

## Book and Media Reviews

---

*The Contemporary Pacific, Volume 28, Number 2, 491-529*  
© 2016 by University of Hawai'i Press

and this means not only scholars but also activists, journalists, and, indeed, military personnel.

Although Davis focuses on US militarization, his intention in titling the book *The Empires' Edge* was to signal that patterns of US militarization in the Pacific share much in common with the broader processes that other hegemony-seeking powers have demonstrated both historically and contemporaneously in the region. To be certain, the Pacific region constitutes the edge of not one but multiple empires.

To conclude, a brief note on some fascinating aspects of the geography of this publication's genealogy and afterlife. Davis completed his PhD at Penn State University, and his doctoral material from Bikini noticeably enriches the monograph. *The Empires' Edge* is published by the University of Georgia Press, with offices in London, UK, and Athens, Georgia, at some great distance from the parts of the world Davis is writing about. But having Pacific issues raised in the press's Geographies of Justice and Social Transformation Series could have interesting—and hopefully transformative—effects on future conversations about militarization and resistance in our region. Davis has ostensibly departed the Islands and is now based at Keene State College in New Hampshire. What a parting gift this book was, then! As he notes about the affinity-seeking power that informs the activist networks resisting militarization in the Pacific, it is filled with aloha.

TERESIA TEAIWA  
Victoria University of Wellington

\* \* \*

*Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific*, edited by Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-8248-3895-9; vii + 308 pages, artwork, photographs, notes, works cited, contributors biographies. Paper, US\$29.00.

*Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific* breaks new ground as the first book-length, collaborative exploration of Pacific literary and artistic rhetorics and aesthetics. Foundational anthologies, such as *Lali: A Pacific Anthology* (Wendt 1980) and *Nuamua: Pacific Writing in English since 1980* (Wendt 1995), offer a broad and representative sampling of literature throughout the Pacific, relying on English as a common language for contributors and readers. More recent anthologies have embraced the multilingual realities of the Pacific but focus on the complexities within a single island group. Since 1995, Huia Press has published its series of biennial award-winning prose as both the English-language *Huia Short Stories* and the companion Māori-language *Ngā Pakiwaitara a Huia*, while collections like *Vārua Tupu: New Writing from French Polynesia* (Stewart, Mateata-Allain, and Mawyer 2006) move effortlessly between Reo Mā'ohi, French, and English in a single volume. Among *Huihui's* many strengths is the dexterity with which it weaves the diverse languages and locations of Moana Nui into one book. The twenty-four chapters include texts translated from indigenous and settler languages, texts presented in the original language alongside English, and

texts that move imperceptibly from one language to another—often without translations. The resultant seamless compilation successfully engages the reader while also emphasizing that narrative and meaning making in the Pacific are multivalent and layered.

The accumulation of diverse languages and locations, coupled with variations in genre, are themselves one layer of the metaphor(s) around which the anthology is organized. “Huihui,” as editors Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom note, is a Proto-Polynesian word that can be translated as a pooling or collection; they also read the term through a specifically Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) lens, invoking the multiple kaona (hidden meanings) and descriptions of the constellation Pleiades, of which Huihui is but one name. Huihui, as both collective and constellation, guides the text’s navigation of rhetorics and aesthetics. The term is both extensive and inclusionary, but also quite specific—just as the focus on rhetorics and aesthetics, the editors argue, should be. They endorse a culturally and geographically located understanding of these terms, which when left unspecified often reinforce colonial hierarchies through an implicit reference to Euro-Western norms. They note that the current modification of the terms “rhetoric” and “aesthetic” as, for instance, “minority” or “alternative,” usually marginalizes literary traditions and finds them lacking through an implicit comparison to Euro-Western ideals. Invoking the multiple intersections of art and politics, the editors argue that “by recognizing the rhetorical and aesthetic sovereignty of

the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific, *Huihui* contributes to the overturning of these hegemonic structures and the promoting of decolonization” (6).

Drawing on “Makali‘i, or the fine mesh or ‘tiny eyes’ of the constellation Pleiades . . . [as] the essential fabric of an organism,” the first section of the book focuses on identity as an entry point to rhetorics and aesthetics as constructed practices (7). Kalena Silva’s “A Contemporary Response to Increasing Mele Performance Contexts” traces how language revitalization has been integral to the resurgence of evolving and reemerging traditional practices in Hawai‘i. His description of the collaborative composition process and the overview of specifically Kanaka Maoli poetic devices, or *meiwi*, creates a fuller understanding of how poetic language based in indigenous perspectives furthers cultural and political sovereignty. If Silva shows us the potential of reclaiming an identity that has been forcefully excised or merely eroded over time, Selina Tustitala Marsh’s “Un/Civilized Girls, Unruly Poems: Jully Makini (Solomon Islands)” alternatively examines how one’s identity may be wrested from its overlapping and sometimes competing components. Focusing on personal identity in the context of an emergent nation, Makini’s poems pose more questions than answers about identity. Contrasting images of “un/civilized” female bodies, Marsh’s close readings deftly reveal how gendered indigenous hierarchies are used to critique cultural and political colonization at the expense of women, and these readings ultimately advocate an indigenous feminism as an integral component

of personal, cultural, and political independence.

The collection builds on these constructions of individual identity as rhetorical and aesthetic locations, focusing on how institutions simultaneously affirm and contest hierarchies and collaborative relationships. Jean Anderson's translation of Chantal Spitz's poem "let's pull in our nets" is a cautionary tale, using the metaphor of fishing nets encircling the fish to illustrate how Native writers must be alert to the precariousness of writing in hegemonic, colonial forms and languages. Spitz's critique of academia as a potential perpetuation of colonial hierarchies, coupled with its attention to orality, is well placed next to Joan Lander's transcription of Haunani-Kay Trask and Mililani Trask's "Speeches from the Centennial of the Overthrow: 'Iolani Palace, January 17, 1993." The inclusion of these speeches, as well as others throughout the anthology, emphasizes the role orature, as a specifically Native rhetorical and aesthetic strategy, plays throughout Oceania. However, Mililani Trask's assertion that "Sovereignty is not waha [lots of talking]. Sovereignty is not wala'au [loud talk]. Sovereignty is what you do with the gesture of your life" (110), is a fruitful launching pad for other contributors' discussions of lived experiences within the range of political statuses throughout Oceania. Lisa King's "Sovereignty out from under Glass? Native Hawaiian Rhetorics at the Bishop Museum" and McDougall and Nordstrom's "Stealing the Piko: (Re)placing Kānaka Maoli at Disney's Aulani Resort" give the reader guided tours of two seemingly antithetical spaces and reveal

how the assumptions of education and authenticity affect one's experience of physical, institutional spaces. These two pieces emphasize contemporary indigenous peoples as vibrant, dynamic, and persistent agents within spaces that seek to normalize depictions of them as static and complicit in their own erasure.

The dynamism and fluidity of indigenous cultural and political survival also speak to the collection's organizing metaphor of constellations as navigational guide, perhaps most clearly in the pieces depicting movement outside and within Moana Nui. Steven Winduo's bilingual "Pasin / Ways" encourages diasporic Natives to return, while his "Pasin Pasifik / Pasifik Way" calls all Oceanians to "meet together as islanders" (218). Craig Santos Perez's "I Lana'la Tatao-tao Ta'lo: The Rhetoric and Aesthetics of Militarism, Religiosity, and Commemoration" recounts his travels throughout Guåhan, the United States, and Europe. As adeptly as he moves from location to location, Perez skips between multiple genres in a single piece; Perez's geographical and generic alacrity is both a hallmark of Pacific writing and an innovative, personal lens for understanding how the diaspora has shaped indigenous narratives and experiences of colonial forces. Dan Taulapapa McMullin's "Tiki Manifesto" considers the psychological and emotional consequences for indigenous peoples when cultural representations circulate in the diaspora as well. Noting the appropriation of tiki culture in Asia, the Americas, and Europe, McMullin asks us to contemplate the ways global consumer culture makes room for bastardized,

kitschy representations of the Pacific, while marginalizing actual peoples abroad and in their homelands.

*Huihui* breaks new ground in exploring rhetorics and aesthetics, while holding fast to traditional elements of Pacific Islands literary and cultural studies. The body of the text opens and closes with poetry, a genre that buttresses most forms of expression in the region and that is also understood in its fullest context only when spoken aloud. Along with the inclusion of several speeches, the emphasis on orality in the anthology speaks to the indigenous storytelling techniques that undergird the rhetorical and aesthetic strategies of the contributors. It also strengthens the editors' commitment to community, the pooling and collecting of "huihui," which is the theoretical and organizational foundation of the book. The range of authors and texts places newer voices in conversation with prominent writers. Contributors' biographies contain information about their work and in some cases geographical context, valuable to instructors and students alike in an anthology encompassing so many regions of the Pacific.

Many of the pieces in *Huihui* draw on the interconnectedness of Pacific peoples and the ways these bonds are forged through travel and voyaging traditions within Moana Nui, from its center to its so-called peripheries. This anthology points toward future collections that could more fully address diasporic movement. However, as the first book dedicated to the rhetorics and aesthetics of the Pacific, *Huihui* has certainly moved forward

the fields of Pacific Islands literary and cultural studies.

JOYCE PUALANI WARREN  
*University of California,  
 Los Angeles*

\* \* \*

*In Football We Trust*, 87 minutes, DVD, color, 2015. Directed by Tony Vainuku and Erika Cohn; produced by Erika Cohn, GERALYN DREYFOUS, MARK LIPSON, and GAVIN DOUGAN. Distributed by IFWT Productions, LLC; Idle Wild Films Inc; and the Independent Television Service, in association with Pacific Islanders in Communications.

*In Football We Trust* is a documentary feature film that follows the lives of four Tongan student athletes: Harvey Langi from Bingham High School, Fihi Kaufusi from Highland High School, and brothers Leva and Vita Bloomfield from Hunter High School. Directed by first-time documentary filmmakers Tony Vainuku and Erika Cohn, *In Football We Trust* was an official selection in the 2015 Sundance Film Festival and is set against the backdrop of the class, race, and religious context of Salt Lake City, Utah, the epicenter of both the "Polynesian Pipeline to the NFL [the National Football League]" and also Polynesian immigration to the United States of America via the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The film leads with the stunning statistic that while Tongans and Samoans in the United States number only 240,000, they are twenty-eight times more likely than any other ethnic group to play in the NFL.