

A Note on the Cover Art

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‘Āina connects us to our past, our present, and our future. It has sustained us for generations. This visual rendering by Professor April A. H. Drexel is a reminder of our relationship and kuleana to each other. Archived in layered voices of ‘ōlelo, mo’olelo, and mo’okū’auhau, our relationship to the ‘āina is documented.

According to Kanaka Maoli tradition, we will forever be connected to the ‘āina. From this perspective, the ‘āina is our eldest sibling and we are family. This voice represented in our own language details the story of Papa and Wākea that gives proof of our genealogical connection to the āina. It is a voice that explains our kuleana to protect and care for the ‘āina. In return the ‘āina will feed, shelter, and sustain us.

We are the evidence, not the crime!

A contemporary voice speaks of the mo’olelo from a foreign source that has consistently tried to erase our connection to the ‘āina. It cautiously speaks to the abuse, atrocities, and outright theft of our ‘āina. Presented in the style of graffiti, this voice says, “Me, I’m from the house of ‘āina.” Graffiti is often relegated to art crime or criminal behavior. Those who engage in graffiti are labeled as criminal. The same can be said of Kanaka Maoli who teach what we now know of our ‘āina. When we enact our kuleana to the ‘āina, we are labeled criminal. Just look at what happened on Kaho’olawe and at Mākua.

...will resist with the strength of the elders gone...
by April Drexel

We are the evidence, not the crime!

A voice from the future is represented by a keiki. Our keiki offer hope that the next generation will teach kūpuna wisdom, speak our 'ōlelo, tell our mo'olelo, and pass on our mo'okū'auhau to the 'āina.

We are the evidence, not the crime!

The offerings within this volume echo the diverse relationships we have to the 'āina. It is our great hope that you will understand *we are the evidence, not the crime!*

This piece was inspired by the lyrics of "Willy Bright," performed by Big Island Conspiracy on the CD "Street Tapestry, Vol. 1, Reflective But Unrepentant," and by the lyrics of "O Wākea Noho Iā Papahānaumoku," as performed by Hālau O Kekuhi on the CD "Uwōlani" (Chanting unto The Chiefs).