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## *Re-membering Panalā‘au: Masculinities, Nation, and Empire in Hawai‘i and the Pacific*

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On 25 May 2002, more than two hundred people gathered at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, for the opening of a traveling exhibit entitled “Hui Panalā‘au: Hawaiian Colonists, American Citizens.” The exhibit brought to light a little-known chapter of Hawaiian history in which over one hundred thirty young men, most of whom were Native Hawaiian, had “colonized” five small islands in the Equatorial Pacific as employees of the US Departments of Commerce and Interior between 1935 and 1942. What began as a secret mission to claim uninhabited coral islands for weather stations and emergency landing fields along planned commercial air routes ended tragically when war came to the islands and two Hawaiian colonists—Joseph Keli‘ihananui and Richard Whaley—died from shrapnel wounds sustained during a bombing raid by the Japanese Imperial Navy on 8 December 1941 (the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor). Though largely forgotten by most, the memory remained with the few surviving members of the Hui Panalā‘au (Society of Colonists), as they came to be known. Bishop Museum project director Noelle Kahanu, whose grandfather George Kahanu, Sr, had been a Jarvis colonist, assembled a team of researchers (including myself) to produce a traveling exhibit, a museum pamphlet (Bishop Museum 2002), and an oral history collection on the project (Center for Oral History 2006). These activities recuperated the stories of the colonists, reinserting the episode into the collective memory of the Hawaiian community.

In this essay, I examine the ways in which the Panalā‘au stories became fertile grounds for “re-membering” masculinities, a type of gendered memory work that facilitates the formation of group subjectivities through the coordination of personal memories, historical narratives, and bodily

experiences and representations. I focus my discussions here on the representations, embodiments, and recollections of what were referred to as the “right type” of personnel—the Kamehameha Schools (KS) alumni and students who exclusively served as colonists on the first five expeditions on Jarvis, Howland, and Baker from March 1935 to August 1936 (see photo 1). The KS colonists embodied a Hawaiian-American masculinity that allowed government officials, military officers, newspaper reporters, museum staff, school administrators, and colonists, as well as local and national audiences, to make (sometimes divergent) claims to racialized citizenship and gendered belonging. Their experiences spoke to the pre-

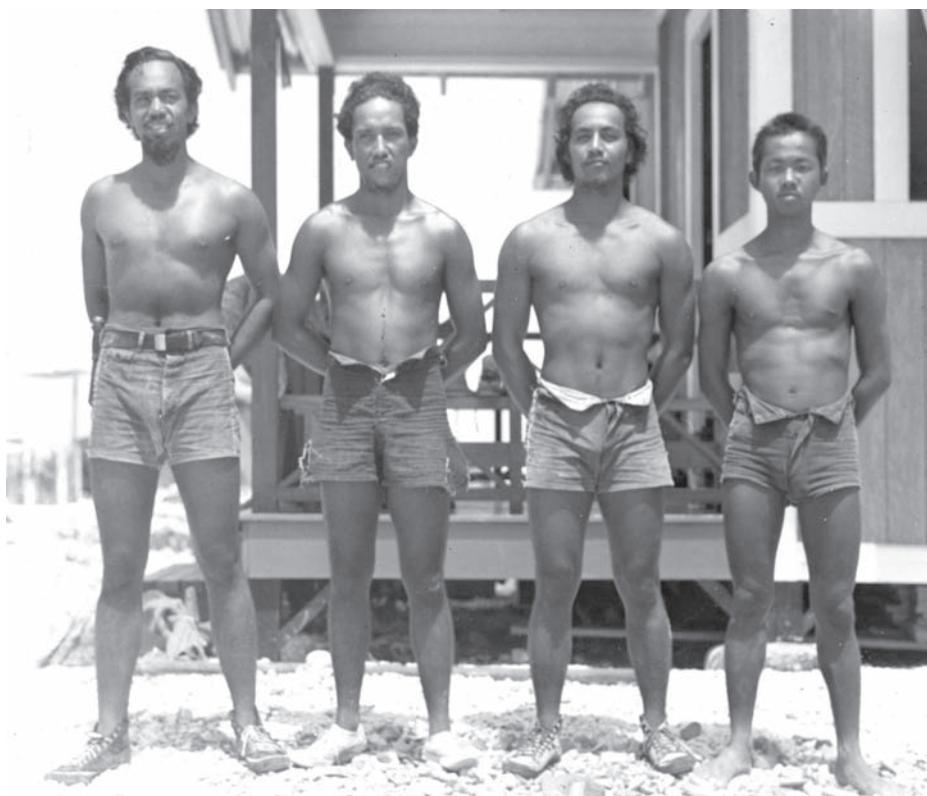


PHOTO 1. Solomon Kalama, Charles Ahia, Jacob Haili, and Harold Chin Lum on Jarvis, 1937. In Harold A Meyer’s scrapbook, from which this image came, a caption reads “Hawaiian Colonists—American Citizens. Kamehameha School Graduates.” These words inspired the title of the 2002 Bishop Museum exhibit. Lum, however, was not a KS graduate. Photo by W T Miller. Reproduced courtesy of Bishop Museum.

dicament of Hawaiian men working in and against US colonialism, and thus their stories later became a unique site for re-membering Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) warriorhood and masculinity in the context of Hawaiian nationalism and decolonization.

### RE-MEMBERING MILITARISM, EMPIRE, AND MASCULINITIES

In theorizing the production of masculinities at the intersection of empire and militarism, I am interested in the ways that particular visions and ideals of masculinity are promoted above others as defining what it means to be a “proper” or “successful” man, and the ways that these figurations work to naturalize and maintain systems of gendered, raced, and class-based oppression and domination (Connell 2005b). Empire building (and dismantling) involves a reshaping of both local and global gender orders, which leads to a resituating of men and women in their relationships between and among each other (Connell 2005a; Lamphere and others 1997). The institution of the military represents a primary site for the study of indigenous men’s gendered transformations in and engagements with modernity and nationhood. Despite the fact that Pacific Island nations “entered into modernity by force of colonial arms” (Teaiwa 2001, 85), militarism has become so deeply embedded it cannot be seen as completely “Other” and instead must be accounted for in the ways that contemporary Oceanic people construct themselves and nations and modern subjects (see also Camacho and Monnig 2005).

Among other things, militarized sites of memory serve as potent sources of nation-building and narrating. Barbara Myerhoff talked about the process of re-membering in the context of life histories as a “special type of recollection” that calls attention “to the reaggregation of members” (1982, 111). As Geoffrey M White has noted (2004), modes of emotional remembering and narrating that occur in survivor discourse and at historic sites facilitate the formation of national subjectivities by articulating personal experience with historical narratives. Thus re-membering is both a type of memory work and an embodied practice that reaggregates historically constituted collectives by coordinating personal memories, historical narratives, and bodily experiences and representations. Such a process becomes especially complicated, and all the more pressing, in the case of Hawai‘i, where the expansion of American empire led to the *dis*-memberment of the Hawaiian nation and its collective memory (Osorio 2002; Stillman 2001).

## RE-MEMBERING PANALĀ'AU: COLONIALISM AND HAWAIIAN MEN'S LABOR

Tellingly, the Hawaiian term “panalā'au,” which the colonists adopted for themselves when they officially chartered their association in 1956, was the same word that was used in the Hawaiian version of the Organic Act of 1900 declaring Hawai'i a “territory.” By 1935, indigenous Hawaiians had experienced massive depopulation from epidemics and had suffered widespread loss of land and sovereignty. The political economy of the Territory of Hawai'i was controlled by the “Big Five” sugar interests,<sup>1</sup> whose leaders—all haole (white) men—had conspired with US Minister to Hawai'i John L Stevens, who landed armed soldiers to back the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian government in 1893 (McGregor 2007; Trask 1999). Since the mid-1800s, thousands of Asian laborers had immigrated to Hawai'i to work the fields, and by the 1930s Hawaiians had become a minority (13.8 percent of the population) in their own homeland (McGregor 1989, 104–105).

At the same time, the US Government was busily fortifying its “Pacific outpost,” as tensions with an expanding Japanese empire grew. Between 1930 and 1940, the number of US military personnel and dependents in Hawai'i rose from 19,000 to about 30,000, and defense expenditures jumped from US\$35 million to US\$45 million with the construction of two airfields, a naval air station, and a naval magazine (Ferguson and others 1994, 184; McGregor 1989, 13). Conversely—though not unrelatedly, as Teresia Teaiwa's conceptualization of “militourism” reminds us (1999)—Hawai'i's image as a tourist destination characterized by its unique culture, music, and hula was increasingly being marketed and consumed through new developments in advertising, mass media, and aviation (Desmond 1999, 98–99). In this context, both the images and actual bodies of women and men circulated widely on the cruise liners, magazines, and radio waves (Brown 2002; Imada 2004).

While a landed elite of Hawaiian royalty enjoyed the benefits of political alliances and intermarriages with the white Republican families, many more urban Hawaiians struggled to get by. In 1930, unemployment rates for Hawaiian men were at 40 percent, in part due to the Great Depression. Though Kānaka 'Ōiwi “spanned a range of professional, skilled, and unskilled occupations, the majority were part of the laboring classes, occupying the lower fringe of the middle class” (McGregor 1989, 108).

Significantly, a great number of Kanaka men earned their livelihoods on the waterfront or on the sea. Young boys dove for coins thrown by tour-

ists from steamers, men dominated the stevedore workforce, fishermen commercialized traditional practices, and perennially unemployed “squatters” living by the beach subsisted on the fish they caught (McGregor 1989, 168–176). As the economy continued its shift to tourism, a number of professional surfers known as “beachboys” utilized the “boarderzone” and shore breaks off Waikiki as a venue for economic, cultural, and political achievement, even domination (Walker, this issue; compare Ishiwata 2002). When young Hawaiian men sought opportunities and/or adventures beyond Hawaiʻi, “many . . . of them shipped out to sea as sailors or merchant marines” (McGregor 1989, 190). Their identities as “oceanmen” (see Walker and Jolly, this issue) reflected the persistence of deeper Oceanic cultural patterns of voyaging and world enlargement (Hauʻofa 1993), as well as “ukupau” labor, which involved long periods of strenuous though well-paid work that afforded long intervals of rest and opportunities for subsistence practices (Beaglehole 1937, 27; McGregor 1989, 108–109).

Although colonial capitalism failed to fully transform a Kanaka work ethic, it did succeed in devaluing it as evidence of Native laziness. Anne McClintock noted that the discourse on black or Native sloth and indolence is one of the oldest and most pervasive discursive tactics used by settlers in the appropriation of land and labor (1995, 252–253), a pattern that Teaiwa has shown is widespread in the Pacific (2001, 28). In the mid-1800s, missionaries and lawmakers in the Hawaiian Kingdom posited “the twin vices of idleness and indifference” as the primary sources of Hawaiian depopulation, which could only be corrected through the creation of private landownership and the adoption of a capitalist work ethic (Hasager and Kelly 2001, 195; Merry 2000, 128). In 1937, ethnologist Ernest Beaglehole reported, “A part-Hawaiian woman said seriously that all Hawaiians are lazy. . . . The only manly thing about the old culture was its warfare and its games, but centuries of selection have bred into the Hawaiian habits of indolence that he will never lose as long as he lives in Hawaii” (1937, 25). This passage speaks also to the gendering of the discourse on sloth as one of emasculation, that is, a lack of manly vigor and competitiveness.

### RE-MEMBERING WARRIORS: KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Seeing education as the only means of checking the rapid decline of the aboriginal population, Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the last direct descendant of Kamehameha I, provided in her 1883 will for the creation

of the Kamehameha Schools. From the time of its creation until the present, the Kamehameha Schools has been one of Hawai'i's most prominent "structures of experience" (Elliston 2004, 620). Pauahi bequeathed the bulk of her massive estate to establish two schools, one for boys (opened in 1887) and one for girls (in 1894), to provide an "education in the common English branches" and "make good and industrious men and women" (Bishop 1883). Though Kamehameha was considered a select school in the late kingdom and early territorial periods, its primary focus well into the 1960s was manual and vocational training. As Jennifer Noelani Goodyear-Ka'opua noted, "The aim was to produce an assimilated and docile citizenry by individualizing students, drawing them away from their cultural roots and social networks, and teaching them the kind of self-discipline that would make them suitable laborers for a modern capitalist society" (2005, 98).<sup>2</sup> This particular model of industrial education was developed in a transnational circuit of nineteenth-century civilizing and educational reform projects that linked the Hampton Institute, the Carlisle Indian School, and the missionary and government schools of the Hawaiian Kingdom in their shared efforts to "uplift" African Americans, Native Americans, and Hawaiians (Baker 2006; Goodyear-Ka'opua 2005, 93–98). Hokowhitu described a similar pattern in state education of Māori boys in Aotearoa/New Zealand, which emphasized "manual, technical, and agricultural skills" to produce a workforce of "practical-minded" Natives (2004, 267; see also Hokowhitu, this issue).

If the "virtue of industry" was the aim of ks education, militarization was the means for disciplining it and inculcating its honor in its boys. Teaiwa has noted that throughout Oceania, social institutions such as schools, sport, and religion draw on military modes of discipline to correct Native "laziness" (2001, 28). The first principal of the boys' school implemented military drills and uniforms and organized the boys into companies with student officers (photo 2). In 1908 the US War Department stationed an army officer to serve as commandant, and a Junior Unit of Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) was officially organized on campus in 1916. As it was a boarding school, militarism literally regulated every aspect of the lives of the cadets (as they were all called) for nine months of the year. A military chain of command established rank in the battalion, and a demerit system regulated infractions of behavioral, dress, and hygienic codes (Goodyear-Ka'opua 2005, 123–124; Hudson 1953, 309–310; King and Roth 2006, 36–37; McGregor 1989, 128; Rath 2006, 75–97).

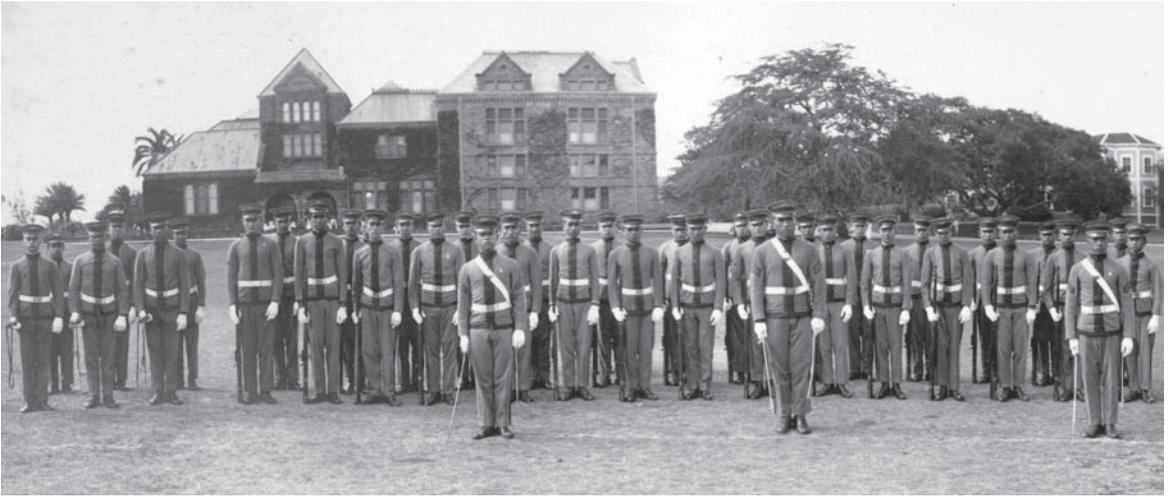


PHOTO 2. Kamehameha Schools cadets in formation, circa 1917. In the background stands the Hawaiian Hall of the Bishop Museum, which at the time shared the campus with the Kamehameha School for Boys. Reproduced courtesy of Bishop Museum.

Though the KS program was primarily aimed toward American assimilation, it also created an important space for formation of Hawaiian subjectivities through the commemoration of the schools' founder Pauahi and her great-grandfather Kamehameha. As Samuel P King and Randall W Roth detailed, "Pauahi was ritually exalted throughout the year, held up as the official soul of Kamehameha Schools. At vespers, the lives of both Jesus Christ and Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop were commemorated" (2006, 43–44). The memory of Kamehameha, the warrior chief for whom the school was named, was frequently called on as an exemplary model of militarized masculinity, rational judgment, and good governance (Robertson 1916). As the school's mascot was the "warrior," even sporting events involved commemoration as the school's fight song recalled Kamehameha's war cry "I mua—Forward!" In the 1930s, a boys' club called Hui 'Ōiwi (Society of Native Sons) formed with the intention of learning traditional cultural art forms (Zisk 2002).

The Bishop Museum also sought to reeducate the KS student body in matters of culture and history. Charles Reed Bishop, Pauahi's widower, founded the museum in memory of his wife. Though established by a separate will (Charles Reed's), the museum nonetheless shared the same

trustees (until the 1970s) and the same campus (until 1940) as the Kamehameha Schools. In the early 1930s, museum staff members gave weekly lectures on Hawaiian culture that were eventually published in a 1933 collection entitled *Ancient Hawaiian Civilization* (Handy and others, 1965). Somewhat ironically, while Kamehameha Schools was actively assimilating the “Hawaiianness” out of its students, the museum was frantically recording and salvaging whatever it could of the “rapidly disappearing native cultures” of Hawai‘i and the Pacific (Stillman 2001, 194; White and Tengan 2001, 389–390). The museum also strove to transform KS students into ethnologists to record traditions and collect specimens. Little did either the students or faculty know that opportunity for active fieldwork would soon come knocking; when it did, the museum energetically seized the opportunity (Lebo 2002).

### EQUATORIAL COLONIZATION: DETERMINING MEMBERSHIP

In March 1935, the potential for the development of airways between California and Australia made it imperative that the United States claim islands along these routes. Ownership of the Equatorial or Line Islands, as they were variously called, was uncertain due to the fact that both US and British fertilizer companies had claimed, mined, and abandoned the same islands for its guano in the second half of the nineteenth century. Since both American and British companies were actively competing for new air routes, William T Miller, superintendent of airways from the Bureau of Air Commerce (US Department of Commerce), moved quickly and discreetly to assert sovereignty over Jarvis, Howland, and Baker by organizing a “colonizing expedition” to occupy those islands. Of equal interest was the islands’ strategic military significance; thus the US War, Naval, and Treasury departments provided army personnel, food rations, camp equipment, and Coast Guard cutters.

Miller put US Army Lieutenant Harold A Meyer in charge of outfitting the first expedition with supplies and three groups of colonists, each group comprising three army soldiers put on furlough “and two Hawaiians who could look after such matters as fishing and boating, and other miscellaneous duties” (Bryan 1974, 3). Thus Miller and Meyer met with Bishop Museum Trustee Albert F Judd to invite a member of the museum staff on the trip and to secure Hawaiian colonists. Judd offered the services of Edwin H Bryan (curator of collections) and arranged for Dr Homer Barnes (KS principal) to select “six Hawaiians” who met Lt Meyer’s conditions of

being “grown up,” “disciplined,” and “friendly and unattached”; as well as being “able to fish in the native manner,” “swim excellently,” “handle a boat,” and “able to ‘take it’” (Bryan 1974, 6). Here Judd followed in the footsteps of his grandfather Gerrit P Judd, the Honolulu agent for the American Guano Company who had recruited hundreds of Hawaiian laborers to work the islands.<sup>3</sup> Davianna Pōmaika‘i McGregor further situated this line of employment in a longer genealogy of Hawaiian men exploited by the United States as “non-white, cheap, pliable, expendable, manual labor” (2004, 218), including sailors and settlers in the Northwest fur trade, supply carriers for the Wilkes expedition to Hawai‘i, and Calvinist missionaries to the Marquesas and Micronesia.

When Meyer went to Kamehameha Schools to meet with the candidates, he spoke with ROTC instructor Lt Sidney Hinds, who “agreed . . . that it was better to take a group of young men of Hawaiian blood who came recommended through the schools than it was to go out and pick up beachboys and individuals living near the shore” (Bryan 1974, 7). This statement points to the contemporaneous ordering of Hawaiian masculinities in which the ks students exemplified the colonial ideal of the Native man: trained by the military, willing and able to labor, and otherwise “safe.” The “beachboys,” on the other hand, subverted much of the colonial ordering of gender practices that had taken place following the annexation, especially through their liaisons with white women and fights with white men (see Walker, this issue). Their reputations took a further turn for the worse when they were implicated in the Massie affair.<sup>4</sup> Hawaiian and local Asian men embodied the “black peril,” a trope readily deployed in colonial settings throughout the Pacific (Inglis 1974).

It was important, then, that the young men chosen to represent Uncle Sam’s claims in the Pacific embody a different type of masculinity, one that was disciplined and not lazy, nor overly sexualized or threatening. However, that body was still required to be a physically powerful one; George West, the only student (a senior) and the smallest in the group of candidates, was excused by Meyer because of his height (see photo 3). The first six alumni recruits (between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four) who were selected—Henry Ahia, Daniel Toomey, Abraham Pi‘ianaia, William Kaina, James Kamakaiwi, and Kilarney ‘Opiopio—were distinguished in athletics, ROTC, academics, and other leadership capacities at the school. They did not know the true purpose of the trip, and they were given little time to prepare for it; West recalled only receiving a description of what sounded like “a purely scientific expedition” (West nd, 1). Pi‘ianaia later

noted that it was “a great adventure” and a job that paid three dollars a day, more than a sailor or a plantation laborer earned at the time (quoted in Knaster 1988, 97).

Once on the ocean aboard the US Coast Guard cutter *Itasca*, Meyer revealed the true nature of the project. When they arrived on the islands, they helped land the supplies and assisted the army men in establishing and maintaining the tent camps. The official party led by Miller declared the first expedition a success, and on the second cruise they replaced the army soldiers with two more KS colonists on each island. This time West made the cut, and he joined the Jarvis party.

The full rationale for removing the military personnel is unknown; Meyer stated only, “This was directed from Washington as part of their international policy” (Bryan 1974, 10). Though the utilization of cheap Hawaiian laborers in place of enlisted white soldiers might have provided sufficient economic motivation, the more interesting dimensions are the imperial anxieties that animated this policy. McClintock noted that in colonial discourse, the “tropics” and other “dark corners of the earth” are seen as zones of degeneration that threaten the white male body (1995, 32–33). At the time, concerns over the suitability of tropical climates for the white man figured in public debates about the “new problems” presented by America’s “far islands” (Baldwin 1935). Logbooks kept by the soldiers, letters by officials, and recollections of later colonists confirm that the army men struggled with the heat and living on islands (Bell 2006; McBride 1940).

The Hawaiian colonists on the other hand were “well-suited” and “fit perfectly” into the environment. The KS students took pride in their charge and vowed to “make good for Kamehameha and for all other Hawaiians” (Bryan 1974, 59). Their duties included “recording weather observations, keeping detailed daily logs, collecting scientific specimens, clearing landing fields, establishing effective camps, preserving food supplies and keeping up morale” (Meyer 1935). When not actively engaged with work, the colonists would exercise, play sport, read, write home, collect shells, fish, dive, swim, observe bird life, and kill the rats and field mice (brought by shipwrecks) that covered the islands.

## REPRESENTING THE RIGHT TYPE OF COLONIST

Despite the “veil of secrecy” that shrouded these initial expeditions, reporters quickly took notice of the *Itasca*’s movements and were awaiting its arrival back in port after its second cruise. In July 1935, *Honolulu*

*Star-Bulletin* writer John Williams published a three-part series of articles detailing the current colonization project, the history of guano mining and the role of the Judd family in both eras, and stories of shipwrecks and castaways on the islands (1935a, 1935b, 1935c). These articles placed the colonists and the new frontier of transpacific aviation and commerce within a larger historical narrative of US national/imperial expansion, and they initiated a spate of local, national, and international reporting on the project (Kikiloi 2002).

The bodies of the Kamehameha students figure prominently in Williams's (and others') stories as key arbiters for understanding racialized citizenship, labor, and masculinity. Throughout the series, readers could see photos of the KS colonists unloading supplies, standing tall aboard the *Itasca*, collecting shells, and training in an improvised gymnasium. The full narrative of their work appears in Williams's first article (1935b), where he described them as "the right type of men with American citizenship . . . courage, resource and stamina"; as KS students, he wrote, they received an "outstanding practical education, from varied manual work, including cooking, to self-discipline." Due to "their Hawaiian blood and backgrounds, the boys are admirably suited for the life" and "carry out their disciplinary and hygiene measures of shaving and bathing every day." In addition to the meteorological notes they compiled (hourly throughout the day and every third hour at night), he wrote, "Many useful specimens have been obtained for the Bishop Museum, which has supplied the boys with collecting and preserving equipment." Williams ended, "So, in the future, when you hear the operations officer at the Oakland airport call out 'All aboard for Honolulu, Pago Pago, Suva, Auckland, and Sydney,' remember the Kamehameha boys, their colorful work, and remember, too, the other American men, many of whom will never be known to the public, who helped make transpacific aviation a glorious reality."

These and later stories run rife with colonial metaphors, but in complex and sometimes contradictory ways. The focus on the young men's hygienic practices reflects a colonial imperative to reconstitute domesticity through the reconfiguration of male and female bodies and spaces (Jolly and MacIntyre 1989; McClintock 1995). Allusions to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, an allegory of empire (Redden and Macdonald 2002), often appear, though here the KS students represent a merging of Crusoe and the Native who became his servant, Friday. The Kamehameha colonists are thus both subjects and objects of nation and empire, a discursive formation that, as Jolly noted (1997), operates differently for men and women in the (post)colonial Pacific. Their objectification as "types" and "specimens"

emerges from two imperial modes of classification—scientific racism and commodity racism—in which the latter converts “the narrative of imperial Progress into mass-produced *consumer spectacle*” (McClintock 1995, 33; italics in original). In many important ways, their images fit nicely into the visual landscape populated by the images of US gold medalist swimmer and “father of surfing” Duke Kahanamoku, whose body became the site for imagining the domestication of Hawai‘i, the sexual liberation of elite white women, and the revitalization of white masculinity (Desmond 1999; Willard 2002; Walker, this issue).

The colonists’ Kamehameha Schools education helped them mediate the racial and gender divide, providing them with the “right type” of military and vocational training and discipline to become “men with [white] American citizenship.” Shown bare-chested, at times lined up as if they are in a “parade rest” formation (see photo 1), they embodied a distinctly militarized masculinity that bears the burden of race, labor, and science in the tropics. Williams’s call to “remember the Kamehameha boys” marked their bodies and stories as important object lessons in the pedagogy of imperial citizenship. Kathy E Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull wrote that in the United States, the granting of citizenship and individual rights to young men has historically demanded a militarization of their masculinity (1999, 158). Newspaper editorials thus extolled them for learning “the valuable lesson of self-reliance,” which should have had “wide appeal to the youth of the Territory” (*Honolulu Advertiser* 1936).

The colonists’ popularity also carried over to the continental United States, where it was actively consumed in an economic and social space that was undergoing a national “crisis in masculinity” (Kimmel 1996). Michael S Kimmel noted that the Depression had an emasculating effect for a great many American men who could no longer prove their manhood in the marketplace. New forms of masculinity based on physical strength, aggressive force, and male sexuality became more achievable for men who could take up the Atlas course of physical culture (Kimmel 1996, 199–211). Thus in February 1936, Henry Ahia (the leader on Jarvis) received a letter from a Glenn William Munger of Colton, New York, stating, “A few weeks ago I saw your picture with three of your companions in one of our newspapers and a description of your island. It all sounded most fascinating to me and I should like to ask if you would care to send me a snapshot or two of yourself to add to my collection of physical culturalists and other notables? If so, it will be highly appreciated and receive a choice place. Please tell me more about what you do during a day and what your pleasures are. Do you swim much, sun bath, etc?” (photo 3).

More than just admiration, Munger’s letter expresses desire that is both colonial (to add to his “collection”) and homoerotic (to know “pleasures”; see also Dvorak, this issue). Dowsett has argued that sexuality must “be more central to the analytical gaze, not just for gay men but for the question of embodiment in general” (2006, 10). Hawaiian males’ sexuality had already gained wide purchase from the commoditized spectacle of the beachboys and coin divers. Such interest in these young, infantilized but virile bodies points to the understanding of the Islands (both Equatorial and Hawaiian) as what McClintock has termed a “pornotropics” onto which the American mind projected “its forbidden sexual desires and fears” (1995, 22). Munger’s desire and admiration for the Hawaiian

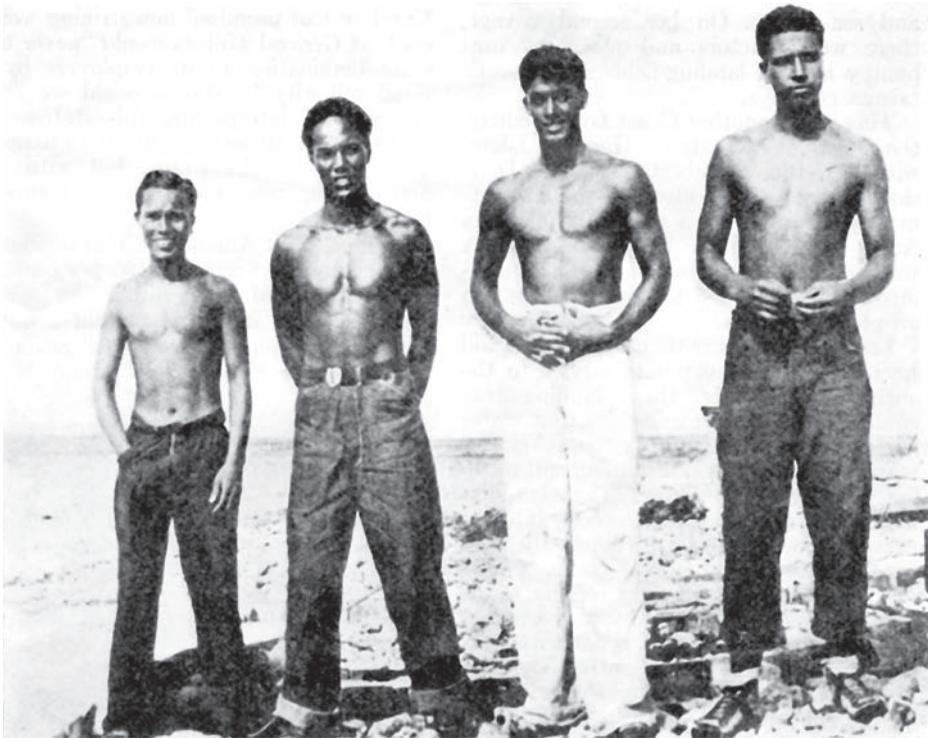


PHOTO 3. George West, Henry Ahia, Daniel Toomey, and Frank Cockett on Jarvis Island, 1935. This image, which appeared in the 23 January 1937 issue of *Literary Digest*, is most likely the one reproduced in Munger’s hometown newspaper in New York. The same image also accompanied an interview of George West in a 27 January 1936 *San Jose Mercury Herald* article by G H McMurry entitled “State College Freshman ‘Empire Builder’ for U.S.” The subtitle read “Hawaiian Lad Tells of Crusoe Life on Lonely Isle.”

male body may also have been linked to anxieties that were experienced by men who felt that civilization and modernity had softened them, thus creating a need to reconnect with the “primitive masculinity” embodied in colonial fictions such as Tarzan (Bederman 1995). Tellingly, another Hawaiian Olympic swimmer, Buster Crabbe, literally embodied this vision as he starred in the 1933 *Tarzan* serial and movie (McGregor, pers comm, 31 Jan 2007). Indeed, the stories and images of the colonists on guano islands proved fertile grounds for imagining a powerful American masculinity, especially as print media and magazines were powerful genres for understanding national and modern identity (Anderson 1991; Pendergast 2000).

These same images and narratives also offer alternative readings that allow us to find Hawaiian agency, motivations, and meanings separate from those imposed by the colonizer. Positive images of Hawaiian males at the time were few in the aftermath of the Massie case and the vilification of local and Hawaiian men; even more pervasive was the image of the lazy Kanaka. The KS colonists provided an image of Hawaiians as capable, intelligent, healthy, responsible, hardworking, and able to make claims (if unevenly) to both modern American citizenship and Native Pacific heritage. A great many reader responses in the Honolulu dailies praised the work and accomplishments of the “Kam School boys” and allowed the public to collectively re-narrativize and re-member positive Hawaiian masculinities. Rather than only take up the role of the properly disciplined Native, the KS colonists also performed the more subversive masculinities of the beachboys as the Jarvis group posed for pictures with surfboards they had crafted on the island. This is particularly ironic given the explicit contrast between the Kamehameha School boys and the beachboys, and reveals that the KS assimilationist project was an incomplete one.

#### RE-MEMBERING HUI PANALĀ‘AU

The rich and extensive logbooks kept by the colonists and their own personal recollections some sixty-six years later archive another set of memories created and evoked by the islands. Pi‘ianaia’s logbook from Baker (18 June–4 Aug 1936) shows that he and the others (William Kaina, Kenneth Bell, and Edward Young) connected their journey to their own seafaring traditions as Polynesians and modern Hawaiians. One morning Pi‘ianaia and Young, both stevedores back home, discussed their experiences as “shipmates on the SS *Maunalei*, a freighter plying between Honolulu, San Francisco and Seattle” (21 June); a couple of days later they talked “about

the stars—their Hawaiian names, and their necessity to early Polynesians as means of navigating between islands” (23 June).

The colonists were all active shell hunters, but more so for themselves than the Bishop Museum. After one excursion, Bell returned to camp with a “beauty—a spiral shell tapered like a screw with ridges on it.” Later “Bell spread out his shell collection,” which Pi‘ianaia noted had “glossy and colorful shells. Almost every kind of shell that could be found on the beach is represented in this collection.” Yet, much to his dismay, in his 2002 oral history interview Bell recalled that Bishop Museum officials took all the best shells he had brought back for himself (Bell 2006, 119–120).

Indeed, the museum, government, and military are all marginal in the narratives of the colonists. More important are their bonds with each other, which they attribute to their gendered experiences of militarism and Hawaiian culture fostered at Kamehameha (Kahanu 2002). George Kahanu explained, “We all got along. It was a military school so you respected the chain of command. And that was one of the requirements of being on the island” (Kahanu and Harris 2006, 143). Classmate Arthur Harris (colonist on Baker) agreed and added, “We were like a big family. . . . The guys that I worked with, they weren’t superiors. . . . They were senior to us in rank in school that we showed respect to. . . . even till today, we have lots of *aloha* for the way they acted and for the way they treated you” (Kahanu and Harris 2006, 158; italics in original).

Harris’s remarks point to the affective dimensions of re-membering Hawaiian masculinities. Bodies figure centrally through felt emotions and embodied experience. In a humorous subversion of the term “colony,” George Kahanu recalled, “Well, one of the things that limited whatever we did was water. . . . if you had clothes to wear, then you had to wash the clothes. . . . So . . . it’s reasonable that we became a nudist colony” (Kahanu and Harris 2006, 145).

Kahanu’s story suggests a homosociality on the island that was literally stripped of any disavowals of homoeroticism. It also reflects the liminality of their situation, which, according to Victor Turner, produces a “modality of social relationship” that he termed “*communitas*,” through which individuals relate to one another as undifferentiated and “total beings” (1969, 96, 127). Furthermore, liminal situations and *communitas* provide groups with an experience of renewal, regeneration, revitalization, and even status elevation, all of which enable them to return to society more fully capable of participating in its structure (Turner 1969, 128–133). Though they may not have been able to keep all the shells they wanted,

the colonists did return with significant economic and cultural capital, which allowed them to support themselves and their families. A number of former colonists later became distinguished leaders in the community.<sup>5</sup>

After the US Department of Interior took over the project in 1936, the pool of colonists included both non-ks men and non-Hawaiians, though most were young, local men (see Tengan 2004).<sup>6</sup> Of the total one hundred thirty-four colonists between 1935 and 1942, fifty-four were from Kamehameha Schools. The colonists subsequently formed a group called Hui Panalā‘au, which would maintain their friendships and stories, bring back the bodies of Richard “Dicky” Whaley and Joseph Keli‘ihananui (two non-ks colonists killed on 8 December 1941) from Howland, and establish a scholarship for needy Hawaiian boys to attend the University of Hawai‘i. In 1974, Dr Edwin H Bryan, Jr, of the Bishop Museum, published *Panala‘au Memoirs*. Aside from a few articles in local newspapers and magazines, the memory of the Panalā‘au faded quickly from the collective consciousness of the Hawaiian people.

#### RE-MEMBERING KOA: MASCULINITY AND DECOLONIZATION

What the Hawaiian community *did* actively begin to remember in the 1970s was a history of American suppression of Hawaiian culture and sovereignty. Since that time, the Hawaiian movements of cultural nationalism, self-determination, and decolonization have flourished. Contemporary Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mine the historical record to understand and heal the colonial past. The Hawaiian terms for remember—*ho‘omana‘o* (make meaning) and *ho‘omaopopo* (create understanding)—highlight the role of individual and collective memory as method, analysis, and interpretation. For Kānaka, the process has involved a gendered re-remembering and reclaiming of “authentic” cultural and political selves that were (forcibly) forgotten with the ascension of American hegemony in the Islands.

In recent years, Hawaiian men and women have returned to “traditional” institutions for the achievement of indigenous identities in the realms of precolonial dance, tattooing, ocean voyaging, martial art forms, and warrior traditions. Though both men and women have taken up these traditions, the emergent form of warriorhood especially has become gendered as masculine and has come to represent a more aggressive assertion of cultural and national strength and vitality; in many ways, this counters an emasculating discourse of weakness and death (such as that of Hawaiian sloth) that have been a part of the colonial process.<sup>7</sup> Given the masculine gendering of nationalisms elsewhere, such a development might

be expected; however, this was not immediately or automatically the case in Hawai'i, and in fact it is partly a response to the female leadership in the Hawaiian movements and male leadership in Māori communities. Commenting on 'Ōiwi women's leadership, Hawaiian Studies professor and nationalist Haunani-Kay Trask asserted that while Hawaiian male leaders have collaborated with the State for the rewards of patriarchy (ie, elected office), "Hawaiian women have chosen the path of decolonization" because they "have not lost sight of the lahui" (1999, 92, 93).

At the same time, men who traveled the Pacific on the *Hōkūle'a* Hawaiian voyaging canoe have recounted explicit challenges from Māori men. Former Marine and Vietnam veteran Billy Richards, a captain on the *Hōkūle'a*, related, "In New Zealand, 300 came out and did haka. . . . But we couldn't respond as warriors because we didn't know how, so we would send hula dancers out instead. And they would always ask, 'Where are your men?'" (Sodetani 2003). Hawaiian men and women have valorized Māori men's practices as the epitome of indigenous Polynesian warriorhood and masculinity, an image that in many ways is a product of colonial discourses on savage physicality (Hokowhitu 2004, and this issue). For the Hawaiian movement more generally, the Māori represent an exemplary model of anticolonial resistance and cultural "staunchness," and one that has been seen as predominantly masculine in nature. The important part of this claim is that masculinity is identified with authentic traditions of precolonial Polynesian society that were able to resist the perceived feminization and emasculation that accompanied colonization in Hawai'i.

It is in this context that revitalized practices of koa (warriorhood, bravery) have become key sites for the re-membering of Hawaiian cultural masculinities as decolonizing practice. Groups called *nā koa* (the warriors/courageous ones) emerged in the early 1990s around commemorative events and ceremonies marking pivotal moments, sites, and leaders of the Hawaiian nation. At the same time, the Hawaiian bone-breaking martial art of lua experienced a revitalization (Paglinawan and others, 2006). As with the Hui Panalā'au exhibit, a Bishop Museum staff member initiated the lua program by bringing together four masters to institute new *pā* (schools) of the art. Though both men and women joined, *nā koa* and *pā lua* were implicitly (sometimes explicitly) seen as sites for Hawaiian men. Perhaps the clearest articulation of this assumption came in the establishment of a *hale mua* (men's house), which formed out of these two movements (Tengan forthcoming).

Memory work figures centrally in the reconstruction of warrior selves,

and members of *nā koa*, *pā lua*, and *hale mua* frequently attend and take part in commemorative activities of all sorts, including those that pay homage to Hawaiian veterans. Representatives of *Pāku‘iaholo*, the school at which Noelle Kahanu received her lua training, performed a warrior’s dance and presented wooden spears to the families of Dicky Whaley and Joe Keli‘i Hananui when they were finally reburied at the state veterans’ cemetery in December 2003 (Tengan 2004). In February 2005, members of all organizations took part in a highly publicized funeral service for Nainoa Hoe, a KS graduate and army lieutenant killed in Iraq whose story made national headlines (Cole and Lum 2005). One of the more complex twists in Hoe’s narrative is that his father Allen Hoe is a Vietnam vet, member of *Pāku‘iaholo*, Honolulu attorney for a Hawaiian rights legal team, and counsel in a case brought to the International Court of Arbitration that sought to expose the US occupation of the Hawaiian nation-state.

How do we explain the contradiction of Hawaiian nationalists advocating decolonization and de-occupation yet memorializing Kanaka men employed by the military in service of American empire? I would suggest that this sort of gendered memory work proceeds from the nationalist modes of belonging that have been produced through the militarized structures of experience in place, especially the Kamehameha Schools (Elliston 2004). The militarized masculinities and modes of work adopted by the KS *Panalā‘au* colonists allowed them to transgress the boundaries of race, class, and gender to make claims to full US citizenship, if only briefly and incompletely. These young men were able to make themselves visible in a recognizably “masculine” way and partially counter discourses of emasculation that work to erase male bodies and agency. Moreover, in memory-rich sites such as the Bishop Museum, interaction with the photographs, texts, collections, videos, and actual bodies of the Hui *Panalā‘au* allow current day audiences to be drawn into the larger histories in which the KS *Panalā‘au* were agents.

## CONCLUSION: HAWAIIANS RE-MEMBERED

The Kamehameha Schools, now an elite institution supported by a six-billion-dollar endowment, has recently become a focal point for Hawaiian political activism following a series of court cases filed by non-Hawaiians seeking to dismantle the school’s admission policy giving preference to children of aboriginal Hawaiian ancestry. KS students, faculty, alumni, and

their supporters, many of whom had not previously shown any interest in Hawaiian nationalist politics, came out nearly ten thousand strong in a 2003 march for social justice that recognized the attacks on Kamehameha Schools as a part of a larger backlash against Hawaiian rights and entitlements (Bernardo 2003; Kauanui 2005). Now more than ever, Hawaiian men and women of diverse economic, social, and cultural backgrounds are searching for a way to unify as a people and nation.

One of the more difficult tasks facing Hawaiian nation-builders is that of integrating the older generations of Hawaiians. Trask characterized the territorial period as a “long, sixty-year eclipse” during which Hawaiian ways were deemed to be “gone forever” (1999, 94, 93). Those that were born and came of age in that period are considered by some to be the “lost generations,” whose marginalization under the American system led to their widespread assimilation (Rath 2006). Such a characterization, though, is incomplete, and it leads to a devaluing of the previous generations’ labors and contributions to the Hawaiian collective. Moreover, a fuller re-membling of their stories allows for the integration of present Hawaiian selves and collectivities with earlier states of being (Myerhoff 1982, 110), a process quite central to nation-making. The retelling of the Panalā‘au stories fulfills such an integrative role. Thus, at a Native Hawaiian conference held on 11 September 2002, colonists’ stories were featured in a particularly emotional day of remembering. Noelle Kahanu asked the audience to contemplate what brought them together as Hawaiians and Americans, and if the two must be mutually exclusive. The lessons from the Panalā‘au history and survivors present seemed to suggest “no.” Whether or not one agrees with that assessment, their stories are nonetheless good to re-member.<sup>8</sup>

\* \* \*

I WISH TO THANK *Margaret Jolly, Geoffrey White, Davianna McGregor, Candace Lee, Hōkūlani Aikau, Pensri Ho, Nandita Sharma, Vernadette Gonzales, Roderick Labrador, and two anonymous reviewers for their comments. Versions of this paper were delivered at the “Moving Masculinities” conference at the Australian National University in 2005 and in the University of Hawai‘i Anthropology Department colloquium series in 2006, and I thank those who responded with questions and comments there. Finally, I wish to thank all who were involved with the Hui Panalā‘au exhibit and oral histories, including Noelle Kahanu, Warren Nishimoto, and the men and families of the Hui Panalā‘au. Any errors here are my own.*

## Notes

1 Castle and Cooke, C Brewer, American Factors (AmFac), Theo H Davies, and Alexander and Baldwin (A&B).

2 According to two surveys of all living graduates conducted in 1930 and 1935, most KS alumni (about 70 percent) ended up in mechanical trades and government service, though some managed to break through the “grass ceiling” (Rath 2006, 59) to become doctors, teachers, lawyers, businessmen, executives, managers, and politicians (Beaglehole 1937, 21; Hudson 1953, 593–600; McGregor 1989, 130).

3 After the American Guano Company ceased operations there in 1879, the British John T Arundel & Co worked the islands with laborers drawn from Niue and the Cook Islands (Bryan 1974, 188).

4 The 1931–1932 series of court cases and acts of vigilantism involved the accusation by Thalia Massie (a naval lieutenant’s wife) that she had been raped by five local men, and the subsequent murder of the “darkest” of the youths by the Massie gang (Rosa 2000; Stannard 2005).

5 In a book review of Bryan’s *Panala’au Memoirs*, Chuck Frankel wrote, “The colonizers include some familiar names: Abraham Piianaia, former head of Hawaiian Homes Commission; Daniel Toomey, retired policeman; Theodore Akana, former Hawaii Government Employees Association executive; Frank Cockett, Maui county official; Joseph Anakalea, Solomon Kalama and Killarney Opiopio of the Board of Water Supply; and George West, Star-Bulletin writer” (1975). Also, Hartwell Blake was mayor of Kaua’i, and Alexander Kahapea was the most highly decorated World War II veteran from Hawai’i.

6 McKinley High School graduate David Kalama, a Jarvis Island colonist (Oct 1939–April 1941) and brother of Solomon (pictured in photo 1), continued to follow pathways of Pacific travel laid by the military when he moved to Guam to work as a civilian for the US Navy. He became the head coach for the Tamuning Eagles, an American youth football team comprising primarily Pacific Islanders who realized a remarkable string of victories on and off the field in competitions with the military, largely through the articulation of indigenous masculinities (Diaz 2002 and pers comm, 27 March 2004).

7 Not surprisingly, these same forms of warrior masculinity have also been quickly commoditized in the production of identity merchandise such as T-shirts with hypermasculine ethnic warriors, and in the promotion of Hawai’i as a tourist destination with the inclusion of warrior stories in airline magazines (Linnekin 1997; Sodehani 2003).

8 In 2006, further remembrances occurred at the University of Hawai’i, Mānoa, with the publication of the Center for Oral History’s collection of interviews conducted in 2002 and the inclusion of Native Hawaiian artist Kā’ili Chun’s piece *The Irony of Trust* (comprising five concrete blocks representing the five islands colonized) in the “Reconstructing Memories” exhibit in the art gallery.

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*Abstract*

Between 1935 and 1942, over one hundred thirty young, mostly Native Hawaiian men (later known as the Hui Panalā‘au) “colonized” five small islands in the Equatorial Pacific as employees of the US Departments of Commerce and Interior. Students and alumni from the Kamehameha Schools served exclusively in the first year, and their experiences largely structured the ways that the project was represented at the time and would be remembered later in a 2002 Bishop Museum exhibit. In this essay, I examine the ways that the bodies and memories of the Kamehameha colonists became fertile grounds for re-membering masculinities, a type of gendered memory work that facilitates the formation of group subjectivities through the coordination of personal memories, historical narratives, and bodily experiences and representations. The colonists embodied a Hawaiian-American masculinity that allowed a wide range of interlocutors and audiences to make (sometimes divergent) claims to racialized citizenship and gendered belonging. Their experiences spoke to the predicament of Hawaiian men working in and against US colonialism, and thus they enabled a collective re-membering of Hawaiian masculinities that helped counter notions of Hawaiian men’s laziness, marginality, and absence, both in the political economy of the territory and the present-day movements for self-determination and decolonization.

**KEYWORDS:** masculinities, colonialism, militarism, nationalism, memory, embodiment, Hawai‘i