

# **E Ola ā Kau Kō Kea**

## **He 'Ohina 'Ōlelo No'eau a Nane no nā Kūpuna, nā Luāhine me nā 'Elemākule**

A Collection of Hawaiian Proverbs, Poetic Sayings, and  
Riddles Pertaining to Elderhood



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Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health  
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The Hā Kūpuna team extends a warm mahalo to the artist, Kupihea, for his beautiful portraits honoring Mary Kawena Pukui and her life's work on which we depended so heavily to create the glossary and 'ōlelo no'eau collection about elderhood. Mrs. Pukui is an embodiment and exemplar of what it means to be a kupuna, whose many teachings live on in her students and the broader lāhui who have been enriched by her scholarship and care. We humbly ask that these images not be used without the permission of the artist.

# Artist's statements

## **Pukui Kukui: Assemblage of Knowledge**

A collection of knowledge pertaining to our kupuna's wisdom carried on the breath of life that takes on the characteristics of the wise one at the turn of every exhalation. Deep and philosophical, light and playful, puzzling and allegorical, or even symbolic and metaphorical is the possibility of each lungful of wisdom in the elder days. Gentle, forceful, even deceiving is the puffing of the wise one, but never to be held in secret. It floats on the wind or flutters as wings to shed light upon the hearts of the willing. Each solitary breath, like a single leaf of the kukui, has the potential to shape and enlighten those inclined to listen. But a lei of kukui, such a thing of beauty, a tangible form of weight and smell, how lovely it is to ensnare us; to wrap us in its glorious symbolism. A collection from the tree of light.

The idea of the Hawaiian proverb has a specific weight for the cultural mind. A particular way of thinking, imagining, and observing is able to elicit emotions dormant in the modern mind. But a collection of 'Ōlelo No'eau will forever gather the works of Mary Kawena Pukui in the hearts of many. Depicted here are two portraits of her, one in her middle age and the other in her blessed old age. The lei kukui forms a figure eight around them, encapsulating her in the sign of eternity as one who has endeavored to keep the light of the ancients animated in the hearts and minds of those willing to listen.

## ***Artist Biography***

I was born in the town of Waimea on the island of Kaua'i. I even graduated from Waimea High School. But I actually grew up in the little plantation town of Kekaha, West of Waimea. It was a thriving little community during the 1960's and 70's when the sugar plantation was still going strong. Kekaha was a great place when I was little. There was the mom and pop Kekaha Store, a theater, up until hurricane Iwa in 1982, even a public swimming pool. There was also a huge park that was connected to Kekaha Elementary School where I attended till the sixth grade, and the Kekaha Neighborhood Center where I have a lot of fond memories of wonderful community events.

As far as the arts was concerned, it was pretty much non-existent on the west side. My influences came from the limited meager comic books I had access to, and whatever television cartoons were visible when my younger sister and I took turns rotating the tv antenna. My proper introduction to art came while in the Art Department at UH Mānoa. I had never seen what was truly achievable in the arts till then, as I had never been exposed to any elements of art history. However, for this I am truly grateful, because the absence of formal training during my early years has shaped me into the type of artist that I am. One who operates predominantly from the imagination.

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# Introduction

*E Ola Ā Kau Kō Kea: He 'Ohina 'Ōlelo No'ēau a Nane no nā Kūpuna, nā Luahine me nā 'Elemākule* is a collection of 'ōlelo no'ēau (proverbs and poetic references) and nane (riddles) pertaining to aging, elderhood and caregiving. It was created by Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders at the University of Hawai'i to deepen our understandings of Native Hawaiian perspectives of aging and elderhood. This title comes from entry #91 in this collection, wishing readers long life, to "**Ola ā kau kō kea**. Lives till the sugar cane tassels. Said of one who lives until his hair whitens with age." (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 271, #2477)

The preface in Pukui's 1983/1997 *'Ōlelo No'ēau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings*, articulates their complexity, naming each as a "distillation of thought" (p. viii):

The sayings may be categorized, in Western terms, as proverbs, aphorisms, didactic adages, jokes, riddles, epithets, lines from chants, etc., and they present a variety of literary techniques such as metaphor, analogy, allegory, personification, irony, pun, and repetition. It is worth noting, however, that the sayings were spoken, and that their meanings and purposes should not be assessed by the Western concepts of literary types and techniques (p. viii).

By looking at this collection as a whole, in conjunction with the glossary produced by this same project titled *E Ola ā Kau ā Kaniko'o: He 'Ohina Hua 'Ōlelo no nā Kūpuna, Luāhine me nā 'Elemākule (A Glossary of Hawaiian Language Terms Pertaining to Elderhood)*, it is our hope that readers will become familiar with and begin to use, once again, the poetic references to elders and aging that were once commonly understood. It is our hope that these collections also will assist in the creation of new poetry that is grounded in and informed by the worldview and values that underpin our 'Ōlelo. As put so eloquently by Eleanor Lilihana-a-i Williamson, one of the editors of Pukui's *'Ōlelo No'ēau* (1983/1997), "To know the sayings is to know Hawai'i" (p. xix).

This collection features **109** sayings or riddles relevant to ancestors, elders, aging, and elderhood from three sources.

- Handy & Pukui, M. K. (1998). *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-'U, Hawai'i*. Honolulu: Mutual Pub. (Original work published 1958)
- Judd, H. P. (1978). *Hawaiian Proverbs and Riddles*. Bulletin 77. Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum. <https://www.trussel2.com/haw/texts/judd-riddles.pdf> (Original work published in 1930)
- Pukui, M.K. (1997). *'Ōlelo No'ēau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press. (Original work published 1983)

Some of the sayings and riddles that are included in this collection are not readily understood today and are included with the hopes that users of this collection will contribute to the puzzle of recovering their meanings. As articulated by Dr. Kekeha Solis in the abstract of his 2010 dissertation that focuses on the importance of reinvigorating the use of 'ōlelo no'ēau, "Our kūpuna were able to utilize and manipulate proverbs to deal with a new era. And this is an important idea to build on in our language revitalization movement" (p. viii).

Hā Kūpuna is a program of the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Our mission is to enhance knowledge about Native Hawaiian

kūpuna to inform the development, testing, improvement, and expansion of culturally informed strategies to improve their health and well-being. This project was primarily funded by the Cooke Family Foundation in Honolulu, with supplemental funding from the US Administration on Aging and the Barbara Cox Anthony Endowment on Aging at the University of Hawai'i.

## Background

The early work on this collection was done as research for a book chapter in *Aging across Cultures: Growing Old in the Non-Western World*, a 2021 anthology of essays about elderhood in diverse ethnic and cultural groups. When thinking about how to articulate the unique ways Kānaka Maoli view elderhood, the authors began by simply listing common epithets that appear in mele (songs and poetic texts) and pule (prayers) asking for or celebrating long life. These epithets include kaniko'o, palalauhala, and haumaka'iole, which refer to the sound of a cane, skin like a pandanus leaf, and rat-like eyes, respectively. It struck the research team that translations of these terms are rather unflattering in English, and yet in Hawaiian language they are desirable qualities that mark longevity. Interested in other Hawaiian poetic references for older people that may capture a Hawaiian worldview, 'ōlelo no'eau were sought.

Another discovery during the research for that same book chapter was about the evolution of the usage of the word kupuna. According to the Pukui and Elbert dictionary (1957/1986, p. 186), a kupuna is a "grandparent, ancestor, relative or close friend of the grandparent's generation, grandaunt, granduncle." Over time, the way we use this word has shifted. Today, the word kupuna is used colloquially to refer to any older person, similar to the English term "senior citizen," and has lost the added distinction of an elder or ancestor with whom one has a relationship (whether biological or social). The realization that we have become largely unaware of the original usage of this commonly used word highlighted the need to look more closely at our assumptions and beliefs about later life and the esteem with which we hold elders.

The discreet concepts of "elder," "grandparent," and "ancestor" in English are all encompassed in the Hawaiian term "kupuna," whereas in English, "elder" refers generically to a living older person, "grandparent" implies a biological relationship to an elder, and "ancestor" implies a person who existed many generations ago with whom one has biological ties. In Hawai'i, the word "kupuna" connects ancestors of far antiquity intimately closer to living generations, and venerates living elders to the status of an illustrious progenitor in one's family. (Muneoka et al., 2021, p. 351)

It's not clear when or why this shift in usage took place, but it is our hope that this 'ōlelo no'eau collection and its companion glossary will help to address some of our gaps in knowledge, including in areas we don't know we don't know.

Using the Pukui and Elbert dictionary definition (1957/1986), which includes "ancestor" in the definition of kūpuna, this collection includes sayings about ancestors as well as grandparents and elders.

## Methods

### *Selection of entries*

Two methods were primarily used to identify relevant 'ōlelo no'eau and nane for this collection. The first was a reading of the subject index in Pukui's 1983/1997 *'Ōlelo No'eau*.



All index entries listed under the categories and subcategories shown in Table 1 were reviewed and selected for inclusion based on their relevance to ancestors, elders, aging and elderhood.

Table 1. Referenced Index Entries  
from Pukui's *Ōlelo No'eau* (1983/1997)

Index categories	Index subcategories
Old age	
Aging	
Ancestors	
Children	Care for their elders
Death	Of elders
Elders	Care for
	Mistreatment of
	Questioning of
	Respect for
	Value of
Family	Cares for elders
	Importance of
Grandparents	
Kinship	

The second method used the results from the index search to create a list of 21 search terms that would be used to search digital copies of the three source books discussed above (Table 2). These terms were intentionally aligned with the glossary that was created as a companion to this collection of *ōlelo noe'au*, with extra Hawaiian language terms added.

It is important to acknowledge that the accuracy of the search function can vary based on the quality of the digital scans of a particular resource. Because of this, and the fact that relevant information can be missed if the pertinent passage doesn't happen to contain any of the chosen search words, a digital search cannot replace a close reading of a text. As relying on the table of contents or the index may not reliably point a researcher to every relevant passage of a particular topic. Conversely, a manual reading can be very slow. Thus, these two methods should be used together for their breadth and depth they each provide. For example, for Judd's *Hawaiian Proverbs and Riddles* (1930/1978) and Handy and Pukui's *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-'U, Hawai'i* (1958/1998), we also used the table of contents to point us to relevant chapters. For those chapters, we did not rely solely on the word search, but instead read them in their entirety. However, there is important information embedded in unlikely places, which warrants a broader reading of the entire text.

Table 2. Search Terms Used to Find Relevant Entries  
in Digitized Publication

Age	Grandparent	Old
Ancestor	Feeble	Elder
Bald	Luahine	Tooth
Blind	Grandchild	White
Deaf	Gray	Wrinkle
Teeth	Grey	Elemakule
Infirm	Mature	Kupuna

Some of the topics covered in this collection are not specific to old age, such as baldness, deafness, blindness, and death, but have been included as one may be more likely encounter these phenomena in later life.

### ***Arrangement, numbering and spelling of entries in this collection***

Although the format of each of the three sources used in this collection is slightly different, the editors of this collection have tried to emulate the familiar format used throughout Pukui's 1983/1997 *'Ōlelo No'eau*. The saying or riddle is first presented in *'Ōlelo Hawai'i*, followed by a literal translation and, often, with interpretations or explanations of allusions and hidden meanings along with common uses and variations of the saying.

For each entry in this collection, there is a citation indicating the author, year of publication, and page number, as is standard in APA format. Additionally, the number of the saying as assigned in their original sources is included. However, while Pukui's 1983/1997 *'Ōlelo No'eau* includes a number for each saying, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka'ū* does not, but instead lists sayings by subject area. The 1930/1978 Judd publication includes numbers for the sayings in its collection, restarting at 1 in its section on nane (riddles). We don't distinguish between these two sets of numbers in the Judd collection in our citations, as the combination of page number and saying number should be sufficiently specific to locate a particular saying in the source document.

Also, we have assigned our own unique identifying numbers in our collection to simplify the index of themes that appears at the end of this document. These numbers appear offset on the far left of this document. In the instances when *'ōlelo no'eau* were found in multiple sources with slight variations in the *'Ōlelo Hawai'i*, literal translation, or interpretation, the entries from each source were included and listed under the same entry number in this collection, with proper citations. If identical versions of the same saying appear in multiple sources, it is listed only once with a citation that indicates all relevant sources.

Dictionary definitions are included on some entries to offer deeper (and sometimes alternate) insights in to the sayings. These definitions have been pulled from the 1986 Pukui and Elbert dictionary (originally published in 1957) and are noted as such. In one instance, an excerpt from the 2015 publication *Hānau Ka Ua: Hawaiian Rain Names* (Akana and Gonazlez) is also included for the same purpose.

At times, the editors of this collection added their own interpretations, questions, and musings. These are indicated by [Ed.] an abbreviation for “Editors,” and are offset from the main entry via indentation. These notes typically appear at the end of entries and not in the midst of them. Square brackets that appear inside of sayings, translations, and interpretations are inclusions from the original text.

Entries in this collection follow the alphabetization utilized in Pukui’s 1983/1997 ‘Ōlelo No‘eau that orders phrases by the English alphabet (ABC...) without regard to kahakō or ‘okina. Thus an entry that begins with the word *Āhea* will appear before an entry that begins with *Aia*. Each of the three sources use diacritical marks (kahakō and ‘okina) differently—Judd generally doesn’t use either, while the earlier Handy and Pukui work (*The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘U, Hawai‘i*) tended to use ‘okina, but not kahakō. The 1983 ‘Ōlelo No‘eau book uses both, but not consistently (p. vii). The research team that put this collection together have added the modern orthography according to the 1986 Pukui and Elbert dictionary to the best of our abilities. Modern orthography refers not only to diacritical markings, but also spelling conventions where words may be grouped together or separately (such as *malalo* vs *ma lalo*).

## Index Themes

To maximize the usability of this collection, an index was created that organizes the entries by specific subject categories. For this, we identified 25 themes, such as ancestors, baldness, caregiving, and 10 sub-themes, such as intergenerational reciprocity and lack of care under caregiving (Table 3). These themes and sub-themes were identified through a thorough examination of each entry, with an attempt to align with the index themes used in the glossary *E Ola ā Kau ā Kaniko‘o: He ‘Ohina Hua ‘Ōlelo no nā Kūpuna, Luāhine me nā ‘Elemākule* (*A Glossary of Hawaiian Language Terms Pertaining to Elders, Aging and Elderhood*) that includes terms pertaining to aging and elderhood that was developed as a companion resource to this collection. This index is located at the end of the collection.

## Future research

As noted, this collection relied on three main source documents—Pukui’s ‘Ōlelo No‘eau (1983/1997), Handy and Pukui’s *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘U, Hawai‘i*. (1958/1998), and Judd’s *Hawaiian Proverbs and Riddles* (1930/1978). Future research should include a more thorough read of these books from cover to cover, which may result in other sayings that were not captured through keyword, index, and table-of-contents searches. Future researchers could also return to these three sources with an expanded search term list (Table 2) and see if there are other relevant results. For example, a closer read of Handy and Pukui’s *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘U, Hawai‘i*. (1958/1998) may deepen one’s understanding of the role of elders in traditional society, which may aid in the interpretation of the sayings in this collection.

Another source to examine may be Thrum’s almanacs that were produced between 1877 and 1924. They are now digitized and available online, but require a concerted effort to review. Kumu Kapali recalls seeing ‘ōlelo no‘eau in them, but we were not able to locate them for this project through our random sampling. Another project to further this work would be to look for these ‘ōlelo no‘eau and nane in mo‘olelo and in nūpepa to see them used in context. Doing so would be helpful in deepening our understanding of the different ways they were used and would help us ground the revival of these sayings in tradition.

Table 3. Subject Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Advice/directives	
Ancestors	
Baldness	
Caregiving	Intergenerational reciprocity of care
	Lack of care
	Threat of caring for elders other than one's own
Chiefs/ali'i	
Chins	
Deaf/Deafness/Hearing impairment	
Elderhood/stages of life	End of life
Existence because of	
Eyesight, vision, blindness, related to the eyes	
Feeding/eating	
Gender specific	Wahine/luahine
	Kane/'elemakule
Grandparents/grandchildren	
Hair color	
Honorific	
Kalo/Taro/Hāloa	
Legacy	Living on through future generations
Parents/mākua	
Physical Strength, Health and State	
Riddles (nane)	
Sexuality	
Skin Color, Complexion and Texture	Wrinkles
Sugar cane/Kō kea	
Temperament	
Unflattering	Derisive and insulting
	Jokingly used

# A

- 01 **A'ea'e mōhala i luna o ke kukui.** *Whiteness unfolds on the kukui trees.*  
Used in reference to a person who grays, comparing him to a blooming kukui tree laden with white flowers (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 3, #5)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "him" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders. The reference to kukui here may imply enlightenment due to the use of the oily kukui kernels as a candle of sorts.
- 02 **Aia a pa'i 'ia ka maka, ha'i 'ia kupuna nāna 'oe.** *Only when your face is slapped should you tell who your ancestors are.*  
Hawaiians were taught never to boast of illustrious ancestors. But when one is slandered and called an offspring of worthless people, he should mention his ancestors to prove that the statement is wrong. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 6, #31)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered terms "he" and "his" are used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- Aia a pa'i 'ia ka maka, ha'i 'ia kupuna nāna 'oe.** *Only when your face is slapped should you tell who your ancestors were.*  
Never boast. Only when slandered or called a worthless offspring of worthless ancestors may one mention one's lineage to prove that the slander is baseless. (Handy and Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 200)
- 03 **Aia au me nā moku, wa'apā, wa'a, nā mea kolo, nā mea lele a me ke kānaka.** *I am with ships, boats, canoes, creeping things, flying things, and men.*  
Answer: Decay. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 88, #250)
- [Eds.] The translation of the word "kānaka" as "men" is likely referring to people generally and not specifically to males. There is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 04 **Aia i Ka'ū i Ka'alu'alu.** *There in Ka'ū is a place named Ka'alu'alu.*  
When seen from the ocean, Ka'alu'alu appears creased. This saying is applied jokingly to the wrinkles of a person, or to wrinkled clothing. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 7, #43)
- 05 **Aia nō ka pua i luna.** *The flower is still on the tree.*  
A compliment to an elderly woman. Her beauty still remains. (Pukui, 1983/1997, pp. 10-11, #72)

- 06 **'A'ohe mea koe aku iā Makali'i, pau nō ka liko me ka lā'ele.** *Makali'i left nothing, taking [everything] from buds to old leaves.*

Said of one who selfishly takes all, or of a lecherous person who takes those of the opposite sex of all ages. From a legend surrounding a chief, Makali'i, who took from his people until they faced starvation. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 22, #186)

- lā'ele - n. Old leaf, ready to fall or beginning to dry (a contraction of lau 'elemakule, old leaf). Fig., aged; old age. Mai ka liko a ka lā'ele, from leaf bud to old leaf. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 189)

- 07 **'A'ohe na ia mau mea e uē iā 'oe, na ke kanaka 'oe e uē.** *Things will not mourn you, but people will.*

Said to one who thinks more of his possessions than of his kinfolk or friends. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 23, #191)

- [Eds.] Though not specific to old age, this saying was included because it talks about who will mourn someone, presumably after their death. Though not specific to death caused by advanced age, questions of legacy are not uncommon in later life. While the male gendered term "his" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

# E

- 08 **E hānai 'awa a ikaika ka makani.** *Feed with 'awa so that the spirit may gain strength.*  
One offers 'awa and prayers to the dead so that their spirits may grow strong and be a source of help to the family. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 34, #275)
- [Eds.] Included to show that the relationship to one's kūpuna, continues beyond death and may be cultivated between people who lived many generations apart.
- 09 **E hele ka 'elemakule, ka luahine, a me nā kamali'i a moe i ke ala 'a'ohe mea nana e ho'opilikia.** *Let the old men, the old women, and the children go and sleep on the wayside; let them not be molested.*  
Said by Kamehameha I. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 35, #280)
- E hele ka 'elemakule, ka luahine a me ke keiki a moe i ke ala.** *The old man, the old woman, and the child shall lie down by the way side and shall not be molested.*  
The "Māmalahoe" edict of Kamehameha I. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 40, #496)
- 10 **Ehu ahiahi.** *Evening twilight.*  
Old age. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 36, #295)
- 11 **'Elemakule 'auwae lenalena.** *Yellow-chinned old man.*  
Said of an old man whose teeth are gone and whose chin wags toothlessly. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 41, #336)
- [Eds] Cross reference with #65 in this collection, for application to luahine (old women).
- 12 **'Elemakule kama 'ole moe i ke ala.** *An oldster who has never reared children sleeps by the roadside.*  
Caring for and rearing children results in being cared for an old age. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 41, #337)
- 'Elemakule kama 'ole moe i ke ala.** *The old childless man sleeps by the wayside.*  
A sign of the absence of care. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 26)
- 13 **E mālama i ka makua, he mea laha 'ole; 'o ke kāne he loa'a i ka lā ho'okahi.** *Take care of parents for they are choice; a husband can be found in a day.*  
Parents should be cared for, for when they are gone, there are none to replace them. One can marry again and again. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 42, #346)
- E mālama i ka makua, he mea laha 'ole; 'o ke kāne he loa'a i ka lā ho'okahi.** *Take care of the parent for he is not replaceable, but a husband can be found in a day.*  
(Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 175)

- 14 **E mālama i ka makua o ho'omakua auane'i i ka ha'i.** *Take care of [your] parents lest [the day come when] you will be caring for someone else's.*

Mākua includes all relatives of the parents' generation, including their siblings and cousins. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 42, #347)

**E mālama i ka makua, o mālama auane'i i ka ha'i 'elemakule.** *Take care of your parent before you take care of someone else's oldster.* (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 175)

- 15 **E noho iho i ka pūweuweu, mai ho'oki'eki'e.** *Stay among the clumps of grasses and do not elevate yourself.*

The teachings of grandparents and parents: Do not put on airs; remain peaceful, quiet and unassuming. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 195)

**E noho iho i ke ōpū weuweu, mai ho'oki'eki'e.** *Remain among the clumps of grasses and do not elevate yourself.*

Do not put on airs, show off, or assume an attitude of superiority. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 44, #361)

- **pūweuweu** - Same as pūpū weuweu. E noho iho i ka pūweuweu, mai ho'oki'eki'e, in the grass clumps, do not be conceited. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 360)
- [Eds] Though not specifically about elders, this 'ōlelo no'eau was included because in the Polynesian Family System in Ka'ū version, it identifies this sentiment as being something older generations hope to impart to younger generations of the family. *Pūweuweu* is also used colloquially to refer to one's humble abode.

- 16 **E ola koa.** *Live like a koa tree.*

Live a long time, like a koa tree in the forest. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 44, #365)



# H

- 17 **Ha'a ka pelehū i ka haka; ha'a ka 'elemakule i ke ala; ha'a ka luahine i ka hale.** *The turkey struts on the roost; the old man struts on the highway; the old woman struts in the house.*
- Show places are not confined to a single locality. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 47, #566)
- [Eds.] It is unclear if Judd is using the word "ha'a" as another word for hula, "to dance with bent knees... called hula after 1800s" (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 44) and thus he translates it as "struts". The saying may make more sense if we read "ha'a" to mean "low" (Andrews, 1865, p. 129; Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 44) or "humble" (Andrews, 1865, p. 129). The research team is in agreement that the main idea conveyed in this saying is that different behaviors are appropriate by different people in different settings.
- 18 **Hana a ka mea kama 'ole, hele kuewa i ke alanui.** *What a childless person will (eventually) do, is to wander about uncared for on the highway.* (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 173)
- 19 **Hana a ke kama 'ole, hele 'ope'ope i ke ala loa.** *A person who has not raised a child may go along with his bundles on the road.*
- Said of an aged person who has no one to take care of him. Had he troubled to rear children, they could take care of him when he is old. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 54, #445)
- Hana a ke kama 'ole, hele 'ope'ope i ke ala loa.** *A person who has never reared a child may may travel with his bundle on a long road.*
- Said of a childless old person who has no one to care for him. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 180)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered terms "him" and "his" are used in the translations and interpretations of this saying, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 20 **Hana 'ino i kā ke kino 'elemakule a ho'omakua aku i kā ha'i.** *Mistreat your own oldsters and the day may come when you'll be caring for someone else's.*
- Said to a rude or ungrateful child (or grandchild). You should think of your own elder first, while he is alive, lest after his death you must take care of someone who had no part in rearing you. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 55, #454; Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 180)
- [Eds.] An alternate translation, "If you mistreat that which belongs to the old folks, they will begin to parent a child who belongs to someone else."

21 **Hānau mai ua po'ohina.** *When it is born, it has gray hairs.*

Answer: The flower of the sugar cane. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 69, #34)

- [Eds.] Cross reference 91 and 104 in this collection for other entries that likens an elder to a flowering sugar cane.

22 **Hāpala 'ia a'e la i ka hāwena.** *Daubed with lime.*

Said of an oldster without wisdom. His hair may be gray, as one whose hair is bleached with lime, but he has no more wisdom than an inexperienced youth. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 58, #483)

- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "him" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

23 **He hopena luahine (or 'elemakule).** *The ending into an old woman (or old man).*

Said of a person who shows signs of old age. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 180)

- **Hopena** - n. Result, conclusion, sequel, ending, destiny, fate, consequence, effect, last. *He hopena 'elemakule*, the result of being an old man. *He hopena luahine*, the result of being an old woman. (Both of these sayings are said jokingly of oneself as [s]he advances in years.) (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 82)

24 **He hulu ali'i.** *Royal feathers.*

Said of the adornment of a chief, or of an elderly chief himself who is one of a few survivors of his generation and therefore precious. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 68, #599)

- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "himself" and "his" are used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

25 **He hulu mākua.** *A feather parent.*

When most of the relatives of the parents' generation were gone, the few left were referred to as hulu mākua and considered as precious and choice as feathers. Hulu can refer to relatives as far back as three generations. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 68; Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 69, #601)

26 **He 'ike nāwele.** *A scanty vision.*

To be hardly able to see or have very scanty knowledge of anything. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 71, #621)

- 27 **He ipu ho'oilina mai nā kūpuna mai.** *An inherited container from the remotest ancestress.*  
Said of the womb, the container by which the family line continues. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 73, #642)
- 28 **He kapuahi kau 'ia e ka pueo.** *It is a fireplace where the owl often sits.*  
A bald-headed man sits with covered head. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 34, #376)  
• [Eds.] Not specific to a person who is bald because of old age.
- 29 **He keiki e nānā ana, he keiki e nānā 'ole ana.** *One child may care, and another may not.*  
Said to one who raises a family—some may take care of the senior members of the family and some may not (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 76, #685)  
**He keiki e nānā ana, he keiki e nānā 'ole ana.** *Perhaps a child who will care, a child who will not.*  
Said to or of a person who raises a family: maybe some among them will care for the old folks and some among them will not. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 179)  
• **nānā** - to look at, observe, see, notice, inspect; to care for, pay attention to, take care of. *He keiki nānā mākuā*, a son [child] who cares for his [their] parents. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 260)  
• [Eds.] Note the lesser used translation of *nānā*, meaning to care for, may be useful vocabulary to describe caregiving.
- 30 **He keiki mea kupuna.** *[It shows] that the child has a grandparent.*  
Said in admiration of a child whose grandparents show affection by making beautiful things for his use or compose songs and chants in his honor. A similar expression is *He keiki mea makua*: [It shows] that the child has a parent. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 77, #688)  
**He keiki mea makua. (or mea kupuna).** *A child has a parent (or grandparent).*  
Said of a child whose parents, uncles, aunts or grandparents show affection by making beautiful things for his use or composing songs and chants in his honour. It is said in respect and admiration, for, to Hawaiians, it was a great thing to show love for their children. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 166)  
• [Eds.] While the male gendered term “his” is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 31 **Hele a 'īlio pī'alu ka uka o Hāmākua i ka lā.** *Like a wrinkled dog in the upland of Hāmākua in the sunlight.*  
An uncomplimentary remark about an aged, wrinkled person. Line from a chant. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 80, #728)

32 **He mau kūpuna kou, he 'ai ko uka, a he i'a ko kai. He aha ka inoa o ka pua?**

You have grandparents, food in the upland, and fish in the sea. What is the name of the flower?

Answer: The ginger blossoms.

The food in the upland is "awa" and the fish of the sea is "puhi." The two words from "awapuhi" (ginger blossom). (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 66, #1)

- [Eds.] Here we see a clever play on the word kūpuna, translated by Judd to mean *grandparents*—a meaning a reader (or listener) may be led to by the use of the word *pua* which, in addition to flower can also mean *child, progeny, descendant* (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 344) But the riddle is confounding when using the translation provided by Judd. Could another meaning of *kupuna* be intended? Source is another meaning listed for *kupuna*. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 186).

33 **He mea loa'a 'ole ka hulu makua.** *You will never find another parent.*

Treat well your parents. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 28, #283)

34 **He mēheuheu mai nā kūpuna.** *Habits acquired from ancestors.* (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 89, #817)35 **He palupalu nā hewa li'ili'i i ka wā kolo, lolēlua i ka wā kamali'i, loli 'ole i ka wā 'o'o, 'oni pa'a i ka wā 'elemakule.** *Small sins are weak in the creeping state, changeable in childhood, unchanging when an adult, and firmly fixed in age.*

Bad habits can be changed in the early stages but eventually become firmly implanted. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 95, #883)

**He paluaplu nā hewa li'ili'i i ka wā kolo; lolēlua i ka wā kamali'i; 'o'ole'a i ka wā u'i; loli 'ole i ka wā o'o; 'oni pa'a i ka wā 'elemakule.** *Tender are the little sins when creeping; uncertain in childhood; obstinate in youth; hard to change in maturity; and fixed in old age.*

Do not allow sins to get beyond creeping. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 25, #245)

36 **He pū hala uo'o.** *A tough [old] pandanus tree.*

Said of a stingy person. A play on pū hala in Puhala-hua, the name of a man in the 1800s who was known for this thrift and diligence in saving for old age. (Pukui, 1983, p. 99, #924)

- **uo'o** - vs. Tough. He pū hala uo'o, a tough old pandanus [a tight-fisted person, named for Pū-hala-hua, a Hawaiian noted for thrift]. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 372)
- [Eds.] This dictionary definition was included to show the usefulness at cross-referencing different source materials. If only looking at the dictionary entry one would miss the added context provided in the puke 'Ōlelo No'eau, that Pūhalahua was saving for old age.

**He pūhala ua o'o, he pī, kuli pa'a, maua.** *It is a matured pū hala; stingy, mean, close.*

Comparing a stingy, mean, and close man, to the trunk of a hala tree. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 20, #181)

- **maua** - nvi. Failure to give a return gift; to receive without giving in return; illiberal, ungrateful, close-fisted. Cf. mamaua. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 241)
- [Eds.] The meaning of "close" in both the literal translation and interpretation is unclear here, but note the dictionary definition of "maua" includes the term "close-fisted," perhaps that was what was intended. Compare this version (#181 in Judd) to the one preceding (#924 in Pukui) and the similarities in "uo'o" and "ua o'o" - entirely different meanings, both of which make sense here. The former being something that's texturally tough, while the latter (o'o) means mature, but can also mean elderly (see dictionary entry in 1957/1986 Pukui & Elbert, p. 290) Both versions include connotations about later life, but interestingly do so differently. While the Judd interpretation indicates that this saying was applied to men, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

37 **He puni kauoha.** *A fondness by request.*

A dying person might will to a relative his fondness for a certain food or activity. After his death, the relative would eat or do the thing until he grew to be as fond of it as the dead person had been. This was called a puni kauoha. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 100, #937)

- [Eds.] While the male gendered terms "his" and "he" are used in the interpretation of this entry (for both the deceased person and their surviving relative), there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

38 **Ho'okahi 'a'ama, kāne a me ka wahine, wahine me ke keiki, ho'okahi nō 'a'ama.** *One 'a'ama (the black crab), male and female, wife and child, one 'a'ama. Grandparent and grandchild, only one 'a'ama.*

Answer: Laziness.

Laziness is demonstrated by the fact that the one "a'ama" (black crab) must be shared by so many. (Judd, 1930/1978, pp. 86-87, #232 nane)

39 **Ho'olana i ka wai ke ola.** *Life floats on water.*

Near death. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 377)

- [Eds.] Under the dictionary entry for "wai". Not specific to death due to advanced age.

# I

- 40 **'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kōkua aku, kōkua mai; pēlā iho la ka nohona 'ohana.** *Recognize and be recognized, help and be helped; such is family life.*

Family life requires exchange of mutual help and recognition. (Pukui, 1983, p. 130, #1200)

To thrive, family life requires exchange of mutual help and recognition. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 183)

- 41 **I kua na'u.** *A burden for me.*

A request to a dying person for last instruction: "Let me carry out your last wishes." This saying also implies simply, "Let me bear the responsibilities," or "Let me help." (Pukui, 1983, p. 132, #1218)

**I kua na'u.** *A load for my back.*

A request to a dying person, "Tell me what you want me to carry on with after you are gone." (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 183)

- [Eds.] Not specific to death due to advanced age.

- 42 **I lohe i ka 'ōlelo a ho'okō, e ola auane'i a laupa'i.** *One who hears good counsel and heeds [it] will live to see many descendants.* (Pukui, 1983, p. 133, #1229)

**I lohe i ka 'ōlelo a ho'okō, e ola auane'i a laupa'i.** *He who heeds good counsel will live to see many descendants.* (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 194)

- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "he" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

- 43 **I maika'i ke kalo i ka 'ohā.** *The goodness of the taro is judged by the young plant it produces.*

Parents are often judged by the behavior of their children. (Pukui, 1983, p. 133, #1232)

**I maika'i nō ke kalo i ka 'ohā.** *The goodness of the taro is judged by the fine young plants it produces.*

Parents are often judged by the behavior of their children. (Handy & Pukui, 1998, p. 180)

- 44 **I pa'a iā ia 'a'ole 'oe e puka.** *If it had ended with him [or her] you would not be here.*

Said to a younger sibling to encourage more respect for an elder. (Pukui, 1983, p. 135, #1249)

- [Eds.] Though the interpretation identifies this saying as being about siblings

and birth order within a nuclear family, it was included because there is nothing specifically indicating that it's usage was limited to that particular context. Perhaps it could be used similarly to entry #45 in this collection, to refer to generations in a family.

- 45 **I pa'a i kona kupuna 'a'ole kākou e puka.** *Had our ancestress died in bearing our grandparent, we would not have come forth.*

Said to remind a member of the family to respect the senior line, because they came first. Also expressed "I pa'a i kona makua..." (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 136, #1251)

- [Eds.] An alternate translation: If it had stopped with our grandparent, we would not have come forth.

- 46 **I pa'a ke kino o ke keiki i ka lā'au.** *That the body of the child be solidly built by the medicines.*

A mother ate herbs during pregnancy and nursing for the sake of the baby's health. The herbs were given to the child up to the age of twenty so that he would be healthy and strong through maturity and old age. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 136, 1252)

- [Eds.] Included to show that even in childhood one's parents were already thinking of and planning for their children's later adulthood. While the male gendered term "he" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

- 47 **I ulu nō ka lālā i ke kumu.** *The branches grow because of the trunk.*

Without our ancestors we would not be here. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 137, #1261)

- 48 **I Ulupa'upa'u, i ka hale o ka makapō.** *In Ulupa'upa'u, house of the sightless.*

Said of one who is actually or figuratively "blind." Hema, chief of Maui, went deep-sea fishing to satisfy the longing of his pregnant wife. He landed at Ulupa'upa'u where his eyes were pecked out by a large bird. (Pukui, 1983, p. 137, #1262)

# K

- 49 **Ka 'ele i uka, ka 'ele i kai, ka 'ele i waena, ka 'ele kē.** *The "ele" in the upland, the "ele" in the lowland, the "ele" in the middle, the "ele kē."*

Answer: The 'elepaio bird, the black crab ('elemihi), the old man ('elemakule), the cockroach ('elelū). (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 88, #251)

- [Eds.] It is not clear what is meant by "'ele kē" in this name to which the answer is "the cockroach". One guess is from the first definition of "kē" on page 140 in the Pukui and Elbert dictionary (1957/1986), "to shun... to avoid". The third definition offers another possibility, "to flatten out, adjust to a surrounding level, as in removing a heap of earth". The very next entry on the same page is for "-kē" which is described as a rare suffix meaning "here and there". It points us to see examples "holoholokē, holokē, lelekē". On page 77 of the same Pukui and Elbert dictionary (1957/1986), hololokē is listed as a reduplication of holokē which is defined on page 78 as, "to run here and there; helter-skelter". Lelekē is similarly defined as "to leap here and there," on page 202. It is interesting to note that none of the example words (holoholokē, holokē, lelekē) are marked as rare, though the suffix -ke is.

- 50 **Kakahiaka 'ehā wāwae, awakea 'elua wāwae, ahiahi 'ekolu wāwae.** *In the morning four legs, at noon two legs, at evening three legs.*

Answer: A man. In youth, crawling; in maturity, walking; in old age, with a cane. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 77, #123)

- [Eds.] The answer to this name, "A man," is likely referring to people generally and not specifically to males.

- 51 **Kālina ka pona, 'a'ohē hua o ka pu'e, aia ka hua i ka lālā.** *The potato hill is bare of tubers for the plant no longer bears; it is the vines that are now bearing.*

The mother is no longer bearing, but her children are. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 180; Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 156, #1444)

- 52 **Kama'oma'o, ka 'āina huli hana.** *At Kama'oma'o, land of activities.*

Ghosts who do not go to the pō of their ancestors often wander about in certain areas. Kama'oma'o, Maui, is such a place. The activities of such ghosts usually annoy the living. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 160, #1481)

- 53 **Ka mo'opuna i ke alo.** *The grandchild in the presence.*

Said of a grandchild who was reared in the presence of a grandparent. Such a grandchild was made much of and was usually the one who learned the family lore and traditions. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 179)



54 **Kani ka pahu, holo ke kao.** *The drum is sounded, the goat flees.*

A humorous expression applied to a bald-headed man whose bare head is likened to a drum. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 162, #1496)

- [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by old age.

55 **Ka ua po'okea i ke oho o Kawainui.** *The rain whitens the top of Kawainui.*

Likened to a bald-headed man. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 34, #382)

- [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by old age.

56 **Ka ua po'o nui o ke kuahiwi.** *The big-headed rain of the mountain.*

The 'Awa rain, which falls in fine, icy cold drops that make one's head appear white. (Pukui, 1983/1993, p. 173, #1600)

- "Mountain rain

15. **Ua 'Awa** - He ua kēia ma ka mauna, he ua 'awa, he ua li'ilī'i, 'o ke ehu wale nō; 'a'ole i loku 'o ka ua, 'o ke po'o ke kuakea me he kanaka po'o hina lā, he ua po'o nui o ke kuahiwi, 'o ke anu na'e ka mea nui, no laila mai kēia inoa ua 'Awa, he ua noe.

'Awa rain - This is a rain in the mountains, a bitter rain, a fine rain; it is only mist; it doesn't pour down; the head is white like a gray-haired man, a troublesome "po'o nui" rain in the mountains, though the cold is the main problem, and therefore this name, ua 'Awa, a misty rain.

From a letter to the newspaper Kuokoa regarding famous rains. Hawaiian source: Kalaaukumuoale, "Manao wehewehe." English trans. by author ... Note: In this rendering, "'a'ole i loku 'o ka ua" is used instead of "aole iloko o ka ua," which was printed in the Hawaiian source." (Akana & Gonzalez, 2015, p. 14)

- [Eds.] Though the Pukui version doesn't explicitly mention it, greying hair is implied by this saying, as is mentioned in the *Hānau Ka Ua* excerpt above. While the *Hānau Ka Ua* excerpt translates "he kanaka po'o hina" as "a gray-haired man," it could also be translated as "a gray-haired person."

57 **Kau ka mahina.** *The moon is shining.*

A remark made in fun when a bald head is seen. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 174, #1612)p

- [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by old age.

58 **Ke ēwe hānau o ka 'āina.** *The lineage born of the land.*

A native Hawaiian who is island-born and whose ancestors were also of the land. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 182, #1691)

- 59 **Ke kau mai nei ka mākole.** *The red-eyed one rests above.*  
Said of the rainbow with red predominating. A sign to some people that their 'aumakua is watching them. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 187, #1740)
- **Mākole** – nvs. Inflamed or sore eye; bloodshot; red-eyed; red-hot; red or yellow, as dying leaves; red, as a tinted cloud. Mākole, mākole 'akahi (FS 223), so red-eyed, red-eyed [said tauntingly of Pele, referring to her fires]. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 230)
- 60 **Komo mai ma loko e hānai ai. 'A'ole e loa'a kēia i ka lā'ele, aia wale nō i ka liko.** *Come inside, have something to eat! This one cannot be had by an old leaf; but only by a young shoot of the plant.*  
The reply of a young girl to an old suitor. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 24, #228)
- **lā'ele** – n. Old leaf, ready to fall or beginning to dry (a contraction of lau 'elemakule, old leaf). Fig., aged; old age. Mai ka liko a ka lā'ele, from leaf bud to old leaf. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 189)
  - [Eds.] Cross-reference #06 in this collection (#186 in Pukui's 1983/1997 'Ōlelo No'ēau)
- 61 **Kū ana ka 'ōhule, kani ana ka pahu.** *There stood a bald head, the drum sounded.*  
Answer: Rain follows a bald-headed man. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 86, #228 nane)
- [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by old age.
- 62 **Kū i ka māna.** *Like the one from whom he received what he learned.*  
Said of a child who behaves like those who reared him. Māna is food masticated by an elder and conveyed to the mouth of a small child. The haumāna (pupil) receives knowledge from the mouth of his teacher. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 202, #1875)
- **māna** – n. 1. A chewed mass, as of kava for drinking, coconut flakes or kukui nut for medicine...  
2. n. Trait believed acquired from those who raise a child. *kū nō i ka māna a ke kahu hānai*, trait acquired from association with the one who raised the child  
3. n. Short for haumāna, student. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 236)
  - **pū'ā** – 3. vt. To feed by passing directly from mouth to mouth, of masticated food such as fish or poi; infants and the aged were fed thus. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 344)
  - [Eds.] While the male gendered terms "he," "him," and "his" are used in the translation and interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

- 63 **Kuli uōuō.** *Bellowing deaf person.*  
Said of a deaf person who speaks louder than necessary because of his own inability to hear. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 206, #1915)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "his" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 64 **Ku'u 'ele, ku'u lua, ku'u mo'o.** *My black, my hole, my reptile.*  
Answer: Old man, old woman, grandchild ('elemakule, luahine, mo'opuna). A play on "ele" in elemakule, "lua" in luahine, and "moo" in moopuna. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 77, #121)
- 65 **Ku'u luahine pa'ū nui; ku'u luahine 'auwae lewa; ku'u loko i'a kau i ka lewa, he 'ō'io ka i'a o loko.** *My old woman with a large skirt; my old woman with a swaying chin; my fishpond suspended in the air, an 'ō'io is the fish within.*  
Answer: Taro leaf. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 69, #33)
- 66 **Ku'u mau kūpuna.** *My grandparents.*  
Answer: Puna. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 84, #201)
- [Eds.] A play on "puna" (grandparent).
- 67 **Ku'u mau mākua.** *My parents.*  
Answer: Hāmākua.  
A play on "makua" (parent) in Hāmākua. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 83, #187)
- 68 **Ku'u wahi kanaka, 'akahi ho'okahua i Ko'olau a hānau i Hāna, nui i Kīpahulu, kanaka makua i Kaupō, Po'ohina i Kahikinui, make i Honua'ula.** *My little man, conceived in Ko'olau and born at Hāna, becomes big at Kīpahulu, a mature man at Kaupō, grey-haired at Kahikinui, dies at Honua'ula.*  
Answer: The kiu wind. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 88, #248)
- [Eds.] Though Judd translates "kanaka" as "man" in this entry, it is likely that this saying is about human beings generally and not specifically about males.
- 69 **Ku'u wahi kanaka moe a makahiki ala mai, ua po'ohina.** *My little man sleeps a year. When he awakens, he is grey haired.*  
Answer: The taro plant. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 68, #20)
- [Eds.] Though Judd translates "kanaka" as "man" in this entry and uses the male pronoun, "he" it is likely that it is referring to human beings generally and not specifically to males.

70 **Ku'u wahi manu, noho nō a moe pū me kanaka. 'A'ole 'ai i ka 'ai, 'a'ole nō ho'i inu i ka wai, ola nō na'e a 'elemakule. 'O wai ka inoa o ka manu?** *My bird, dwells and sleeps with men. Eats no food, drinks no water, but lives nevertheless to a ripe old age. What is the name of the bird?*

Answer: The pueo batten of the Hawaiian house. A play on the word "pueo" (owl: batten). (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 80, #158)

- [Eds.] This saying was included to show the use of 'elemakule to indicate elderhood regardless of gender (translated as "ripe old age") and applied to a non-human being (a bird). Though Judd translates "kanaka" as "men" in this entry, it is likely referring to human beings generally and not specifically to males.

- **Pueo** - 1. n. Hawaiian short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus sandwichensis*), regarded often as a benevolent 'aumakua (HM 124). Keiki a ka pueo, child of an owl [one whose father is not known]...

3. Same as 'aho pueo, main purlin of a house. Ku'u manu noho pū me ke kanaka: pueo (riddle), my bird living with people: owl [pun on 'aho pueo]. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 348)

# L

71 **Li'uli'u wale ka nohona i ka lā o Hauola, a holoholo i ke one o 'Alio.** *Long has one tarried in the sunlight of Hauola and walked on the sand of 'Alio.*

Said in praise of an aged person. There is a play on ola (life) in the name Hauola. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 217, #2012)

72 **Luahine moe nonō.** *Old woman who sleeps and snores.*

Pele, who is said to sleep in lava beds. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 218, #2024)

73 **Lu'u a ea, lu'u a ea, ua po'ohina.** *Dive and come up, dive and come up, the head is gray.*

Answer: A finger of poi. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 87, #234)

# M

- 74 **Maika'i nō ka ho'oipoipo i ka wā e lana ana ke koko; a pau ka lana ana, pau no ka hie o ia mea.** *Lovemaking is good when the blood is circulating freely [in youth]; but when the blood ceases to circulate freely [as in old age] the pleasure one derives from it ceases.* (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 224, #2061)
- 75 **Mai kāpae i ke a'o a ka makua, aia he ola ma laila.** *Do not ignore the teachings of a parent, for there is life in them.* (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 194; Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 224, #2065)
- 76 **Mai kaula'i wale i ka iwi o nā kūpuna.** *Do not dry out the bones of the ancestors.*  
Do not discuss your ancestors too freely with stranger, for it is like exposing their bones for all to see. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 225, #2069)  
**Mai kaula'i nā iwi o kupuna i ka lā.** *Do not put the bones of your ancestors out in the sun to dry.*  
Do not discuss the ancestors too freely with strangers, for it is like bringing their bones out of their hiding places for everybody to stare at. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 195)
- 77 **Make nō ke kalo a ola i ka palili.** *The taro may die but lives on in the young plants that it produces.*  
One lives on in his children. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 229, #2107)  
• [Eds.] While the male gendered term "his" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.  
**Make nō ke kalo a ola i ka palili.** The taro may die but lives on in its young offshoots. The oldsters may die but live on in their descendants. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, pp. 180)  
• **Palili** - n. Small weak taro shoot (preceded by ke). He make nō ke kalo, ā ola nō i ke palili (saying), the old taro stalk is dead, but survives in the shoots [the ancestors are dead, but survive in their offsprings]. (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 312)  
• [Eds.] Note that in both Handy and Pukui's *Polynesian Family Systems in Ka'ū* (1958/1998) and in Pukui's *'Ōlelo No'eau* (1983/1997), this saying was written "ka palili," but in the Pukui and Elbert dictionary (1957/1986) there is a specific note that the word palili should be preceded by "ke" and provideds the same 'ōlelo no'eau as a sample sentence written as "ke palili".

78 **Māla 'uala.** *Potato patch.*

Said in annoyance by an oldster when another Hawaiian asks in English, "What's the matter?" "Matter" sounds like "māla," and the retort "Māla 'uala" squelches any more questioning. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 231, #2123)

79 **Moe kupuna i ka mamō, a puka hou mai nō nā mamō.** *Ancestors slept with descendants, and more descendants were born.*

Said when a girl mates with a supernatural lover in a dream and later bears him a child. The lover might be a family 'aumakua, hence the reference to an ancestor. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 236, #2171)

- [Eds.] Often from one's distant family tree; see pp. 120-122 of Handy and Pukui (1958/1998) for more on supernatural lovers that appear in a dream.

# N

80 **Nā ali’i mai ka pō mai.** *Chiefs from the night.*

Chiefs whose ancestors were chiefs in remote antiquity and were recognized by the gods. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 241, #2203)

81 **Nā ali’i o ke kuamo’o o Hāloa.** *Chiefs of the lineage of Hāloa.*

Said of high chiefs whose lineage goes back to ancient times—to Hāloa, son of Wākea. Wākea mated with Ho’ohōkūkalani and had two sons, both named Hāloa. The older Hāloa was born a taro, the younger brother that the high chiefs name with pride as their ancestor. (Pukui, 1983, p. 241, #2204)

82 **Na ka makua e komo i ka ‘āwelu o keiki, ‘a’ole na ke keiki e komo i ka ‘āwelu o ka makua.** *Let the parent wear out his children’s old clothes, but do not let the children wear their parent’s old clothes.*

Some Hawaiians would wear the partly worn clothing of their children. However, wearing the old clothing of one’s parents was kapu. (Pukui, 1983, p. 244, #2228)

- “In the matter of clothing, a general rule was that it was not right to wear clothing of anyone other than kin. But as between generations there were strict rules affecting this. A daughter’s clothes might be worn by the mother, but not the mother’s by the daughter, and the same rule applied as between aunts and nieces. The same kapu prevailed on the male side as between the generations.” (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 181)

83 **Nā ola o ke kanaka (1) kaniko’o, (2) kolopupū, (3) haumaka’iole, (4) pala lau hala, (5) ka’ikōkō.** *The ages of man: (1) The click of the cane; (2) to crawl doubled over (3) have eyes like a rat, with long eyebrows; (4) yellow as the ripe leaf of the hala; (5) carried in a net.*

Very old, past four score years. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 28, #285)

- [Eds.] Though Judd translates “kanaka” as “man” in this entry, it is likely that this saying describes the life stages of human beings generally and not specifically only that of males.





- 84 **'Ōhule ke po'o i niania.** *Bald of head and smooth.*  
Said of a bald-headed man. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 260, #2378)  
• [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by advanced age.
- 85 **'Oiai e nānā mai ana nō nā maka.** *While the eyes still look around.*  
While a person is living, treat him kindly and learn what you can from him. (Pukui, 1983/1007, p. 260, #2381)  
• [Eds.] While the male gendered term "him" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders. Please see entry #87 in this collection for a similar saying that includes no gendered language.
- 86 **'O ia lā he koa no ke ano ahiahi; 'o ia nei no ke ano kakahiaka.** *He is a warrior of the evening hours; but this person here is of the morning hours.*  
That person has had his day and is no longer as active as before; but this person is strong, brave, and ready to show his prowess. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 260, #2383)  
• [Eds.] While the male gendered terms "he" and "his" are used in the translation and interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 87 **'O i ka'aka'a nā maka.** *While the eyes are still open.*  
Advice given to young people often contains these words which mean to learn all they can from old folks while they are alive (eyes open) for it will be too late when the eyes are closed (moe nā maka) by death. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 179)
- 88 **'O ka 'au aku nō koe o ka lā.** *The sun will soon go down.*  
Said of an aged person. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 262, #2398)
- 89 **'O ka lā'au i hina, 'a'ole ia e kū hou.** *A fallen tree does not rise again.*  
Said of an old man who has lost his sexual potency. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 263, #2412)
- 90 **'O ka niho kā ka mea mālama, 'a'ohe 'ike iho i ka hulu makua.** *So it is the tooth that he requests to take care, and not the parent.*  
Ke'eaumoku's reply, or side remark, when Kiwala'ō came to take the ivory-toothed necklace around (the neck of Ke'eaumoku). (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 28, #284)

91 **Ola ā kau kō kea.** *Lives till the sugar cane tassels.*

Said of one who lives until his hair whitens with age. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 271, #2477)

- [Eds.] While the male gendered term “his” is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

92 **Ola ka inoa.** *The name lives.*

Said when the name of a beloved deceased relative is given to a child. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 272, #2484)

93 **Ola nā iwi.** *The bones live.*

Said of a respected oldster who is well cared for by his family. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 272, #2488)

- An expression meaning that there is comfort, contentment and happiness for one. When a child is good, thoughtful and loving, the oldsters of his family say of themselves, “Ola nā iwi.” A complimentary saying to a friend who finds contentment with his loved ones or is blessed greatly. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 169)
- Said of old folks to whom a grandchild is considerate and kind. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 179)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered term “his” is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

# P

- 94 **Pahu kani.** *Sounding drum.*  
A humorous epithet for a bald head. The skin-covered dome looks like a drum on which the skin is pulled taut and no hair grows. Also called pahu hinuhinu (shiny drum). (Pukui, 1983, p. 283, #2570)
- [Eds.] Not specific to baldness caused by old age.
- 95 **Pili ma nā kūpuna.** *Related through grandparents or ancestors.*  
A more distant relationship that belonged to the grandparents' generation or before. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 180)
- 96 **Pio ke kukui, pō'ele ka hale.** *When the light goes out, the house is dark.*  
Said of one whose sight is gone -- he dwells in darkness. Also said when life goes and the darkness of death possesses. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 291, #2657)
- [Eds.] Not specific to death caused by old age. While the male gendered term "he" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 97 **Pipili no ka pīlali i ke kumu kukui.** *The pīlali gum sticks to the kukui tree.*  
Said of one who remains close to a loved one all the time, as a child may cling to the grandparent he loves. (Handy & Pukui, 1958/1998, p. 169; Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 292, #2662)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered term "he" is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- Pipili no ka pīlali i ke kumu kukui.** *The gum will stick to the kukui tree.*  
People will stick around only when you have plenty. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 21, #184)
- [Eds.] Note the vastly different interpretation and usage of the same saying.
- 98 **Pū'ali kalo i ka wai 'ole.** *Taro, for lack of water, grows misshapen.*  
For lack of care one may become ill. (Pukui, 1983, p. 296, #2705)
- Pū'ali kalo i ka wai 'ole.** *The taro is uneven from lack of water.*  
Physically unfit from want of care. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 31, #333)
- [Eds.] Not specific to eldercare.
- 99 **Pumehana ka hale i ka noho 'ia e ka makua.** *Warm is the home in which a parent lives.* (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 300, #2743)

# U

- 100 **Ua 'ai au i kāna loa'a.** *I have eaten of his gain.*  
Said with pride and affection by a parent or grandparent who is being cared for by the children he reared. (Pukui, 1983, p. 305, #2769)  
• [Eds.] While the male gendered term “his” is used in the translation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.
- 101 **Ua lele ka lau'i (lau kī) i ka pali.** *The ti leaf has jumped to the cliff.*  
The impotence of old age has arrived. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 19)  
• [Eds.] Unclear if this is specifically describing sexual impotence, or general infirmity.
- 102 **Ua loha nā hui o Hā'upu.** *The flippers of Hā'upu droop.*  
Said poetically of an aged person. The ridges on both sides of Hā'upu hill on Kaua'i go down gradually, with a rise here and there, but none is as high as Hā'upu itself. (Pukui, 1983, p. 310, #2823)  
• **hui** - 6. n. Flippers of a turtle. Ua loha nā hui o Hā'upu, the flippers of Hā'upu droop [an aged person, a reference to the story of Kana and Niheu, in which a turtle lifted up Hā'upu hill on Moloka'i] (Pukui and Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 86)
- 103 **Ua malo'o ka pua hue.** *The gourd blossom has withered.*  
Said of a person withered with age. (Pukui, 1983, p. 310, #2827)
- 104 **Ua ulu ke kō kea.** *The white sugar cane grew.*  
Likened to a person who has grown old. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 34, 370)
- 105 **Ua pomaika'i kāua, ola nā iwi i loko o ko kāua mau lā 'elemākule.** *We two are indeed fortunate, we shall be cared for in the days of our old age.*  
Good fortune. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 25)
- 106 **Uliuli kai pali o Kahikinui, kokolo mai ka 'ohu la, he 'ino.** *Blue the sea neath the cliffs of Kahikinui; when crawls the mist, it is bad weather.*  
Everything is lovely in youth; when old age comes adversity follows (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 56, #695)  
• [Eds.] Kokolo and 'ohu may be references to old age; Kokolo shares a root word (kolo - to crawl) with kolopupū which means to be “old, infirm, of an aged person bent with age, Lit., creep crouched.” (Pukui & Elbert, 1957/1986, p. 164) Because of its color, often grey or white, and because of the way it tends to encircle or settle on mountaintops, 'ohu (mist/fog) can be a reference to graying hair of an older person. (see 56 and 108 in this collection for examples)

# W

- 107 **Waiākea pepeiao pulu niu.** *The people of Waiakea with coconut fiber ears.*  
Hard of hearing. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 61, #766)
- [Eds.] Not specific to hearing loss due to advanced age.
- 108 **Wehe 'ia ma luna o Hihīmanu.** *Bared on the summit of Hihīmanu.*  
A humorous reference to a person whose bald head is fringed with hair–like a bare mountaintop above a circle of mist. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 320, #2922)
- Wehea iho ma luna o Hihīmanu.** *Open from the top of Hihīmanu.*  
The person is bald headed. (Judd, 1930/1978, p. 33, #365)
- [Eds.] Not specific to hair loss due to advanced age.
- 109 **Wini 'i'o nō!** *How pointed!*  
Said of a too-bold person who questions his elders, intrudes where he is not wanted, or talks out of turn. (Pukui, 1983/1997, p. 322, #2942)
- [Eds.] While the male gendered term “he” is used in the interpretation of this entry, there is no apparent reason that this saying could not be applied to people of other genders.

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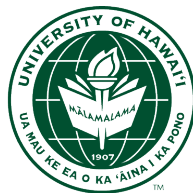
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