

I am Lot Lane (*a solo effort*)

**An Educational Guide to the Chaos of History,
Satire and . . . Us**



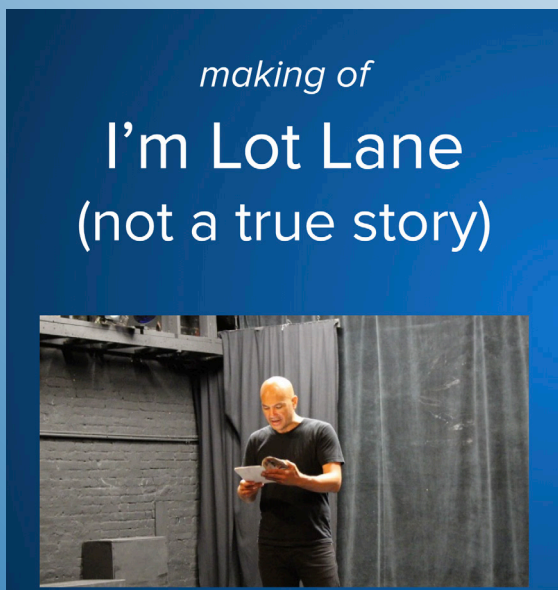
He 'Ōlelo Ho'olauna

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This production of I am Lot Lane happens at a unique time of reorganization and expansion of the department's offerings. We, as a faculty, have made the decision to center Hawai'i and the Pacific in every decision we make for the future of the Department of Theatre and Dance. This centering goes beyond creating a Hawaiian place of learning in our department. We are now focused on the land of Ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina, its people and the history of this place as a mechanism for evaluating curriculum, projects and activities that we support and engage in.

This decision also reminds us to contextualize efforts and productions that are not centered on Hawai'i as a means to decolonize and perhaps dismantle the pervasive settler colonialism that dominates the institution. The direction in which we move forward privileges this place, the islands that many of us recognizes as our kulāiwi (birth place). In this movement for change we are creating a space where Kanaka Maoli narratives are celebrated and honored in a manner that will elevate previously ignored or oppressed histories.



Keola's thesis production is situated in this time of change that encourages deep inquiry and exploration of the past and the future possibilities for Ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina. I am Lot Lane opens a doorway for theatre-makers to appreciate a Kanaka Maoli approach to what we deem to be culturally appropriate research of the past. For us, primary source material includes the descendants of the kupuna we represent in our work. In this case Keola sought out the mamō (grandchildren) of Lot Lonoikaua Kamehameha Carey Lane for permission to tell this story and to gain a deeper understanding of who this kupuna was to his family. This research practice grounds us by reconnecting us with the legacy of our kūpuna, the ancestors who walked these lands as well as the land itself.

It is my hope that we will continue to nurture the development of new Hawaiian and Indigenous storytelling via the stage that propels us to investigate our history and understand the complexities of who we are as Kānaka Maoli. It is imperative that we embrace a sustainable relationship with the

He 'Ōlelo Ho'olauna (continued)

land that we dwell upon and invest in improving our community. We cannot ignore the myriad of peoples who have made Hawai'i their home, rather, we must encourage them to understand their positionality to this beloved 'āina of ours and increase their awareness of the indigenous peoples of these islands and Hawai'i's complicated history.

This production acknowledges the misrepresentation of Kānaka Maoli in the mainstream media. The production also asserts the need for Kanaka Maoli perspectives in all forms of media as we navigate through the past and into our future. It is productions like this that pave the way in decolonizing the stage and amplify Kanaka Maoli voices and agency as we reclaim our history.

I ola ka mo'olelo.

I ola ke kū'auhau.

I ola ka no'ēau.

I ola ka 'ōlelo.

E ola mau nō nā mamo a Lot Lonoikaua Kamehameha Carey Lane! Ola!



Into the Darkness for a New Future

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Even as a founding member of ;好/ Peligro! (or Aloha also means goodbye), articulating our identity and methodologies has always been a bit complicated because we always just do. Our constitution, NO RULES, was our declaration that we did not fit into a box or a system where we had to decide and articulate prematurely how things had to happen. This refusal to encrypt has given us the flexibility to execute, innovate, and welcome every moment and member who comes to play.

We allow our individual humanities to infiltrate our devising and creating, and we do not separate our histories or intersectionalities from the narratives we present. We layer the untold stories of our ancestors and our people with conversations we have about these histories as we seek to understand the meanings—the truths—beneath the words that might be documented in newspapers and journal entries, or passed orally. As raw, candid, or unpolished as it may seem, communicating our feelings, our struggles, and our desires allows us to connect the audience not just with the story or characters we feature, but also with us as individuals. Grappling with colonial pasts and oppression is a communal journey, and we bring the audience along to experience it with us.

Sharing this process matters. If we, as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are going to overhaul and reimagine a Theatre that looks, sounds, and feels like us, now is the time to be brave. To be dangerous. To listen deeply. To vulnerably embrace our identities. It is painful and scary to go into these dark spaces, but out of darkness comes (re)birth. Our ancestors and children are counting on us to pave a new path. This is our aloha for the past, present, and future.



Ka Hālau Hanakeaka: No ka Lāhui

Kaneikoliakawahineikaiukapuomua Baker

Haumana Laepua

UH Mānoa Ka Hālau ‘Ōlelo o Kawaihuelani

Welina mai me ke aloha e nā makamaka heluhelu, ‘o Kaneikoliakawahineika‘iukapuomua kēia, ka pua uakea a Haili‘ōpua lāua ‘o Kaliko Baker. He mamo au no Ke Kula ‘o S.M. Kamakau LPCS a he pulelehua au i ulu mai ke kino ‘enuhe i halihali ‘ia e nā makua like ‘ole i uka i Mānoa. I kēia manawa nō e ho‘ēheu ana wau i kahi e mālama ‘ia ai ka wai momona o Kawaihuelani. ‘Oiai he kama au na Haili‘ōpua, ua hānai ‘ia wau me nā loina o ka Hālau Hana Keaka ‘o ia nō ‘oe ‘o ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, ka ha‘i mo‘olelo, a me ka hana keaka ‘ana. I loko o nā makahiki he 18 o ko‘u ola ‘ana, ua ‘ike wau i nā mea kupaianaha like ‘ole ma o ko‘u komo ‘ana i ka Hālau Hana Keaka. Eia na‘e ‘o kahi mea i ‘ike pinepine ‘ia ‘o ia nō ka mālama ‘ana i ke kuleana lāhui.

Hāpai mau ‘ia kēia mana‘o ‘o “no ka lāhui” ma nā ‘ano pō‘aiapili like ‘ole, i nalu a‘e wau i ia mea, kāmālua a‘ela wau, pehea ua nalowale paha ka mana‘o ‘i‘o o ia ‘olelo ‘o‘ole‘a? I ku‘u wahi mana‘o ua kō ia mea ‘o “no ka lāhui” ma ka Hālau Hana Keaka, ‘oiai ‘o kekahi o nā pahuhopu o ka hālau ‘o ia nō ho‘i ka pā ‘ana o ka na‘au o ke anaina. Na ka Hālau Hana Keaka e auamo i nā kuleana lāhui ma o ka ha‘i ‘ana i nā mo‘olelo ‘oia‘i‘o i hō‘ano hou ‘ia Dr. Haili‘ōpua Baker, ma o ka hana keaka ‘ana i ia mau mo‘olelo e hō‘ola‘ia ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, e ho‘ohanohano ‘ia nā kupuna, a e ho‘omana ‘ia ka lāhui. Ma hope o kēlā me kēia pō o ka hana keaka e kakali ana kekahi mau lālā o ke anaina e kama‘ilio i nā mea hana keaka a me nā haku e hō‘ike mana‘o i ka hālo‘ilo‘i ‘ana o ko lākou waimaka a kulu wale i ka wā o ka hana keaka. Ho‘omana‘o wau i ka pō hope o ka hana keaka ‘o Au‘a ‘Ia, e kama‘ilio ana wau me kekahi me‘e mau i ola o ka lāhui Hawai‘i a ho‘opa‘a ikaika ‘o ia i ko‘u lima me ka ‘i‘ana “If I not here tomorrow, I no worry, cuz you guys [ka hānauna hou] get em,” me ia ‘olelo a kēia me‘e o‘u i ho‘omaopopo ai wau i ke ko‘iko‘i o ka Hālau Hana Keaka a me ke kō ‘ana o ia pahuhopu ‘o ka lawelawe ‘ana i ke kuleana mo‘olelo no ka lāhui.



Postdramatic Theatre

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The term “postdramatic theatre” was first introduced in the 1980s, but a first book-length study of this theatrical form (by the German theatre scholar Hans-Thies Lehmann) wasn’t published before 1999. Since then, the term has become widely established internationally. Postdramatic theatre messes with the Aristotelian hierarchy of the components of tragedy (plot, character, diction, idea, music, and spectacle) and clearly privileges the visual, spatial, temporal, musical, and media aspects of performance over the representation of a pre-existing, authoritative, dramatic text. Postdramatic theatre is less interested in making sense of texts of the past than in the creation of aesthetic experiences in the present that explore – and, perhaps, explode – the traditional parameters as well as expectations of theatrical performance. This doesn’t mean that postdramatic theatre completely shuns the work with texts, only that texts are no longer the primary focus and reference point in a theatrical production. (Lehmann discusses the plays of Heiner Müller and Sarah Kane as examples of postdramatic theatre.) Key precursors of postdramatic theatre include avantgarde performances of the 1920s and experimental theatre in the 1960s. There is a significant overlap between postdramatic theatre and devised theatre – however, even though most devised theatre is also postdramatic, not all postdramatic theatre is also devised. In the context of American theatre, the work of Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman, The Wooster Group, Forced Entertainment, Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, The Big Dance Company, Branden Jacobs Jenkins, Young Jean Lee, and Suzan-Lori Parks could be considered postdramatic.



Family Legacy

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It was at our Lane-Baker family reunion that I first heard whispers about my great-grandfather Lot Lonoikaua Kamehameha Carey Lane's involvement in the 1895 Wilcox Rebellion, and his heroic and fearless attempt to reinstate Queen Lili'uokalani and the Hawaiian Kingdom. He was remembered that night as a tall, athletic hapa Hawaiian (Hawaiian-Irish), a staunch royalist, and as the last to surrender in the 1895 uprising. I was 18 when I first heard these stories, and it was the first time I felt proud of my mo'okū'auhau—proud to be Hawaiian.

That same night, I heard for the first time that my grandparents were native speakers of 'ōlelo Hawai'i, but like many Hawaiian families throughout the 20th century were forced to silence their native tongues and hide their cultural traditions. My mother recalled that Hawaiian was kept secret or always discussed in private, “away from us keiki”. Still, she would sneak up and eavesdrop on the mākua conversation: “minamina” was all that she could remember.

The second mo'olelo would guide me back to Maui Community College where I would enroll in Papa 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language class) determined to change the future. Minamina... Minamina, I remembered my mother's mo'olelo. I grabbed my puke wehewehe (Hawaiian dictionary) and looked up minamina:

- 1.) nvt. To regret, be sorry, deplore; to grieve for something that is lost; regret, sorrow.
- 2.) To prize greatly, value greatly, especially of something in danger of being lost; to value, place great value on; value, worth

Why did my makuahine only remember the word minamina while listening to her mākua speak in their mother tongue? Today, I suppose they were telling the story of 1895, in the backyard, under the mango tree in Waimanalo. Minamina, they said when describing what was at stake. I also suppose they used minamina to describe the moment that Lot surrendered, the last one to be captured. For me, my mo'okū'auhau are filled with minamina and all its complexities; the loss of the Hawaiian Kingdom brings us grief, and yet, we value this painful history so greatly because it drives us toward our kuleana. It is this complexity that shapes my thinking and most importantly, reminds me of what is at stake—our Ea.

Performance in Protest

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In December of 2015, I took my final curtain call on a New York City stage. I was retiring, so to speak, not from acting, not from theatre, but retiring from my difficult relationship with the American theatre. It was an exhausting fight to have at that level and in that city. I had other things I wanted to do. I wanted to surf more. I wanted to be in Hawai‘i more. I wanted to not be on a diet all the time. I wanted to spend more time focusing on the online stages that were being ignored by traditionalists, or invalidated by the elitists I call snobs, but also known as theatre people. I wanted to look at protest and understand its layers of performance. I’d participated in enough protests to know that there were levels to it, performative being some of the various layers of those levels. These things interested me. Especially the surfing more part. And Hawai‘i. The theatre, the consumerism system I was a part of, yet fighting against, yet very much a part of, did not interest me anymore.

In the fall of 2016, the unthinkable happened to the theatre in NYC. It became instantly irrelevant. One sketchy election result, albeit an extremely difficult election result for American liberals to digest, made the theatre feel like it was not needed. I should clarify that when I say “theatre” in this case, I really mean the content, the programming, the already announced seasons— those things weren’t needed anymore. I’d already been arguing that it was never really needed in the first place, but for the sake of my friends and colleagues suffering from the thought of oppression for the first time in their lives, I’ll let them have their moment and simply say that the work we had been doing all those years was noticeably not relevant to society on the morning of November 9, 2016.

What launched in response to the result of that election was an explosion of protest all throughout the city. Actors would hit the streets before their call times, then get back to their shows to do their job, then jump right back on the streets after their shows. The protests became performative at times. Some of the best theatre in late 2016 that I witnessed was by Korean-American actor, musician, activist, badass, Diana Oh. Diana would perform her previously-committed-to job at a theatre, then march over to the steps of Trump Soho and stand on her literal soapbox, verbally saying nothing, but physically speaking volumes with her stillness. It was a true solo effort, but the pile of markers and brown paper bags that sat beside her soapbox challenged strangers to speak up too. And they did. Stranger after stranger told their own story, handwritten on lunch sacks that when by itself, seemed little, but as those bags piled up, an organic set design of voices emerged all around our silent actor, allowing her audience to do the work too.

Performance in Protest (continued)

I first met Lot Lonoikaua Lane on the fifth floor of the Hamilton Library on the University of Hawai‘i campus in Mānoa. It’s on that fifth and final floor that the Hawaiian Library is discreetly tucked away. I had been researching for another play I was making at the time, when a very helpful librarian, Kapena Shim, slipped a little book into the pile of bigger books he had gathered for me. I asked for anything involving the press around 1893 in Hawai‘i, because that’s what my new play would be about: how the press toppled a monarchy. I was already leaning toward Princess Ka‘iulani being the focal point of the story, but it had to be as told by the press— the white press. Kapena being the specialist he is, snuck in a book of letters written to and from Ka‘iulani during that period. I read them all. None of it was relevant to the show I was making, but one of the letters I read sparked something in me. It was a letter from (presumably) a family member or close friend, telling Ka‘iulani about a man named Lot Lane, and how he stood up to the treasonists, proudly announcing himself to their prison saying, “I’m Lot Lane.” I wasn’t able to dive into Lot Lane at that moment like my instincts were telling me to, but I didn’t forget about him either. I couldn’t. The little I was able to find about him in a short amount of time told a story that didn’t add up, and I couldn’t let that go. That was in early January of 2019. A few months later in mid-March, I was back in NYC, devising the framework for my next play, I’m Lot Lane (not a true story). I performed it in May 2019 in front of a live audience, as well as a live streaming audience.

Here’s the funny thing about being an actor: we’re trained private investigators at best, professional stalkers at worst. We’re heavily trained in developing a back-story. In order to get the complete history of a character, we have to investigate the little material that exists on a character. In a normal Western/American play there are the words a character says, and there are the words other characters say about that character. There are also gaps. Gaps in time, opinion, presence... these things matter, and quite honestly, they might matter as much, if not more, than the words spoken. We’re all actors in a way. We all are performing when we speak to who we are speaking to. Think about being on a date, or on a job interview, versus speaking with your mother or boyfriend. They’re different things. Different audiences. Different desired outcomes. Now imagine speaking to one of those examples, but speaking about someone who is not in the room with you. Apply your desired outcomes to that scenario. (I’ll give you a second.) That’s the majority of the writing on Lot Lane that is available. People talking about someone else, to someone else, having a desired outcome. That’s a gap. In a play’s case, it’s the mechanics of a “missing person” character.

When I look at the English written words that came from Lot Lane, all of which are easily searchable with a little bit of discipline— well, easy if you’re a stalker, you’ll find a couple of things: 1) he writes (or speaks) incredibly well. 2) the words he writes (or speaks) don’t match the previously

Performance in Protest (continued)

given description of him by others. That's how the "missing person" character works in a play. Other characters paint a picture of the character, then when that character finally arrives, they either do or don't fit that description. When they don't fit the description, we learn a lot about the other people who were doing all of the talking. When I say "we", I mean the audience. I mean me. In this case-- in Lot Lane's case, the writers of history were doing all of the talking, and they were leaving a lot out. Yes, pun intended.

If you saw this production, you already have or will Google "Lot Lane". Near the top of that search will be a Wikipedia page. You know that's a terrible source but you'll probably click it. It starts off interesting, but then quickly ends with a quote that is without any context. By itself, that quote could be tough to digest. It's enough to end your search. Why? Because it probably doesn't fit your desired outcome. But before you end your search, ask yourself this, who wrote that and why hasn't it been challenged? There's a basic level of conversation that gets tossed around about the victors of war penning history, casually implying that it is one-sided. As a teen, at the latest, you learn there are two sides to every story. As an adult, you start to figure out there's also a third side. Lot Lane got buried in a one-sided telling of his story, but by two different shovels.

When I research a character, I reserve judgment. I don't care if they're good or bad, right or wrong, no one is one or the other, but most importantly--I just don't care. I only want to know what they want. I also research the other characters. I want to know what they want too. It helps to fill in the gaps. What I found was a man who was down to fight, knew how to fight, could wrangle people to fight, was loyal to two different heads of state, which leads me to believe he was also loyal to the office and not just the person, and was incredibly well-versed in politics, especially American politics, and knew how to weaponize politics. He also knew where the fight was. He knew it was moving from the slopes of Lē'ahi and up Mānoa, to the political arena, where all wars move to. He knew where the political performative stage was-- the newspapers. He knew who their audience was, and he knew who his audience was. Lot Lane wasn't some street thug that switched gangs when he got out of prison, and he certainly didn't give up. That story is poorly constructed. The man was always fighting. You don't learn how to talk and write and perform the way he was able to in just six months. You don't learn how to fight, politically, in the press, just from doing time in a yard filled with people you already know. That Wikipedia tale is as poorly written as any propaganda article you see in the news today, because it is propaganda. But for who? Lot Lane, like many others we don't know about was omitted from history by Americans and Hawaiians. Why? I don't know. His story probably didn't fit their narrative. Why do I think that? Well, we Hawaiians still parade Wilcox around like he's a hero when his story is even more flimsy. Why? Because he probably fits our desired outcome.

Performance in Protest (continued)

My job as a theatre maker isn't to entertain you. Sorry if that's what you came here for, but I won't be entertaining you with the American theatre's post-WWII idea of consumer entertainment. I'm not even here to make you feel good. I don't want you to feel good. My job is to speak truth to power, for others who cannot. If that upsets you, if I can provoke a response from the powers that be, or an audience, or both, great. But you have to work for it too. Like Diana Oh in 2016, standing on her soapbox, challenging strangers that passed by to listen and then contribute to the fight, and like Lot Lane in 1895 challenging Hawaiians to step up and join the fight, be it on the battlefield or later in the political arena, I was listening. I'm the audience. I may be a hundred and twenty-five years late, but I'm working for it now. I may not be as politically smart as I need to be for this effort, but I have friends who are. I may get too self-righteous and bulldoze my way through delicate situations, but I have people around me who are not afraid to disagree with me. It may be too little too late, but I'm coming out of retirement for this and I'm doing the invading this time. I know how to do this because there were people before me and people all around me now who are doing the same thing in their respective fields. I know where my battlefield is. It's in a white building with a white man's name on it on a campus that was created to teach Hawaiians how to think and behave white. All of which is on stolen land that does not belong to them. If I can say one thing to Lot Lane-- if I could have one second with him, I would stop to tell him, "I heard you", and then I would get back to the fight.



I Aha ai Kānaka ke ‘Ole Kōna Mo‘olelo?

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Penei ka ‘ōlelo a Joseph Mokuohai Poepoe i kāna pukana nūpepa i kapa ‘ia ‘o ka Moolelo Hawai‘i Kahiko:

“A o ka Moolelo” wahi a Cicero, “oia ka mea e hoao ai i ka manawa; oia ka malamalama o ka oiaio; ke ola o ka hoomanao; ka rula o ka hoomanao; ka elele o ka wa kahiko.” (1906)

No laila e ku‘u hoa lāhui ē, ‘o ka mo‘olelo ka mea e ‘ike a ho‘omaopopo ai ho‘i kekahi lāhui he lāhui nō ia. No ka mea, ‘o ka mo‘olelo ka mea e mau ai ka ‘ike o kekahi hanauna ā i kekahi hanauna. ‘O ka mo‘olelo ho‘i ka mea e maopopo ai ke kaona i ‘ekepue ‘ia i loko o nā lālani mele a kākou e ho‘oheno nei ā hiki i kēia wā. ‘O ka mo‘olelo kekahi mea e ‘ike ai ka Hawai‘i he Hawai‘i nō ‘o ia. ‘O ka lāhui ‘ike ‘ole na‘e i kōna mo‘olelo

pono‘ī, auē nō ho‘i! He lāhui nele i ka paepae e kūkulu ai ona hale, kahi e lapa ai ka ka maui ‘o ka lāhui ‘ana.

‘O Lot Lonoikaua Kamehameha Carey Lane kekahi i ili ai ka hewa i luna ona ma muli o ka laha pono ‘ole ‘ana o kōna mo‘olelo pono‘ī iho nō. E like me nā mo‘olelo ‘ē a‘e i kākau ‘ia ma kēia puke nei, ua kūpa‘a like ‘o Lonoikaua me Robert Wilikoki i mea e komo hou ai ka Mō‘ī Wahine i loko o ka haleali‘i. Ma muli na‘e o ka laha ‘oko‘a ‘ana he mea hana kalaima wale aku nō ‘o Lonoikaua, ua ‘oi aku kōna ho‘opa‘i ma mua o ko Wilikoki. Ma hope o ka ho‘oponopono ‘ana o kōna mo‘olelo, puka ‘o ia a lilo ‘o ia ka Meia o Honolulu. No laila, ko‘iko‘i ka hopena i kekahi wā ke ‘ole ka loa‘a ‘ana o nā ‘oia‘i‘o like ‘ole e like me ko kākou ‘ike ‘ana. ‘O ia nō ho‘i ka ho‘olaha ‘ana i kā kākou mau mo‘olelo, i mea e ho‘omālamalama ai i ka ‘oia‘i‘o, a kū‘ike ai ho‘i i nā ho‘omana‘o ‘ana e like me ko kākou ‘ike maoli ‘ana.

Kūmole:

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John & Lot, and their Irish father's fighting influence

Dr. Dean Saranillio

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In 1922, Kathleen Dickenson Mellen arrived to Hawai‘i from Richmond, Virginia, and began asking, “How and why did the Islands become American?”^[i] Publishing primarily in the post–World War II period, in the decades when the propaganda of occupation seeking Hawai‘i’s admission as a US state was most active, Mellen’s writings defamiliarized the familiar narrations of Hawai‘i’s seemingly inevitable march toward statehood. Through twenty years of archival research and conversations with Abigail Kawānanakoa, Mary Kawena Pukui, Alice Kamokilaikawai Campbell, Hawaiian homesteaders at Papakōlea, and those whom she described as “older Hawaiians, active participants in the revolutionary events of 1893 when the monarchy was overthrown,” Mellen authored numerous writings, including a series of four books that spanned the time from Kamehameha to the U.S.-backed overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani. While many today may not be able to recall her name or her work, when Mellen passed away in 1969 it was front-page news and her obituary in the Honolulu Advertiser labeled her a “controversial Isle historian,” since “several of Mrs. Mellen’s books expressed the view that Hawaii illegally had been taken over by haole interests in the revolution which overthrew Queen Liliuokalani.”ⁱⁱ

Mellen demonstrated how Hawaiian national memory of the 1893 overthrow continued through the turn of the twentieth century into their present, as opposed to being memorialized events of the past. In a 1948 article in the *Paradise of the Pacific*, “Na Pua o Hawaii,” Mellen writes about key figures in the events surrounding the 1893 overthrow and links this generation with the children who lived through its effects. Of the Irish Hawaiian Lane brothers, Mellen writes that these two, along with their four other brothers, were imprisoned after each took part in the “counter-revolution which was staged in an effort to restore the monarchy.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Their Irish father, William Carey Lane, who was displaced from Ireland after losing his family lands for refusing to abide by Protestant English rule, told them, “Go my sons, and fight for your mother’s land. Fight with all you have in you. And never forget that there flows in your veins the blood of the Careys and Lanes of County Cork.”^{iv}

County Cork is also nicknamed the “Rebel County” after its prominent role in the fight for Irish independence and its position as an antitreaty stronghold during the Irish Civil War. Writing of Lane, Mellen says, “To him, the people who manipulated the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy are still ‘Those damn rascals.’”^v

Mellen was a haole settler, who chose to fight alongside those her nation had helped to dispossess. Although the encroachment of “greed and commercialism” manifested through statehood was insurmountable in her historical moment, her writings helped to clear space for the impos

John & Lot... (continued)

sible to one day become achievable. Such forms of slow resistance by archiving the histories, actions, and opinions of those who were opposed to statehood thus created the conditions of possibility and hope for a Hawaiian nation to reemerge in the future.

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- iii Mellen, "Na Pua o Hawaii: Descendants of Distinguished Hawaiians," Paradise of the Pacific 60, no. 12 (December 1948): 65.
- iv Mellen, "Na Pua o Hawaii."
- v Mellen, "Na Pua o Hawaii."



Conversations with Kūpuna: Archival Exploration

Hinaikawaihi'ilei Nanika'ala Keala

Haumana Laeo'o

Kamakakūokalani a me ka Library Sciences

In the last thirty years, archive repositories have been a critical source in Hawaiian research and scholarship. Our archives are the written memory of our last 250 years. These are physical fragments of history that have long waited to be resurfaced by it's own people. In 1834, only about 10 years after language in its written form was being taught widespread, the literacy rate among Native Hawaiians was estimated to be between 91% and 95%. This shows that our kūpuna were not only consuming written works but, more importantly, producing immense amounts of content on a daily basis. All these mo'olelo were written for us, and it is our kuleana to rediscover and continue the conversations that our kūpuna were so invested in. A conversation of building ourselves as a lāhui Hawai'i to meet the challenges of an ever changing world.

For me, however, it is not just enough to feel the mana of these documents, but to attempt to bring them to life and apply them to us Kānaka living in 2020. In my experience there are many jewels left by our kūpuna all over the world waiting for us to revisit. If you see a destination mentioned in your research, go there. In 2019, myself and a group of other Hawaiian scholars visited what was the Hawaiian Consulate in Torino, Italy. There still is the flag holder for where the Hawaiian flag proudly displayed it's colors in the 19th century. In London at the College of Arms, you can find the first physical draft of the royal Hawaiian seal that we all recognize today. Our kūpuna left their mark on the world, it is up to us to put our flag back in that flag holder and honor the coat of arms our kūpuna traversed vast oceans to design.

We must take what is written with ink and then physically step into their world and be able to recognize ourselves in a seemingly unrecognizable space. Just because something is written down and is being preserved in a secure space does not mean that these pages do not need to breathe. This is OUR time, to be able to tell OUR own stories, from OUR own people, in OUR own mother tongue.

HE KIPI!
Eia i Kou Poli e Kakuhihewa
Ka Iamuku ma ka Mehe e
ia Poe.

I ke kakahiaka o nchini, Mei 20,
ua eleu ae ka Iamuku i ka hopu-
hopu ana i na poe i hoohuoi ia no
ke kipi, a ua pau lakou a pau i ka
hoopaa ia ma Kuapapaui. Ke kau
nei ka weli o na poe e ae i lihi launa
aku i keia hoohuoi ia. Eia na lona
o na poe i hopuia i loa mai mai ko
makou mea kakau mai:

Jno. Brown,
Manuel Ross Jr.,
Geo. Makuela,
R. Palau,
Jim Kolo,
Kaimimoku,
Alexander Smith,
Manuel Espinda,
Kaohiwaina,
J. W. Pipikane,
V. V. Ashford,
Kahahawai,
Baloka,
Lot Lane,
R. W. Wilikoki,
Geo. Markham.

Ensemble

Christine Jamlig Chang

Jesse Hoyhtya

Kaipulaumakaniolono

Kuahea Kukahiko

Kalā Muller

Kara Nabarrete

Lily Hi'ilani Okimura

Catherine Ann Restivo

Keola Simpson

Rachel Sorensen

Melisa Orozco Vargas

Jorin Young