipity | | | | |
| P | kūpuna | elders, ancestors | | | | |
REFERENCES


392


