

## Mental Health in the Pacific\*

by

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In his presentation Dr. Sanborn described how Captain Cook's coming to Hawaii caused the discovery of two major groups of people that had never before existed--the Hawaiians and the haoles. Dr. Sanborn suggested that the Hawaiians had previously not been set apart from anyone, had not been described in contrast to any other groups, and only with Captain Cook's visits and the unification of the islands by Kamehameha did the people begin to see themselves as Hawaiians.

Dr. Sanborn pointed out that Cook was, likewise, set apart as the first haole, described in contrast to the indigenous group, as the first outsider. If Captain Cook had been a Japanese admiral, or if he had been the French explorer Bougainville, the characterization of Hawaiians resulting from contact would have been different. The characterization would have changed according to the identity and cultural traits of those observing those being described.

Dr. Sanborn analyzed the effect of the "help" that missionaries and people in the helping professions have brought to Hawaii. He cited that the process has demeaned the islanders and pointed out that the possible solutions have, instead, become part of the cause of social ills. Labels, he stated, reinforce stereotypes.

Dr. Sanborn described some benefits of modernization: an increase in standard of living, a wider world view, a decrease in fatalistic attitudes and access to a money economy. He went on to illustrate how family breakdown,

alcoholism, juvenile delinquency and suicide as major problems that have resulted from contact with the Western world from which Captain Cook had come.

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