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# ABOUT KA HUE ANAHĀ

*Ka Hue Anahā* publishes academic and research writing in all disciplines and programs and from all courses, except for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math research reports, which are published in a separate journal. The name, given by then LLL Department Chair and Hawaiian language instructor Nawa‘a Napoleon, translates as “The calabash of light” or “The wellspring of reflected light,” and is meant to reflect the diversity of opinions and spectrum of culture our island state fosters, and also pays homage to the concept of ‘welcoming ideas from across the curriculum’ previously engendered in the 2004-2006 publication called Spectrum.

**Ka Hue** – gourd, water calabash, any narrow-necked vessel for holding water. A way of connecting net sections by, interlocking meshes.

**Anahā** – reflection of light.

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# Japanese Shoyu Bottles in Hawaii

HEZEKIAH ALIIPULE

ENGLISH 100

Shoyu, renowned for its culinary versatility and cultural importance, is an omnipresent staple in Hawaiian cuisine. Shoyu's importance to Hawaii is incredible. Easily unappreciated, however, are the containers in which Shoyu is stored. Whether in the form of barrels, jugs, jars, or bottles, there is just as much cultural value to be found in them as in the shoyu itself. In these shoyu containers can be found an elucidating example of the history and fusion of the Japanese and Hawaii—showcasing the fact that local residents sincerely appreciate what these bottles represent in terms of both heritage and identity.

Shoyu was stored in a variety of containers constructed from a variety of materials. Yet as these artifacts primarily survive through garbage dumps, many of these containers have decomposed into irrelevance. Deposited by households, businesses, and plantations, these dumps preserve glass, ceramics, and other non-degradable materials best. Metal, bone, shells, and rubber are sometimes found, but in poor condition. Of these, glass is the most resistant to decomposition and so provides us with a direct unchanging remnant to Hawaii's past.



The first Shoyu in Hawaii was brought by the *Gannenmono* (元年者, literally the First Year People) in 1868—shoyu was a part of their provisions along with rice and miso. The *Gannenmono* were the first large group of Japanese to migrate to Hawaii and would soon be followed by thousands of others. The result was the importation of significant amounts of Japanese goods, including 610 tubs of shoyu aboard the *Yamashiro Maru* in 1886. Shoyu was also briefly produced in Hawaii in June 1891 by Jihachi Shimada. It is not recorded what sort of container Shimada (or for that matter the earlier *Gannenmono*) used to store their Shoyu but the 1886 import list and other contemporary Hawaiian advertisements dating as late as the 1910s describe shoyu as being stored in “tubs”, “kegs”, “barrels”, or similar devices to that effect (Shurtleff & Aoyagi 2, 17; “Imports from Japan” 3; Morita 866).

It seems very likely then that within Hawaii, traditional Japanese *Taru* were being used to contain shoyu from its introduction until at least the end of the 1910s. *Taru* (樽) were the primary traditional container used to store shoyu in Japan itself. Made of tightly joined wood bound with thick cordage, they were used for commercial distribution between breweries and businesses and generally for domestic exportation even into the 1940s. These *Taru* came in various sizes, some like in the photo below contained 4-To (~10 gal.) and others in half the size containing 2-To (~5 gal). Based on the visual logos depicted below, one might contend that a lot of determination and grit led to the product's being placed in these caskets, and that the process was far more

labor intensive to production methodologies that employ industrialized techniques and technology.



The trend of mass importation of shoyu would continue even after the annexation of Hawaii in 1898, with Japanese immigrants continually arriving in significant numbers. In 1899 alone, over \$50,000 in “sauces” were imported; the vast majority of which was shoyu. The following year, the first commercially successful shoyu brewery was established on the junction of Punchbowl street and Pauoa road in Honolulu (“Imports from Japan” 9, 12).

Within the decade, at least nine other shoyu breweries were established in Hawaii. The majority were centered in Honolulu with further breweries in Waipahu, Kahului, Hilo, Waiakea, and Hanapepe. Though primarily brewing shoyu, a handful would go on to make Miso, Tofu, and Sake. It seems based on period newspaper accounts and advertisements that a mix of barrels, tubs, and bottles (both glass and ceramic) were being used (Shurtleff and Aoyagi 24-39).

Though *Taru* still seems to have maintained importance, the share of glass bottles was already increasing. Within Japan from between 1900 and 1915, there was an explosive rise in the use of glass bottles. Though production of these began in earnest in the 1870s and 80s, it was by the popularity of soda and beer that saw the bottle’s widespread use (Ross 2).

The earliest mention of glass lightning stopper bottles being used commercially in Japan was Hakutsuru Sake’s 1-Sho (~½ gallon) bottle in 1901. The Hawaiian Star first mentions shoyu in “quart bottles” in 1906 with the earliest surviving specimens dug from plantation dumps also appearing around this time. So it seems likely that shoyu was being bottled in 4-Go (~1 quart) or 1-Sho bottles which remained the mainstay of Japanese brewers even up until the present (Shurtleff and Aoyagi 34).



Overall, there was an industrial increase in the manufacturing and importation of Shoyu in Hawaii, including the first appearances and rapid adoption of Shoyu in glass bottles. In the first decade of the 20th century alone, Hawaii went from having no local Shoyu breweries to having nearly a dozen, resulting in local production eclipsing 100,000 gallons. Furthermore, importation increased from roughly 16,000 tubs a year in 1899 to 240,000 by 1905, a 15-fold increase in six years (Shurtleff and Aoyagi 62). This logos-driven data already seems to showcase how the industrialization and mass marketing via glass bottling created a potentially democratizing and populist access to shoyu amongst local communities, particularly Japanese-Americans.

Though it'd be easy to assume that shoyu was only bottled in lightning stopper 1-Sho bottles, this specimen preserved a severe juxtaposition between the bottle and the label and contents. The contents in this bottle was



brewed by the Noda Shoyu Company (野田醤油株式会社) which operated under that name from 1917 until 1968 when it was rebranded the Kikkoman Corporation. By great contrast, the bottle originates from the Kabuto Beer Brewery, which was once one of the four largest breweries in Japan, operating from 1898 until 1921. Combining the two date ranges provides an exact date range of 1917-1921 concerning the manufacture of shoyu, but more importantly, it proves that shoyu was at times sold in a motley collection of bottles from numerous sources.

By the 1930s, there were dozens of local manufacturers brewing not only shoyu but also sake, shochu, mirin, miso, and other Japanese beverages and foodstuffs. Throughout the 1920s and 30s, the local market was dominated by small manufacturers and businesses sprinkled here and there; likely to serve local needs directly, the entire manufacturing process became much more prolific. A few Japanese and Hawaiian Shoyu manufacturers began embossing their bottles, though blank bottles continued to be used (Shurtleff and Aoyagi 60-130).



Above is a lineup of Shoyu bottles retrieved from former plantation and homestead sites on Oahu and Hawaii Island. Dating from 1925 at the earliest (far left bottle) to the early 1940s (far right bottle), it's notable that the general shape, style, and color remained the same throughout. The left three specimens are blank whereas the right three are embossed with

Noda Shoyu (left first) and Kawamata Shoyu (right two). Advertisements by this point only reference bottled shoyu insinuating *Taru* had by this point been completely phased out.

During the 1940s, domestic shoyu production would increase due to the cessation of trade with Japan. Although Hawaii was largely spared by the effects of Internment (largely due to the Japanese' economic importance), war-related rice shortages forced many large Hawaiian sake breweries to begin producing shoyu. Two notable examples were the Honolulu Sake Brewery & Ice Co. (1908-1989) and the Fuji Sake Brewery Co. (1935-1963) who shifted from sake to shoyu in 1942 and 1947 respectively (Shurtleff and Aoyagi, 148-156; U.S. Office of Alien Property Custodian 33).

Though Shoyu continued to be bottled in the Sake-style bottles, Shoyu began to be bottled in glass jugs. These jugs are typically unembossed, though some do carry the name of local shoyu breweries on the base (e.x.: Hilo Brewery Co., Ltd.). These were generally



1 gallon jugs which gradually came to replace the 4-Go (~¼ gal) and 1-Sho (~½ gal). Old glass bottles are a curious testament to their time, spurring collectors, archaeologists and enthusiasts to unearth and remember more of Hawaii's shared history. From its introduction in 1868 with the *Gannenmono*, to its mass importation, local production, and cementation into Hawaiian culture, the bottles shown here aid in illustrating the history and melding of Shoyu to Hawaii.

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# The Art of Time: The Symbolism of the Traditional Watch

LU WANG

ESL 100

In *Time and Mind: The History of a Philosophical Problem*, J. J. A. Mooij writes, “Many allegories present Time as a winged, almost nude old man. He usually has an hourglass and often holds a sickle or scythe.” The hourglass symbolizes the flow of time, while the sickle seems to have harvested everything that once existed in this world. Indeed, in modern society, when individuals live fast-paced lives and everything around us evolves rapidly, many things have become outdated. This unpleasant personification of time reminds individuals of the inevitability of time’s passage and represents the powerlessness they feel when facing it.

How do advertisements approach time? The traditional watch, for example, has a long and rich history since it was first invented after 1500 by a locksmith called Peter Henlein in Germany (“Watch”). Nowadays, it is not only a tool to keep track of time but also endowed with the allegory of appreciating and mastering time through its advertisements. One example is the Omega traditional watch advertisement in the May 2024 issue of *The New Yorker*, a magazine that targets the cultural elite in the U.S. who are well-educated and interested in literature, arts, and politics. The other is also an Omega traditional watch advertisement from the Chinese magazine *Sanlian Lifeweek* on October 19, 2020. *Sanlian Lifeweek* is a magazine that targets urban Chinese audiences who are intellectual and from the middle class or upper class and covers a large range of topics, including news, history, and fashion.

Both of the advertisements shaped the confident and time-resisted images of the traditional watch, yet the persuasive effects used in their advertisements—such as color, setting, and document design functions—are distinct due to the different ranges of their target customers: adventurous, young customers and successful, well-established businessmen.

The Omega watch advertisement from *The New Yorker* shown in Fig. 1 delivers bright colors and is co-branded with Swatch. The watch itself is placed in the middle and dominates the whole advertisement with few words around it. The image of this advertisement demonstrates the confidence of time resisting and is succinctly designed to attract young and fashionable customers. The second Omega advertisement shown in Fig. 2 is from the Chinese magazine *Sanlian Lifeweek*. In contrast to the first advertisement, this advertisement is more shadowy and dim. It delivers low-key luxury and a moderate time reflection to Chinese customers who value identities and tastes.

The combination of white and yellow colors from the Omega advertisement in Fig. 1 is modern and evokes feelings of joy and confidence. *The Psychology of Advertising*, written by well-known scholars in psychology, Bob M. Fennis and Wolfgang Stroebe, is regarded as one of the authoritative books in advertising psychology. This book references Nisbett and Ross (1980), who define vivid stimuli as emotionally engaging,

image-provoking, and related to our sensory experiences in time and space (Fennis and Stroebe 53). It states that vibrant colors can evoke emotions from the audience, enhancing the effectiveness of the advertisement.

Therefore, colors in this advertisement are merely visual elements; the dominant bright yellow color in this advertisement, with the color white interspersed, represents not only optimism in life but also a confrontation with the monotony of time, offering wearers the confidence and courage to seize the moment and master time. This combination of colors creates a positive time-mastering allegory and an adventurous atmosphere to attract young and fashionable customers.

The colors from the second advertisement in Fig. 2 are mainly brown and blue, which heighten the product's sense of luxury. They are designed to suit the identities and styles of its featured customers from the middle and upper classes in China. The Omega watch is in deep blue, while the background is brown. This combination of colors reminds audiences of the land and ocean, offering audiences a sense of harmony, stability, and nature. As Adam Goldston, the co-founder of sneaker brand APL, states, "That's the thing about watches: The ones you really love are with you for all your big moments—and even on regular days"(C.R. 63). This sense of luxury and harmony not only highlights the success and elegance of the wearer but also signifies a deep respect for time as if every moment has special meaning and should be appreciated. To their target consumers, this advertisement not only emphasizes the luxury of its products but also brings the cognition of living harmoniously with time.

The setting in the Omega watch advertisement from *The New Yorker* in Fig. 1 is outdoors, with the watch placed on the moon, creating an atmosphere of wildness. It uses a window effect to stimulate the audience's adventurous spirits, as if they can fly to the moon and wander in space after wearing this watch. The

open and wild setting in this image indicates the infinite possibilities of time and adventures, eliciting the adventurous spirits of its target customers.

*Sanlian Lifeweek's* Omega watch advertisement is set in a room that looks like an exquisite study of a businessman, emphasizing its formality. The blue Omega watch is elegantly placed on the middle of a wooden desk with a blue pen and a leather wallet beside it, promoting a sense of taste and identity. This advertisement also uses a window effect to attract its consumers. This setting evokes the audience's imagination of obtaining higher social standing and more exquisite lifestyles, making them feel like they are transforming into a successful businessman after wearing this watch. In contrast to the wide-open setting in the first advertisement, the limited space in this image indicates a more conservative attitude. It reflects that a successful businessman needs a balance between his ambitions and time. Therefore, the setting of the second advertisement signifies the control and introspection of time to its consumers.

The use of words in Fig. 1, such as "Bioceramic," "Mission to the Sun," and "Omega x Swatch," heightens the fashionable and sophisticated temperament of this product. Collinsdictionary.com defines the word bioceramic as "a synthetic or natural ceramic substance used to replace a bone, tissue, etc. in a living body" ("Bioceramic"). It hints that the material of this watch is safe, durable, and lightweight. The words "Mission to the Sun" link with the bright yellow color of this image, as the worldwide famous oil painting artist Vincent Van Gogh once said: "Sunshine, a light which, for want of a better word I can only call yellow – pale sulfur yellow, pale lemon, gold. How beautiful yellow is!" This combination of color and words is not only impactful but also creates time urgency. To complete this mission, the audience is urged to take action and seize every moment when time is ticking. What is rare about this Omega watch advertisement is the fact that it is co-

branded with Swatch. Compared with Omega, Swatch is considered a brand for younger customers like students and young adults. Co-branding with Swatch can help Omega expand the range of its target customers. By using those document design functions, this advertisement creates a powerful image of brave time adventurers for its wearers.

The keywords from *Sanlian Lifeweek's* advertisement in Fig. 2, “Constellation” and “Master Chronometer,” contribute to creating a luxurious and romantic image of this product to its target customers. The concept of a constellation, which means a group of stars, matches the deep blue color of this watch and is in contrast with the other Omega watch advertisement, which states, “Mission to the Sun.” According to the website *Watches of Switzerland*, “A Master Chronometer means that a timepiece has been certified not only by COSC (Official Swiss Chronometer Testing Institute) but also by METAS (Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology), a Swiss government-controlled center considered to be the height of measuring excellence with stringent and comprehensive certification standards.” In general, it means that this watch is not only highly accurate but also reliable under challenging conditions with its magnetic and water resistance functions. In contrast to the first advertisement, the document design functions in the second advertisement demonstrate the image of a successful and romantic character who deeply appreciates time and lives in harmony with it. Advertisements utilize many persuasive effects such as color, setting, and document design to endow the traditional watch with the allegory of appreciating and mastering time. They portray the traditional watch as not merely a tool to tell time but also a symbol of taste and identity. Through these advertisements, individuals can tell that the timeless beauty and distinct allegories of the traditional watch continue to captivate customers.



Fig. 1. Omega Watch, *The New Yorker*, 6 May 2024.



Fig. 2. Omega Watch, *Sanlian Lifeweek*, 19 October 2020.

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# Korea: A Nation United by Shackles

BY KELLIE YAMADA

ENGLISH 272M

The corporal and psychological beating down of Koreans by twentieth century Japan unintentionally strengthened the Korean identity and spirit, contributing to the growth of their pride. Given representation in Shogo Oketani's, "A Day and a Half of Freedom" a story written in the third person limited omniscient narrative point of view, students experience the issues of racism and segregation faced by ethnic Koreans in Japan, post colonial rule. Set in mid 1960s Tokyo, protagonist Kazuo learns of the reason why there are so many Koreans living in Japan, of their poor living conditions and the discrimination they encounter through the brief insight he gets into the life of his friend, Kaneda Minoru, a boy of Korean descent born in Japan.

Witnessing the harassment targeted toward Minoru and others sharing his ethnicity makes Kazuo reevaluate acceptance and how he wants to make others feel. The tone of this story is introspective, reflective, and somber, touching on complex feelings of discomfort as Kazuo learns the history of not only his own people's suffering, but also of the wrongdoings they inflicted on their neighboring countries. The onset of internal conflict within Kazuo is brought about by the external conflict between Minoru and his bullies, and overall Japan versus Korea and the surrounding countries. Oketani's story navigates themes of migration, colonization and the colonized group's responses to change, conflicts between cultural norms and ideals regarding tolerance and acceptance of people viewed as "outsiders," and the

importance of learning about the past to establish an optimistic future for all. "A Day and a Half of Freedom" affirms how the displaced Korean people, although alienated, stripped of rights and forced into slavery as a consequence of colonization, always found a way to survive, never losing their resilience or the will to fight for their identities.

To understand who Japan's "Korean residents" are, why they are there, and the ethnic tension between the two nations, one must familiarize with the history of the countries' interrelations leading to Korea's annexation. In the sixteenth century, Korea, or the Kingdom of Joseon as it was known at the time, developed an isolationist policy due to traumatic invasions which resulted in the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians of all ages. The Kingdom found success in maintaining minimal contact with foreigners and protecting its sovereignty until the nineteenth century when a Japanese gunboat made landfall with its troops, burning houses and killing soldiers. This event led to the coerced signing of the unequal 1876 Treaty of Ganghwa, in which trade ports were allowed to be opened with duty-free importation of Japanese goods and granted Japanese people extraterritoriality and the ability to reside, conduct business and lease land in port areas ("Joseon Dynasty"; Cox; Nho; Patowary).

Several events took place in the vulnerable country that paved the way for annexation. In 1894, the Japanese overthrew the government, occupied the royal palace and murdered, mutilated and burnt the corpse of Queen

Min. The following year, with support from Russia, King Gojong established the Korean Empire (Lankov; Pan). In an attempt to regain control, in 1904, Japan attacked the Russian Port Arthur in Northeast China, declaring war. Under threat from the Imperial Military, the Korean government was then forced to sign the Korea-Japan Protocol, which gave Japan full diplomatic, economic, militaristic control to promote the action of the Imperial Japanese Government (Seo). As a result of the Russo-Japanese war, the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth was created which formalized Japan's control over Korea ("Russo-Japanese War"). Preparing for annexation were two more treaties— the 1905 Eulsa Treaty in which Korea had its autonomy stripped and became a protectorate of the Japanese Empire, and the 1907 Korea-Japan Treaty, which deprived Korea of administration to internal affairs (Pfeifer; Tanaka).

Korea's longest ruling dynasty came to an end in 1910 when it was annexed with the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1910. Now under rule by Japan, many Koreans were imported as laborers or soldiers, or had no choice but to immigrate after being driven out of their homeland due to lack of employment opportunities. In the 1920s, when Japan experienced a shortage of labor, Korean workers began to fill positions in factories, construction, and mining. Receiving much lower wages than the Japanese, Korean slums formed due to poverty and discrimination (Moon), such as Oketani's Little Korea, "with its small factories lining the muddy, polluted, and decidedly unlovely Tachiai River...a neighborhood of shacks with roofs of sheet iron" (Oketani 18, 20). These places were spoken about with a tone of disdain and fear by the Japanese. By the mid-1930s, nearly a third of Koreans were born in Japan, and by 1945 the number of Koreans in Japan peaked at approximately two million; this number is staggeringly higher than the pre-enforced migration number of 790 Koreans in 1909.

After World War II, a majority of the Koreans left, and in 1948, the population settled around 600,000 (Moon; Tamura). These people and their descendants would come to be known as *Zainichi*, meaning "residing in Japan". They were "[p]eople who'd lost their homeland. People, or the sons and daughters of people, who were brought forcibly to Japan, or had no choice but to seek work here" (Oketani 24). Although ethnically "foreign", these people were now culturally and linguistically Japanese; this however, did not lessen the prejudice they were met with. Like Kazuo's good friend in "A Day and a Half of Freedom", "Kaneda Minoru...though born and raised in Japan..." (Oketani 19) experienced hate speech by other children, being called "Korean creep" and propositions such as "[w]ho can wrestle with a Korean who stinks of garlic, anyway...It's not my fault [he's Korean]" (Oketani 22, 23).

During this time, Koreans in Japan were called, "*Chosen*" the Japanese pronunciation, of "Joseon" and "Chosen" is what Korea was renamed after annexation. This title was not only a reminder of colonial conquest, but also implied that Koreans were dirty, smelly, lazy, and stupid, leading to self-hatred, shame, and some Koreans attempting to conceal their identity (Lie). There were, though, people who stood against bigotry like the third grade teacher Mr. Honda, who reprimanded Minoru's bullies saying "'[a]ren't you ashamed of yourself, as a human being?...don't you know how shameful it is to discriminate against others?'...Discrimination is...the worst and most shameful thing a human can do" (Oketani 23). In addition, the fact that Kazuo "...never had a clear idea of what sort of people the 'Korean residents' were...or even that Minoru was one of them..." (Oketani 20) shows that racism is learned and how unfounded it is. The alienation and abuse of the Koreans brought to Japan as forced labor, and their lineage persists to modern days. For many, there was no choice in this home of

theirs; for others, Japan is the only home they know, yet this does not prevent them from being classified as foreigners.

During the occupation years and prior, many atrocities occurred in which the Imperial Japanese Government attempted to figuratively and literally rob Koreans of their lives. People were taken from their homes as slaves and stripped of their lands, resources, and culture. As Oketani states, “[b]efore the war, Korea was a colony of Japan...The people of the colonized country were treated like servants” (24). They were relied on to provide materials, labor and allegiance to the Empire. In an effort to confiscate land, a land-survey ordinance was done in which landowners had to report details of their area. Many farmers were dispossessed since farmlands and forests jointly owned by villages or clans were unable to be claimed by a single individual; these lands were then cheaply sold to Japanese buyers (Lee et. al). As Korea was an important source of raw materials, mines, and forests, people were exploited and manual labor was emphasized, as was loyalty to the Emperor (Blakemore). Korean culture and customs were seen by the colonial force as uncivilized and backwards, and rewritten as such in museums and textbooks (Blakemore). In order to “enlighten the primitive Koreans”, educational principles were issued through colonization of the mind. Through the education system, Imperial objectives such as denationalization, assimilation and vocational training would be achieved. Schools and universities banned the speaking and teaching of Korean Language; Koreans “...weren’t even allowed to use their native language or the names they were born with” (Oketani 24). It became a crime to teach from non-approved texts. Academic societies dedicated to Korean studies were banned, as was news and media published in Korean (Blakemore; Lew et. al).

Following the Soshi Kaimei ordinances,

Koreans were pressured to change one’s given name and create a Japanese-style “family name”, with the requirement of newborns born during this time to have Japanese names. Initially in the occupation, the colonial government deemed it illegal for Koreans to adopt Japanese-style names, but later it was used as a tool of forcible assimilation, eroding ties to ancestry and identity. Refusal to comply resulted in loss of employment, dismissal of education, denial of healthcare and exclusion from mail delivery, ration cards and welfare. This allowed for the government to claim all people that made the change did it voluntarily, which at least 84 percent of Koreans gave in to (Blakemore; Kim).

With war approaching, civilians became increasingly necessary assets. The expansion of industrial development in Japan caused a decline in agricultural production. To counter the chronic food shortage, Korean farmers were ordered to increase rice cultivation for export, while most Koreans were made to subsist on minimal amounts of low-quality cereals imported from Northeast China (B. Hahn et. al). By the National Mobilization Law, “...all able-bodied adult Japanese men were drafted into the military, which made for a lack of workers in the coal mines and factories and so forth. Many men were brought from Korea and China and elsewhere, forced to work like slaves, and fed and treated poorly. Many died” (Oketani 24). As Japan prepared for war, the number of Korean men drafted into the Japanese armed forces was over 242,000, and some 5,400,000 other Korean citizens were conscripted for military related labor. Approximately 260,000 Koreans drafted by or residing in Japan were wounded or perished due to harsh treatment, inhumane working conditions, and war-related events; up to 30,000 died in the bombing of Hiroshima—that is about one in four deaths (Goldman; Moon; Vannoy).

Men were not the only ones captured; “[w]omen from the colonized countries, meanwhile, were

taken to the fronts and forced to...take care of the Japanese soldiers” (Oketani 24) as sex slaves. “Comfort Women,” the euphemism they are commonly referred to as, were predominantly women from poor rural areas of Korea who were kidnapped, extorted, or recruited under the guise of being employed as factory workers, cleaners, kitchen help, or nurses. These women were kept in “comfort stations” to be repeatedly raped from morning til evening by up to 60 men a day, according to victim testimony (Asian Women’s Fund; Bisland). Official rules of the use of comfort stations stated that abuse of women was prohibited, but daily violence was regular, with women reportedly being beaten, stabbed, mutilated, or had bones broken. Suicide became common. Women sent to the frontline to “service” soldiers in makeshift tents often succumbed to bombing and being fired upon, and women who became unable to work or were sick or infected were kept in mass trenches to be poisoned and buried instead of receiving treatment (Asian Women’s Fund; Bisland). The estimated number of sex slaves was upwards of 200,000, including women from other colonized nations of Asia and the Pacific— many were teenagers, some as young as twelve (Bisland, Vannoy). By the end of the war, documentation was destroyed by Japanese officials and approximately 90 percent of the women were executed by retreating soldiers so they could not testify to the horrors they were subjected to. The Japanese government still refuses to accept responsibility for this policy by stating that the women came voluntarily. Japanese officials into the 2020s have even petitioned for the removal of Comfort Women memorials across the world (Blakemore; Museum of Social Justice; Williamson).

Oketani shows that there is immeasurable discomfort when people are confronted by the complex realities of war, as well as the pain and loss that many people are unable to address. The characters realize that war

doesn’t just affect nameless statistics, but the people interacted with in one’s own towns: “... the cause of all that misery wasn’t just some abstract thing called war...It was, in this case, the Japanese who had done the unforgivable. The Japanese...Kazuo himself, his parents and grandparents, and everyone they knew...” (Oketani 24). They all had a role in the untold suffering and sorrow of war, and sometimes the position of victim and assailant overlap. With decades of denial and sanitization by the Japanese government, learning of the injustices upheld can cause feelings of guilt and shame, just as Kazuo experienced after learning that “...the Japanese too had caused their share of suffering, virtually enslaving the parents and grandparents of people like Minoru...So many Koreans and Chinese had died, or lost loved ones ...” (Oketani 24). During the years of colonial rule, freedom of speech was nonexistent, and human rights were taken away. The culture and practices, including language and system of naming were declared uncivilized. Koreans lost their land, livelihood, and even their lives.

The remaining Koreans in Japan were required to transform while still upholding their identities. Their resilience allowed them to navigate assimilation and survive while being alienated, and their resistance and dedication for justice ensured their history would not be forgotten. Prior to its defeat in World War II, the Japanese Government counted Koreans as Japanese nationals and aimed to have them assimilated; after the war, remaining Koreans were left to direct their own adaptation as they were now seen as foreigners, no longer receiving the “benefits” of being a so-called unified people. When the 1950 Nationality Law was enacted, it became a requirement to have at least 50 percent Japanese blood to be considered for citizenship, as long as it was through patrilineal means; meaning half Japanese children with Japanese mothers were stripped of their nationality. This same law required all registered “aliens” be

fingerprinted, tracked, forced to carry issued identification at all times, and subject to immediate police interrogation at any time or place without probable cause (Moon). Also, despite being equal taxpayers, non-citizens were blocked from public services such as medical care and welfare provisions, such as child support and pension (Lie; Moon). After non-nationals were barred from all public and private-sector employment, they were forced to turn to self-employment in service or entertainment sectors, illegal activities or marginal means such as scrap recycling (Moon). These “scrapmen” as they were called, “...paid people a nominal price for old newspapers and magazines, beer and juice bottles, scrap metal, and the like (Oketani 19). In “A Day and a Half of Freedom” when Kazuo sees Minoru and his father, a scrapman, he pities them: “[his] undershirt was soiled and looked almost as old and battered as the man’s knee-length work trousers” (Oketani 18). Even though he thinks “[i]t can’t be easy... poor guy...[’, Kazuo] stepped into the shadow of the concrete-block wall beside him” (Oketani 19) to hide from the dirty pair. In this moment, Kazuo discovers his own concealed discriminatory viewpoints he has formed about impoverished, marginalized people like Minoru’s “scrapman” father, and begins to digest the uncomfortable feelings that arise with its recognition. Kazuo tried to reason that if he were in Minoru’s place he’d feel ashamed being seen dressed poorly and helping his father, the scrapman. Yet, if it was simply empathy, he wondered “[w]hy, then, had he reflexively hidden from Minoru just now...” (Oketani 25), why did he feel deep heaviness... Kazuo realized he was projecting his own feelings of embarrassment because he looked down on Minoru’s father.

Though discriminated against and treated with contempt, these types of workers had the strength to persevere, making a living no matter the means. The *Zainichi* were able to assimilate their own way and stay true to

their values. With the Japanese Government pushing the narrative of Koreans and Japanese being of the same common ancestry to justify assimilation, only to be cast out after the War, proves that the Koreans were simply being used as resources and were never considered equals. Koreans never stopped in their resistance to ethnocide and the fight for identity. Numerous uprisings and battles took place from before annexation up until independence. Many movements were organized by high school students, which showed how important the youth were in defense of the future. Outraged and prepared to stand up to their oppressors, teenagers too were arrested, imprisoned, tortured and killed. They were willing to fall, as long as they fell Korean (Muhammad; Tomovic).

Korea also tried to get assistance from other nations as well by sending emissaries to peace conferences, however their representation was denied each time as they ceased to be recognized as independent and must therefore be represented by Japan. The 1963 United Nations International Law Commission later reported that the treaties and such spanning from 1904 to 1910 were null and void as they were the product of Japanese coercion and unsigned by the Korean Monarch (Chung; Meyer; Totsuka). If the countries that claim to be devoted to peace were to dig in to the ethics of Korea’s treatment and stand in support against injustices, as Mr. Honda had done for Minoru, perhaps the conclusion of annexation invalidity would come sooner. If on an individual level, the people had not condoned hate crimes, acting like Kazuo following Minoru’s bullying with the, “...intention to treat friends like Minoru...kindly” (Oketani 25), maybe the perspective of Koreans as sub-human would have diminished. The importance of knowing history, uncomfortable facts and all, is essential in reparations towards a civil future, with civility undefined by language, name, or occupation.



The Korean commitment to liberation is everlasting. As exemplified by Oketani's characters, Koreans never stopped fighting for their lives despite the Japanese trying to take everything from them, enduring slavery and senseless violence. The community was shaped by decades of discrimination and alienation, as well as an unwillingness to give up their identity. After attempts by the Japanese to silence Koreans, destroy evidence and rewrite history, circulating the truth is the only way either nation can truly heal.

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# Kitesurfing Through Life

LEVI SCOTTE

ENGLISH 100

Going to the beach in Hawai'i on a windy day, you're likely to see big kites out over the horizon, either speeding along the water, jumping from 5 to 50 feet high, doing tricks, or all three. The size of the kites depends on how strong the wind is, ranging from a 4-meter kite in high-speed winds to a 12-meter kite in lighter conditions. Most kitesurfers on Oahu usually use between a 9-meter and 12-meter kite, with experienced kitesurfers owning multiple that they switch out depending on the wind and weather. People kitesurf for many reasons: to exercise, experience nature, or relax, just to name a few. One reason that I think might be overlooked is to challenge yourself to live in the moment.

Throughout history, we have always been in search of meaning and purpose to attribute to our lives. In our contemporary life, it seems like many of us live by habit, but are we participants or just spectators if we're running on autopilot? How can we find out our life's purpose and take charge of it? In his collection of essays, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 20th-century existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre describes the monotonous life of many when he writes, "Get up, take subway, work four hours at the office or plant, eat, take subway, work four hours, eat, sleep ... always the same routine" (77). One way we might look to start breaking the cycle is by introducing more activities into our lives. Something that I find ideologically similar is the sport of kitesurfing, also known as kiteboarding or just kiting. Existentialism teaches us to live freely and authentically, existing for the sake of ourselves and what we

want to be, and giving meaning to the things we think are meaningful in life. Kitesurfing is a good way to put theory into practice by pursuing more activities that challenge us to live in the moment.

Sometimes taking place in winds up to 60-70 MPH at the highest level, kitesurfing is a dangerous sport that provides many opportunities to fill us with adrenaline and put us in the so-called flow state. Hawai'i is one of the best places in the world for the sport with its abundance of beaches and trade winds coming into the islands. According to author and travel journalist Lucy Grewcock, "Kitesurfing can be done on mirror-flat lagoons, as well as in choppy seas or big waves. All you need is wind and water." So, what is kitesurfing? Kitesurfing, kiteboarding, or kiting is a "wind-powered watersport that uses a kite and a board to propel you across the water," writes Grewcock. The terms kitesurfing and kiteboarding are generally interchangeable, though technically, they differ in the type of board used. The kitesurfing board is essentially a normal surfboard, though some can have foot straps to hold the kiter in place, whereas the kiteboarding board is twin-tipped and always has foot straps. The kite is attached to a bar via strong cord lines that the person holds in their hands, and the bar is connected to a harness worn around the waist.

Now that we know what the sport is, we should know about some of the dangers. The first major one is encountered any time a kitesurfer is setting up the kite and has

to do with the lines. The kite has to be set up correctly with the four lines attached properly to the corresponding sections of the kite. If not done correctly, the kite will move differently than normal and could pull the kiter in a different direction, which could be way up in the air, sideways into other people or the ground, all of which can result in injury to not just the kiter but others as well. Another danger is the lines getting tangled or wrapped around the rider or someone else. The kite generates massive amounts of power in order to be strong enough to pull a person around, so if a body part gets caught in the lines, it can get stuck and lose circulation, leading to tissue damage or getting severed completely in some circumstances.

A third complication is the possibility of being pulled upwards. Since wind isn't a constant and fixed force, there will be times when the kite picks up a bit of power that people might not have expected. Human nature tells us to grip more firmly or even pull in to try and keep it under control. This action is a mistake, since counter-intuitively, pulling down on the bar actually powers up the kite, which can lead to it yanking the kiter way up into the air. There have been situations where people get pulled hundreds of feet up into the air and have to struggle to hold on while they wait to descend eventually, but some aren't so lucky. Knowing when to let go is one of the habits that is important to have a mental note of and consciously break. One can't be in control of everything all the time, and in kiting, letting go of the bar will drop the kite, keeping the person safe and allowing for another attempt once getting the kite back into the air.

Now, how does a person kitesurf? Grewcock says, "Any kitesurfer who respects the sport will agree that beginner lessons are essential ... a good instructor will furnish you with essential safety know-how and procedures." Experienced kitesurfers recommend that beginners learn personally with an instructor,

but it doesn't hurt to know what to expect beforehand. Kiters start by setting up their equipment, pumping the kite with air, attaching the lines from the bar to the kite, and setting up their harness. Then, the kitesurfer will probably have someone help them launch the kite into the air. The first few lessons will be on land, getting used to the kite, but eventually, the beginner will move to the surfing aspect. Grewcock explains that a beginner's lessons usually are made up of three parts: flying the kite on land, in the water, and then with a board. She continues by mentioning some of the things in these lessons including assessing if an area is safe to kite, learning and understanding wind direction and strength, as well as about gusts, learning and understanding tides and possible water hazards, some safety procedures, how to get up on the board, how to ride on the board and manage ones speed, and how to stay upwind.

In an article titled "Flow State as an Existential Tool to Increase Optimal Experience and Life Enjoyment," Dr. Isaac Burt and Professor Tiphonie Gonzalez write about individuals who do not succumb to hopelessness but can choose to live a meaningful life despite things like losing all of their friends or possessions. Burt and Gonzalez write, "Although this skill may appear unreachable, the capability to attain peak states is quite achievable, given certain conditions. Coined as flow state, this state of consciousness is within every person's ability to utilize." They continue by saying, "Flow allocates to people a sense of personal enhancement and achievement through deep embodiment, meaning, suffering, and control." Kitesurfing is one of many activities that force one to leave all of their thoughts back on land as they head out onto the water. It allows them to envelop themselves in nature and make deliberate choices rather than being a passenger in the vehicle that is their life. Burt and Gonzalez write, "In both flow state

and [existentialism], the notion of meaning is critical.... Both flow state and [existentialism] use the phenomenological perspective as a fundamental component in being able to adapt to and deal with life events” (202). Here, they are saying that many aspects of the two are similar, and they help people live through events that could’ve otherwise caused them to shut down. The authors continue by saying, “to induce flow state, a person must struggle against chaos and uncertainty.... These challenges encountered can be physical, mental, or spiritual in nature” (203). Being challenged is something that kitesurfing does very well, since it requires focus, which can result in a flow state. Achieving concentration in difficult circumstances can help people carry the benefits of the flow state back into their normal lives.

Sartre describes existentialism not as a philosophy of despair, as some might initially think, but as one of freedom. While the lack of objective meaning in life might seem bleak at first, it allows someone to create their own meaning and truly live for it, rather than for what others in society think that person should live for and do. Sartre writes, “[w]e mean that man first exists: he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterwards defines himself” (22). Here, he is saying that only after realizing and confronting the meaninglessness of life can one move forward, that people are a product of themselves, meaning they are responsible for who they are and what their actions are. One exists and then makes themselves who they want to be, rather than being made for a specific purpose. Once someone realizes that they are in control, they can work towards becoming the person that they want to be.

In a personal interview, local sponsored kiter and instructor Adrian Scotte says, “I kiteboard because when I’m on the water, at one with the elements; I am equal parts nothing and equal parts heightened. My senses are alive as

I master and manage the equipment to ensure I reduce the risks involved. At the same time, I am nothing: My focus is solely on operating the equipment, reading the inputs of wind, water, current, waves, and reef. As a result, I enter a flow state and it’s very easy to emerge from a 3-hour session... and all the [important things] come flooding back, [but I] return with a new perspective.” He continues by saying, “In daily life, I have found deep personal satisfaction and fulfillment by adopting a similar ‘move forward’ mindset.” Essentially, Scotte says he gains valuable insight into his personal and professional matters after experiencing kitesurfing. He uses the mindset of staying in the moment to not get overwhelmed, and attributes some of that to his experiences and passion for kiteboarding.

Humans should live as participants in their lives and do the things that they want to do. People shouldn’t just follow the crowd because others think that’s what they’re supposed to do. Kitesurfing is an activity that can help individuals to take more action and live in the moment, either through its flow state and the benefits one can draw from it, or just in the act of picking something and trying it. As Sartre says, “You are free, so choose; in other words, invent. No general code of ethics can tell you what you ought to do; there are no signs in this world” (33). There is a lot to do in the world, so find things to try; you might end up liking some of them.

### Annotated Bibliography

Burt, Isaac, and Gonzalez, Tiphonie. “Flow State as an Existential Tool to Increase Optimal Experience and Life Enjoyment.” *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, vol. 60, no. 3, Oct. 2021, pp. 197–214. EBSCOhost, <https://doi-org.kappproxy.lib.hawaii.edu/10.1002/johc.12165>. Accessed 14 April. 2025.

In this article for the Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Dr. Isaac Burt and Professor Tiphonie Gonzalez write about the similarities between the flow state and existentialism, and how those can be used to help people, specifically in the use of therapy. Burt and Gonzalez write, “In both flow state and [existentialism], the notion of meaning is critical.... Both flow state and [existentialism] use the phenomenological perspective as a fundamental component in being able to adapt to and deal with life events” (202). Here, they are saying that many aspects of the two are similar. They continue by saying, “to induce flow state, a person must struggle against chaos and uncertainty.... These challenges encountered can be physical, mental, or spiritual in nature” (203). This article includes information useful to my topics of existentialism and kitesurfing, and provides a tangible way to bridge them through the flow state.

Grewcock, Lucy. “Up Your Kitesurfing Game With Our Beginner’s Guide.” *Red Bull*, 13 Nov. 2023, [www.redbull.com/us-en/beginners-guide-to-kitesurfing](http://www.redbull.com/us-en/beginners-guide-to-kitesurfing). Accessed 14 April. 2025

Author and travel journalist Lucy Grewcock writes about “[e]verything you need to know about learning to kitesurf.” She details things such as what kitesurfing is, the need for lessons and where to find them, what you’ll learn during said lessons, some challenges you may encounter, types of equipment you’ll be using, and beginner tips. Grewcock explains, “[k]itesurfing is a wind-powered watersport that uses a kite and a board to propel you across the water,” and that you don’t necessarily have to kitesurf in waves, any location is fine as long as it’s windy and you have a body of water. She also

writes about the process of finding and picking a trustworthy instructor and how to pick the gear you’ll end up using. She continues by saying, “[a]ny decent instructor or kiteschool should provide the kit. They’ll have a range of different kites, boards, and safety equipment to suit you and a full range of different wind conditions.” This article for beginners has information that is useful for my topic, though the author is a freelance writer who might not be an expert, and some sections are short and don’t go in depth.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Translated by Carol Macomber, Yale University Press, 2007.

In this collection of essays, 20th-century existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre gives a brief but detailed look and explanation of the philosophy of existentialism to a wider audience. He explains that existentialism is not a philosophy of despair but one of freedom. While the absence of any true meaning in life might seem bleak at first, you can instead look at it through the lens of existentialism, which posits that you can and should create your own meaning in your life. Sartre continues, “[w]e mean that man first exists: he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterwards defines himself” (22). Here, he is saying that only after realizing the inherent meaninglessness of the world can you move forward, that “man” is a product of himself, meaning that you are responsible for yourself. Once you know this, you can decide what kind of person you want to be and become that person. This book is useful for my essay, which will try to bridge existentialism and its benefits with kitesurfing and how it helps you to take action in life.

Scotte, Adrian. Personal interview, 1 Apr. 2025.

In this personal interview with locally sponsored kiteboarder and kiteboarding instructor Adrian Scotte, I asked him why he kiteboards. I chose him to interview because he has a lot of experience with the sport, having over 10 years of experience, and he has a mindset of living in the moment and being mindful, as well as utilizing the flow state. Scotte says, "I kiteboard because when I'm on the water, at one with the elements, I am equal parts nothing and equal parts heightened. My senses are alive as I master and manage the equipment to ensure I reduce the risks involved. At the same time, I am nothing: My focus is solely on operating the equipment, reading the inputs of wind, water, current, waves, and reef. As a result, I enter a flow state and it's very easy to emerge from a 3-hour session... and all the [important things] come flooding back, [but I] return with a new perspective." He continues by saying, "In daily life, I have found deep personal satisfaction and fulfillment by adopting a similar 'move forward' mindset." Essentially, Scotte is saying that he gains valuable insight into his personal and professional matters after experiencing kitesurfing, and he uses the mindset of staying in the moment to not get overwhelmed, and attributes some of that to his experiences and passion for kiteboarding. This interview is helpful because it gives me a concrete example of someone who has benefited from kitesurfing.

# Kristiana Kahakauwila's "This Is Paradise"

BRITTANY JEFFREY

ENGLISH 100

In her short story, "This Is Paradise," Kristiana Kahakauwila develops the theme of women's societal struggles, through the use of point of view, setting, and narrative structure. Through the voices of female narrators categorized as hotel housekeepers, surfers, and successful career women, Kahakauwila represents a multi-vocal narrative that shows the many ways women support each other, and the reality that it's often easier said than done. The story follows these groups of women as they have different encounters with a tourist named Susan, and their conflicting feelings about speaking up and helping her. While there's a renewed emphasis on women supporting women in today's world, such a noble sentiment doesn't always apply to real life. When biases, societal norms, and even workplace rules come into play, some women stay silent, and some women, such as Susan, don't welcome the support being offered.

In "This Is Paradise," the point of view is from a collective voice comprised of three distinct groups of women. The first impression we get of Susan is from the surfer girls, watching her on the beach, making assumptions about her because of the color of her skin. They think about warning her not to go swimming at Walls, or about the strong current, but they decide not to; it's not their problem. The housekeeper's view of Susan is kind—she reminds them of their oldest daughters, bossy and impatient, saying "This girl, like our girls, is the type a mother can depend on to do things." They appreciate her assertiveness and how she shows them respect for the work that they do. The successful career women first see Susan in an ABC store while sitting in traffic. They judge her for wearing her bikini in the

store and buying all the typical tourist junk. An interesting point is that Susan's point of view is rarely heard or really considered, even though she is the focus of the story. We only learn about her story from other characters' points of view. The perspective of each group also varies in support of Susan, and it mostly feels like they are just dealing with her presence, rather than welcoming her.

The setting in "This Is Paradise" is in Waikiki, and its various tourist hot spots. The surfer girls encounter Susan at a nightclub, noting her clothing choices and wanting attention from the men. The successful career women see her in the lobby of a hotel while leaving, which is ironic because they bash Waikiki, yet they end up in a bar there, rubbing elbows with the tourists they seem to despise. In the story, they describe Waikiki "like any other city strip. We'd like to tell them Waikiki is nothing more than a succession of Hyatts and Courtyards by Marriotts, Cheesecake Factories and Planet Hollywoods, Señor Frog's and dingy Irish pubs with names like Murphy's and Callahan's." The people that live on Oahu know that Waikiki is like any other large city—bad things can happen here, an idea that tourists seem to forget all too easily. The intoxicating tropical smells and the calming sounds of the waves distract the tourists from reality, lowering their inhibitions. The final setting is the beach. The night prior, too many tourists lost their inhibitions and acted foolishly on the beach. Susan's cries for help is mistaken for the sounds of drunk young fun on the beach by the surfers, even hotel security.

The narrative structure is an important element in this story, because it builds the story in a specific way, making us agree with

the narrator. The supposed main character, Susan, is murdered. Everyone has only seen her in moments in passing, and it feels like the narrator wants us to judge her based on the observations, but by the end of the story, we realize that the other women in the story did nothing to help her, or speak up—all they did was judge her appearance and status of being a tourist. The housekeepers in the beginning say “We want to tell her to wear a thicker skirt, but it’s not our place to speak to guests.” Perhaps, they blame her because her skirt is see-through. In the club, the surfer girls note, “the girl in the orange skirt rests her fingertips on the muscled arm of an army man, and we complain, as usual, about all these haoles coming on our land, even though we’ve come to Waikiki.” Everyone in the end had some self reflection, the surfers when they did the paddle out, the housekeepers by sticking around to give the police full reports and blocking her body from people, and the successful women by reflecting on what they could have done differently.

“This Is Paradise” breaks down the postcard image of Hawaii by offering a story grounded in local truth and a collective voice. Kahakauwila’s complex narrative reveals the tensions between tourist fantasies and indigenous realities, between the individuals and the community, and between consumption and responsibility. The reality is that society wants women to speak up, unless it affects them. The housekeepers are told to report suspicious activity, but quickly learned that the hotel does not care about women’s well being, stating “You are not to involve yourself with our guests’ lives” when a woman was possibly being assaulted. Through the detailed storytelling and nuanced characterizations, Kahakauwila urges us to consider what paradise really means, and for who it is meant. In doing so, she reclaims Hawaii not as a place of escapism, but as a living, breathing home where all people, including women, deserve to be seen, heard, and respected.

# Women's Rights and Women's Wrongs: How the Gotham City Sirens Challenge Gender Norms

BY CONNOR REINE

ENGLISH 100

From femme fatales to queer feminist icons, the Gotham City Sirens have evolved into more than just fictional characters—they represent a powerful shift in how female villains are portrayed. This trio, made up of eco-terrorist and botanist Dr. Pamela Isley (Poison Ivy), former psychiatrist and gymnast Dr. Harleen Quinzel (Harley Quinn), and skilled thief-turned-vigilante Selina Kyle (Catwoman), symbolizes female solidarity above all else, with their conflict with Batman taking a secondary role. Together, Catwoman, Poison Ivy, and Harley Quinn reflect key feminist themes through their independence, resistance to patriarchal norms, and complex expressions of agency, power, and identity within a male-dominated comic book world.

Female superheroes have existed since even before Wonder Woman's debut in *All Star Comics* #8 in October 1941. One of her lesser-known predecessors was Fantomah, introduced in *Jungle Comics* #15 (March 1941). Fantomah is portrayed as a blonde woman in a simple black singlet who transforms into a ghostly being with powers like telekinesis, "superiority beams," and shape-altering pheromones. In her debut, she battles Org, a villain who tries to hypnotize giant spiders with a magical drum in order to conquer her jungle home (Flagg 47). The story ends when she traps Org in a pile of grass, where he is presumably eaten by the spiders (Flagg 51).

As bizarre as the plot is, the comic is surprisingly progressive for its time, especially when compared to the typical "damsel in distress" narratives of the era. For example, the very

same issue features another story, "Kaanga the Jungle Lord," whose cover shows a woman in a sundress being held captive by a bull-like creature. Still, Fantomah reflects the limitations of her time. She lacks a distinct personality or any meaningful character development—common flaws in early portrayals of female heroes, who were often defined solely by their powers or appearances rather than their depth or agency.

Within the Batman universe, women have been portrayed in a wide range of roles. They appear as damsels in distress like reporter Vicki Vale, crime fighters like Barbara Gordon (Batgirl), and even deadly villains like Talia al Ghul. Batman himself has long reflected the attitudes of the time in which he was written, with later versions of the character showing greater alignment with feminist values. One way to track these shifting attitudes is by examining the evolution of a single character: Catwoman.

## CATWOMAN: INDEPENDENCE AND MORAL AMBIGUITY

Selina Kyle, better known as Catwoman (originally introduced as "The Cat" in *Batman* #1, April 1940), is one of comic books' most morally ambiguous characters. She has been portrayed as an antagonist in issues such as *Detective Comics* #203, "The Crimes of Catwoman" (1953), and #570, "The Last Laugh" (1987), as well as in screen adaptations like *Batman* (1966) and *Batman Returns* (1992). However, she has also been depicted as a heroine in *JLA* #16–17 (1997),

JLA Volume 3 (2013), and on-screen in *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) and *Batman:Hush* (2019). Due to her anti-heroic nature, audiences are often skeptical whenever Catwoman appears to “pick a side.”

Catwoman’s moral ambiguity also shapes her complex relationship with Batman. Rather than conforming to the traditional “damsel in distress” trope, she is better understood as a “damsel of distress,” shaped by personal struggles but never passive or dependent. Throughout various storylines, she often allies with Batman when their objectives temporarily align. However, these alliances are rarely rooted in loyalty to him and are instead driven by her own ulterior motives. A clear example of this dynamic appears in the *Batman:Hush* comic anthology (as well as the film of the same name), where Catwoman takes on the role of a secondary protagonist to Batman. At one point, she tells Batman, “You saved my life. Through the years you’ve done that more than once. I don’t think I’ve ever properly thanked you.” While this quote reveals her affection for him, it also emphasizes that her actions are not motivated by a desire to gain his approval; it reflects a deeper theme of autonomy and mutual respect.

Catwoman’s criminal identity as a thief is not simply an act of rebellion—it is an assertion of economic autonomy in a world that often denies women power and control. Unlike many of her male counterparts who inherit wealth (like Bruce Wayne) or accumulate it through corporate or scientific means, Selina Kyle earns hers through cunning, agility, and risk. Her decision to steal is not portrayed as mindless villainy but rather as a conscious choice to take back control over her life and circumstances. In *Catwoman* (2011) by Judd Winick, Selina chooses a life of theft not just for survival but as a way to carve out independence. Her wealth is self-made, and her actions often reveal a code of ethics, especially when she targets the corrupt or powerful. In this light, Catwoman’s thefts

become a symbol of female economic empowerment, a reclaiming of value and freedom in a system that historically favors men.

Catwoman’s use of femininity as both disguise and power further reinforces her autonomy. She often navigates male-dominated environments using seduction, charm, and wit in order to not to be controlled, but to control the situation herself. Her sexuality is never portrayed as something passive or for the benefit of the male gaze; instead, it is a deliberate and empowered part of her identity. This is especially evident in *Batman: Hush*, where her interactions with Batman are laced with mutual desire and tension, yet clearly driven by her own terms. She is self-possessed and confident, using her appearance and allure as strategic tools rather than vulnerabilities. In doing so, Catwoman challenges the traditional portrayal of women in comics, asserting that femininity and power are not mutually exclusive. Her sexual agency is part of what makes her dangerous—and deeply feminist.

#### **POISON IVY: ECOFEMINISM AND FEMALE SOLIDARITY**

Poison Ivy’s deep connection to nature serves as more than a character trait; it reflects the idea that political activism is a feminist trait. Her origin story as Dr. Pamela Isley, a gifted botanist manipulated and poisoned by Dr. Jason Woodrue, shows how women’s expertise is often dismissed or even exploited in the male-dominated workplace (*Secret Origins* #36). Following her transformation into Poison Ivy, she becomes a fierce advocate for the Earth, defending plant life with the same intensity many feminist figures reserve for human rights. Her vendetta against corporations and governments that exploit natural resources parallels feminist critiques of industrial capitalism, which often places profit above people and (more importantly for her) the planet. This perspective aligns

closely with “ecofeminism,” a theory that links the exploitation of the environment to the oppression of women (Gaard 118). Ivy sees environmental destruction as inseparable from patriarchal violence, and her actions, though often framed as villainous, can be read as a form of radical justice. In doing so, she represents a unique branch of feminist resistance: one that centers the Earth as a living entity deserving of care and protection, much like the women so often harmed by systemic misogyny.

Poison Ivy’s transformation from a victimized scientist to a self-empowered meta-human reflects a core feminist theme: reclaiming autonomy in the face of misogyny. Initially manipulated and nearly killed by Dr. Jason Woodrue, her rebirth as Poison Ivy marks a clear rejection of the systems that once silenced and endangered her (*Batman: Poison Ivy #1*). Unlike traditional narratives that focus on female redemption through alignment with male heroes, Ivy’s arc is defined by her independence. Her distrust of men in power stems from repeated experiences of betrayal and control. However, this skepticism is not rooted in bitterness; it evolves into a protective instinct towards other women. Ivy frequently uses her powers to defend marginalized communities and vulnerable women, showing solidarity rather than isolation (Scott 52). Her resistance is much more political than it is personal. Through her actions, she refuses to conform to societal norms, instead carving out a space where she defines her identity, her morality, and her purpose.

Poison Ivy also challenges the traditional idea of associating femininity with weakness by turning care into a source of power. As an esteemed botanist, she begins with a nurturing relationship to plant life, and even after gaining supernatural abilities, she retains this role as, albeit self-declared, physical manifestation of Mother Nature. However, Ivy’s compassion is never naive; it is calculated

and often defensive, especially in a world that undervalues both emotional intelligence and ecological balance. A perfect example can be found in her relationship with Harley Quinn. While Ivy is capable of great destruction, her moments of true strength often come from emotional support and empathy, traits rarely highlighted in portrayals of comic book villains. Ivy provides Harley with a safe space, both emotionally and physically, especially as Harley attempts to break free from the toxic influence of the Joker (*Harley Quinn #25*). In this way, Ivy redefines what power is through connection, care, and mutual respect. Her use of traditionally “feminine” qualities becomes a radical act of resistance, offering a counter-narrative to the masculine ideals of control and conquest (Robbins 134).

#### **HARLEY QUINN: RECLAIMING IDENTITY AND ESCAPING ABUSE**

Harley Quinn’s character arc represents one of the most significant transformations in comic book history: from victim to survivor. Originally introduced in *Batman: The Animated Series* as the Joker’s loyal sidekick, Harley was initially portrayed as nothing more than comic relief. However, as her story developed, she evolved into a symbol of resilience in the face of both physical and psychological abuse. Her origin story in *Batman: Mad Love (#1, 1994)* reveals how Dr. Harleen Quinzel, once a respected psychiatrist, is manipulated and emotionally broken by the Joker. Their relationship, once glamorized, is now understood as an abusive dynamic involving control, gaslighting, and emotional dependency. In *Mad Love*, Harley admits, “Never again. No more obsession, no more craziness, no more Joker!” (Timm), underscoring her victimization. Later writers gave her space to confront this trauma and reclaim her identity. This shift reflects broader cultural awareness of domestic abuse and mental health, positioning Harley as a feminist character who chooses to rewrite her story rather than be defined by her abuser (Keller 87).

Harley's break from the Joker is an act of self-liberation that defies traditional expectations of redemption. In the *Harley Quinn* solo series (2013–2016), she frequently asserts her autonomy and independence, refusing to conform to anyone else's rules. Rather than striving to become a traditional hero, Harley embraces chaos as a form of resistance. This defiance is particularly powerful for readers, as it challenges the narrow definitions of emotional intelligence and femininity often imposed on women. Through humor, violence, and a rebellious spirit, Harley reclaims power by redefining what it means to be sane in this already insane world we live in. Harley Quinn resists being sorted into boxes and challenges conventional feminist ideals by being flawed, funny, and fierce. Her contradictions enhance, rather than diminish, her feminist appeal. In *Harley Quinn: Breaking Glass* (2020), Harley says, "I'm not a hero, but I'm not a villain either. I'm me" (McGregor 45), capturing her refusal to fit traditional molds. Importantly, Harley's bisexuality and romantic relationship with Poison Ivy provide significant queer representation in mainstream comics. Their relationship, portrayed as mutually supportive and respectful, contrasts sharply with her abusive history with the Joker. Throughout the *Gotham City Sirens* series, Ivy and Harley's partnership exemplifies female solidarity and mutual empowerment, emphasizing themes of queer identity and survival. By embracing her queerness and supporting marginalized identities, Harley emerges as a feminist symbol of survival, joy, rebellion, and reinvention.

### **THE SIRENS: DEFINING SISTERHOOD AND DEFYING THE PATRIARCHY**

The Gotham City Sirens stand out not only as powerful individuals but as a tightly knit team whose bond exemplifies sisterhood and collective resistance. Unlike many female groups in comics that fall prey to love triangle conflicts or competitive rivalries, the Sirens prioritize loyalty and mutual

respect. Their relationship transcends romantic entanglements, focusing instead on supporting one another through shared struggles and goals. This solidarity is a radical act in a genre often defined by isolation or male competition. By centering female friendship and cooperation, the Sirens challenge conventional narratives about women in comics and present a vision of empowerment grounded in community rather than conflict.

The Sirens claim their roles as protagonists in their own right, rather than mere foils or side characters in Batman's world. Their stories shift the focus away from Gotham's male hero and toward the complexities of female agency, morality, and identity. This reframing challenges the traditionally Batman-centric worldview and invites readers to consider the city (and its problems) through the eyes of women who live, fight, and survive outside of the Bat's shadow. By doing so, the Sirens offer an ingenious feminist perspective that expands the possibilities for female characters in superhero comics and media.

Despite their empowering portrayals, the Gotham City Sirens are not without criticisms, particularly regarding the male gaze and sexualization. Some comic runs and adaptations have been criticized for emphasizing the characters' sexuality in ways that blur the line between empowerment and objectification. While the Sirens often use their sexuality as a tool of agency, certain depictions risk reducing them to mere eye candy, undermining their deeper feminist potential. This tension reflects a broader challenge in feminist media: distinguishing genuine empowerment from portrayals crafted to appeal to predominantly male audiences.

Moreover, questions arise about whether the Sirens' feminist portrayals are authentic or primarily driven by commercial interests.

In an industry increasingly aware of market trends, there is a risk that feminist themes may be used superficially to attract readers without committing to meaningful representation or critique. While the Sirens embody important feminist ideals, their stories sometimes reflect the compromises of commercial feminism—where empowerment becomes a selling point rather than a radical stance. Recognizing these limitations is crucial to appreciating the Sirens’ impact while remaining critical of how feminism is packaged within mainstream comic culture.

Through their themes of independence, resistance to patriarchal norms, and unwavering solidarity, the Gotham City Sirens redefine what female power looks like in the comic book world. Catwoman, Poison Ivy, and Harley Quinn each embody complex forms of agency that challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Together, their stories illuminate a path beyond the typical hero-villain binaries, emphasizing community, autonomy, and nuanced identity. In doing so, the Sirens not only reshape their own narratives but also expand the possibilities for feminist representation within superhero fiction.

While their portrayals are not without flaws or contradictions, the Gotham City Sirens demonstrate that feminism in fiction does not have to be perfect in order to be powerful. Their bold, loud, and unapologetic presence reminds readers that embracing complexity and imperfection can be a form of resistance itself. The Sirens’ stories encourage ongoing conversations about gender, power, and identity—showing that feminist storytelling thrives when it is real and unafraid to challenge the status quo.

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# ‘Iolani Palace: Keli‘iponi Hale

JENOA BASQUES

ENGLISH 100

‘Iolani Palace, a place of immense cultural and historical significance on O‘ahu, is a treasure of the Hawaiian people’s history and cherished memories. “The building persists as a key symbol of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi history and culture—the center of sovereignty movements and commemorations of Hawaiian royalty” (Kamehiro). Alongside this iconic structure is Keli‘iponi Hale, the Coronation Pavilion, which holds special significance for not only the Hula Halau but also for other important individuals and occasions. This gorgeous pavilion serves as a vital connection to Hawai‘i’s strong culture and deep traditions. It embodies the mana of the Hawaiian people. “[On the Pavilion’s interior] each of the eight sides bore the name of one of the respective Kings of Hawai‘i, from Kamehameha I to Kalākaua, painted in gold letters” (Young). When Kumu Lehua announced our class’s first performance of Moanalua and Lili‘u E at Keli‘iponi Hale, I felt both fear and honor. This was the one opportunity that marked a pivotal moment in my journey as a performer.

My heart thundered in my chest—so loud, I wondered if anyone else could hear it. Sweat kept trickling into my eyes, and I wiped it away, pretending to look out the window. The bus was a wild mess: laughter, teasing, Kumu’s scolding, and paper balls flying through the air. In the middle of the chaos, I sat quietly, trying to steady my nerves. This wasn’t just any field trip—it was my first hula performance, and my first solo. I’d practiced every day, pouring my hopes into every step, but I never imagined I’d actually perform in front of a crowd. When the announcement came, a flood of excitement and dread washed over me. I

was overwhelmed by a longing I couldn’t quite name—a yearning to connect with something deeper, to honor the culture I was about to represent. The weight of it pressed against my chest, almost suffocating me.

Just as I was about to drift off, the bus jolted to a stop, snapping me awake. I wiped my eyes and tried to listen as Kumu gave instructions, her words fading behind the thrum of my nerves. Out the window, ‘Iolani Palace came into view—majestic and graceful, echoing the royalty who once called it home. That old yearning returned, heavier than ever, as if the palace itself was calling me closer. I snapped back to reality, realizing I was the last one on the bus. Gathering my things, I stepped outside, and instantly, the noise and chaos melted away, replaced by a serene stillness. The palace grounds radiated awe, sadness, and deep respect—reminding everyone of Hawai‘i’s proud kingdom and the pain of its overthrow.

“E ku ma ka laina!”—“Get in line!” Kumu’s voice rang out, and everyone scrambled into place, buzzing with excitement. I, on the other hand, was fighting the wave of nerves that bothered me the entire bus ride. We marched together toward a white canopy draped with ti leaves, the sweet scent of tuberose hitting me the instant I passed underneath—intoxicating me with its lovely aroma. “Haumāna,” Kumu called us to attention, reminding us about respect, punctuality, and, most importantly, to unleash our mana. “Be confident. Have fun!” she finished, and the class erupted in cheers before rushing to the dressing rooms. I watched my friends laugh and joke, wondering

if I was the only one who felt sick with nerves. I quickly changed into our first outfit and caught my reflection in a wobbly mirror—a long, ruffled mu‘umu‘u patterned in blue and white, topped with a plumeria hair clip and green leaves. It sat so beautifully in my long, brown hair. As the moment approached, I knew I couldn’t go on feeling so anxious, so I closed my eyes and breathed deep, steadying myself.

As is tradition, we began with the Oli kāhea—a chant requesting permission to perform—answered by Kumu’s resonant reply, her voice carried clearly across the crowd, and her salt-and-pepper hair flowed gracefully in the wind. When Kumu Lehua finished, we stepped onto the outdoor stage. Half the class faced the crowd, the other half toward Keli‘iponi Hale. Before us was a sea of faces—family, friends, and some very important guests, poised and dressed far more formally than the rest. They carried themselves with such dignity, I might have thought they actually lived in the palace! There was something about their presence that somehow enhanced our performance. Perhaps it was fear of disappointing these remarkable people, or maybe it was something deeper, but I have never seen my hālau dance with such synchronicity and grace. When our performance, Moanalua, came to an end, the crowd roared with cheers and applause, and we exited the stage, hands on our hips and smiles on all of our faces. The heaviness I once felt had lifted, and I finally felt confident.

Back under the canopy, my classmates and I exchanged hugs and high-fives, celebrating our success. The moment felt joyful until I overheard the host announce my upcoming solo. Suddenly, all the support and encouragement from my classmates faded into the background. The world seemed to spin, and I forced a smile as I headed for the dressing rooms, my hands turning clammy and sweat prickling on my forehead once again. Each time I glanced over to the Keli‘iponi Hale and the crowd that surrounded it, panic

rushed through me and my legs trembled as if they were made of jelly. I was so filled with fear that I had not noticed that I was halfway through getting into my second outfit. Feeling the fabric, or tapa, of the pa‘u top and skirt made me feel a little better, but my hands came to a stop right at my temples. I frantically searched in the dressing rooms and in my bag. My lei po‘o was gone— one of the most important pieces to my costume! I was so caught up in my own head that I had lost track of my belongings. All I could do was sink down onto the dewy grass fighting back tears. A heavy ache pressed into my chest. I felt completely defeated.

The same question replayed in my mind: How could this happen? Everything was going so well! I finally felt confident for a split second, and now I was being punished for falsely believing I could succeed, as if my mind was nudging me to remember every past challenge. I grabbed a handful of grass and clenched while hot tears rolled down my cheeks. I could hear my own breathing—fast and uneven, almost wheezing in my ears. Just as I was about to scream in frustration, I caught sight of my Kumu approaching from the corner of my eye. I quickly wiped at my face, trying to hide my pain, and dusted my pa‘u as I stood up. Turning to face her, I mentally rehearsed how I would explain what happened. But before I could find the courage to speak, she held out her hands and cradled in them was my beautiful lei po‘o! She smiled gently, and placed the lei po‘o on my head. Even as gratitude flooded through me, I braced myself for a scolding. Instead, she explained that the bus driver had found it under one of the seats. I then realized it must have fallen when I rushed off the bus, and a flush of embarrassment crept over me.

I thanked my Kumu and she spoke words I will never forget: “Your ancestors blessed you with a beautiful talent, not a piece of clothing.” She met my eyes and offered a warm, steady

nod. In that moment, I felt a quiet strength settle in me, one that I would carry with me all the way to my solo.

Everything seemed to happen in slow motion, my breathing as steady as ever, and the crowd fell silent. I walked onto the stage tall and proud, feeling my energy drawn toward the palace's pull— the force I had felt since I arrived. Briefly making eye contact with Kumu Lehua, I turned to face the crowd and chanted "E Ho Mai," loud and proud. My voice rang out strong, carried on the wind and I felt the power in every syllable. Then came the pounding of the ipu heke and the call, "Lili'u e noho nani mai!" With one step forward, I crossed the border between fear and pride, ready to honor my kūpuna and bring my own mana to the palace grounds. With every movement, I could feel the thundering of my heartbeat and the spirit of centuries of tradition flowing along with me. Throughout the performance, I finally felt a genuine connection to my Hawaiian culture.

As the last verse came to an end, the crowd stood and applauded. "Hana hou!" echoed from the crowd as the rest of my class joined me on the stage. My Kumu instructed me to stand front and center whilst the rest of the class stood behind me. We did not bow; we stood tall and elegant, allowing the crowd to absorb the magnificence of hula and the presence of the palace. I had stepped into a new sense of self; what began as fear and uncertainty became pride and connection, not just to my performance, but to my ancestors and their enduring spirits.

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# Your First Game Development Guide

JIACONG CHEN

ESL 100

Before I understood coding or game design, I understood obsession, which made me sneak my uncle's phone under my blanket to play games past midnight. With no smartphone or gaming device at six years old, I couldn't resist the pull of a game based on a traditional Chinese cartoon called *Bonnie Bears*. The screen lit up with color, movement, and engaging sound, creating a new universe that felt more alive than anything I had ever experienced. The game became more than just entertainment while I was in China and my parents were in Hawaii. Playing video games was an escape that comforted and excited me during my lonely childhood.

As I grew older, I continued to play and experiment with games. The immersive worlds, engaging words, and well-developed mechanics piqued my curiosity: How do developers turn an idea into a fully functional game that appeals to players? How does a game go from an idea to something that people all over the world enjoy? As a senior journalist at *BBC News*, Galvin Better, states, "High-end graphics, sophisticated game design and hot-blooded hype have all contributed to [a game's] success." Creating a successful video game was the result of a combination of factors—thoughtful ideas, well-designed mechanics, and a meticulous development process—factors that, when followed well, can elevate and take a game to the next level.

Everything starts with an idea. Thinking about an idea is like climbing a steep mountain, which is hard, but once you reach the top,

the view is worth it. Don't think you can have a good idea without spending time on it. Usually, a good game comes from good ideas. I spent a month perfecting my game project idea in my ninth-grade computer science class at Roosevelt High School. Ideas take time and effort to make a game stand out.

Ideas can come to your mind instantly sometimes. Newton, for example, supposedly was hit on the head by a falling apple from a tree, which led him to propose the law of universal gravitation, a theory that revolutionized the views of physics. I had been struggling with the game's idea for my computer science project until I witnessed my parents' repeated arguments. As I walked outside to rest my mind, I began reflecting on relationships: how choices affect each other. The reflection and complexity of relationships guided my idea, and from that moment on, the core of my game, *MelodicFate*, began to form.

The idea appears when you least expect it, but what matters is discovering it and turning it into something to appeal to players. This process might take longer than you think; don't let anxiety take control of your brain. According to research conducted by psychology experts, Eysenck et al., "high-anxious individuals typically engage in more task-irrelevant processing than low-anxious ones due to impaired attentional control." In other words, anxiety can decrease your ability to focus on your task and build creative thoughts. Instead of letting anxiety control you, try to stay open to yourself. A short, simple break or walk in your neighborhood

can clear your mind and restore your focus. To escape the ongoing arguments at my home, I walk the neighborhood to clear my mind and let my ideas take root.

Once you have a clear idea, you can choose the programming language and workspace you prefer to work on, comparable to how filmmakers choose specific tools to present their ideas. For example, a director picks a camera, actresses, and editing software based on the film's needs and styles, game developers opt for the tools suited to their game. There are various programming languages and workspaces in the modern century; each is designed for different purposes and skill levels. For instance, you can create a simple text-based game such as *Rock Paper Scissors* using Visual Studio Code with Python. You might even create a complex game such as *Grand Theft Auto V*, using powerful tools like Visual Studio and languages such as C++ and C# to build phenomenal worlds that can turn your passion into a billion-dollar success, which doesn't come instantly. Even Albert Einstein did not succeed in a night. His theories were once tiny ideas in his a long time ago and grew into a famous science theory. Start with beginner-friendly tools first, and build your experience and idea piece by piece.

With the right tool in your hand, the next step is to outline your game. A flowchart can help you with the game's mechanics and structures, ensuring that each step of your game is logical and coherent. As game developers Kramarzewski and De Nucci write in their book *Practical Game Design*, "A game designer working on establishing the initial scope, it's [developer's] responsibility to list all of the game's features, functionalities, and systems" (45). Before you lose yourself in development, a game designer must carefully consider the elements and how they flow to give players unforgettable experiences that they will remember long after they put the

game down. Just as a film starts with a script that lays out the stories, scenes, and actions, a game begins with a "script." You can begin by sketching out your flowchart with simple pen and paper; I prefer to draw a tree with roots (ideas) and expand the root (creative thoughts) through the branches.

Once you have a completed tree with your ideas expanded, from the tiny seed of an idea to a tree with a structured flow of mechanics, it's time to bring your game alive. You are creating enchanting storylines that leave a lasting impact on others' lives and designing visual graphics that pull players' minds into your world. A compelling storyline is what makes your game stand out; as a university lecturer in creative industries, Jacqueline Burgess, says, "[It's] hard for games like Candy Crush – which lack deep stories and characters – to really leave a mark on players." ("Chinese Game Black Myth: Wukong"). To put it another way, compelling storylines can elevate your game beyond just gameplay mechanics. Like a mediocre movie struggling to keep audiences seated, an ordinary quality game may fail to hook players.

Once all the foundations of your game are set, the next step is to start coding the game. It's like a filmmaking process—just as in filmmaking, directors use all their tools to create the film, game developers begin with writing the core mechanics, such as player movements, interactions, and game rules, ensuring everything functions properly. Consider kindergarteners learning how to walk and read letters before moving to more complex life skills. Designers start with the fundamental mechanics of the game before implementing more features. At this stage, the goal is to create a playable game with simple mechanics. You must ensure that the basic structure is solid without error before expanding into more advanced features. During this phase, you may face challenges—such as errors and frustration. You must remain patient and persistent.

At this stage, you can stick your neck out and take risks by trying to add features you've never attempted before. Challenge yourself to innovate, whether it is by introducing new mechanics or experimenting with unique designs. This is the significant production phase, where you have the opportunity to burnish your ideas and make your game stand out. Consider launching a beta test or a small-scale play test with friends, family, or even a broader audience to obtain feedback. This feedback will provide you with valuable suggestions and advance your game to the next level.

When I first launched a test phase for my game and watched friends and family play, the excitement was staggering, but it was the feedback that gave me a surprise. Some suggestions, like a minor mistake that caused a game to break, were unexpected. Each piece of feedback made me realize how much more there was to improve. The experience made me notice that a game doesn't come to life until it is shared and shaped by others.

For me, making games initially starts as an escape from loneliness but has transformed into a meaningful entertainment that creates moments that players will remember long after the screen goes dark. Like filmmaking, game development doesn't end with the initial release; it advances with time, technology, and feedback. Ultimately, a well-developed game has the potential to offer not only entertainment but also a significant emotional experience.

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In this news article, the senior journalist Gavin Butler reports the release and effects of *Black Myth: Wukong*, a Chinese developed triple A rated game based on the classic Journey to the West mythology. It mentions how the game serves as a cultural export. There is controversy when the game is released, but it doesn't affect the game's success due to high quality development. The article also discusses how international players were drawn to the game's unique setting that offers a fresh experience compared to Japanese animations. It also discusses that integrating culture can attract worldwide audiences, which could be incorporated into the game's storytelling. As a senior journalist at BBC News, Galvin Better states "High-end graphics, sophisticated game [design, and hot-blooded] hype have all contributed to [the game's success]." This quotation tells how important it is to have thoughtful ideas, well-designed mechanics, and a meticulous development process in game development. This article can contribute to my essay by sharing its experience and importance of high production quality in game design. However, the author relies heavily on the industry data and market instead of incorporating firsthand perspectives from players.

Burgess, Jacqueline. "Chinese Game Black Myth: Wukong Tops Steam Charts. What Does It Signify for the Rest of the Gaming World?" *UniSC News*, University of Sunshine Coast, 23 Aug 2024. <https://www.usc.edu.au/about/unisc-news/news-archive/2024/august/chinese-game-black-myth-wukong-tops-steam-charts-what-does-it-signify-for-the-rest-of-the-gaming-world>. Accessed 21 May 2025. In this news article, a lecturer in creative industries at the University of Sunshine Coast, Jacqueline Burgess, discusses

how *Black Myth: Wukong*—a game based on the traditional famous novel from China by Wu Cheng'en, *Journey to the West*—is created by a small game development company, Game Science, and how it take a risk in developing the first Chinese AAA-rated game. She also talks about how the story influences the game's future trends. Burgess states that “[It's] hard for games like Candy Crush – which lack deep stories and characters – to really leave a mark on players.” This quotation suggests that the success of a game is not just determined by its mechanics, but also how interesting its story is and how deep its character development goes. This source can benefit my essay by providing the importance of storytelling in game design. The idea is taking risks in game development like Game Science did can lead to greater success. Although this source is strong, it does not provide information on how Game Science overcomes the obstacles.

Eysenck, Michael W., et al. “A Neurocognitive Account of Attentional Control Theory: How Does Trait Anxiety Affect the Brain's Attentional Networks?” *Cognition & Emotion*, vol. 37, no. 2, Mar. 2023, pp. 220–37. EBSCOhost, <https://doi-org.kappproxy.lib.hawaii.edu/10.1080/02699931.2022.2159936>.

Kramarzewski, Adam, and Ennio De Nucci. *Practical Game Design : Learn the Art of Game Design Through Applicable Skills and Cutting-Edge Insights*. Packt Publishing, 2018. EBSCOhost.

In this eBook, two game developers Kramarzewski and De Nucci provide a comprehensive overview of the game design. They analyze the importance of careful planning at game design in Chapter 3: Scoping a Game Project, which they discuss about the game's

balance, randomization, and decision-making. This means that if an outcome is based on luck rather than skill, players may feel that their efforts don't directly influence success or failure. They also discuss the importance of organization in game development. Kramarzewski and De Nucci say that in their book *Practical Game Design*, “As a game designer working on establishing the initial scope, it's [developer's] responsibility to list all of the game's features, functionalities, and systems” (45). This quotation means that a game designer must carefully plan the flow of their game. The authors are all experienced game developers who offer industry-proven perspectives. The author's clear explanations and real-world game examples make it a valuable source for professional designers. This book helps the people who are looking for strategies to build a game by providing logical guidance.

# Why There Will Never Be Another *Cabaret* 1993

FELICIA LOWERY

*Cabaret* is a long-standing musical, having been made almost 60 years ago in 1966, based on the 1939 novel *Goodbye to Berlin* by Christopher Isherwood, which is a novel based on Isherwood's experiences in 1929 and the rising Nazism in Berlin. *Cabaret* is a musical set in the Weimar Republic-Berlin, four years before the rise of Hitler's Regime. The musical as a whole touches upon many heavy subjects such as Nazism, Fascism, Antisemitism, abortion, and mental illness, but the overarching message of the entire musical is to pull the wool over the viewer's eyes while also acknowledging the result of only being observers in such major world events, such as the rise of Fascism in Berlin within only two years. The Interpretation of this *Cabaret* comes from many, the most well-known yet disingenuous way of telling the story of *Cabaret* is the movie from 1972. Though other variations of the story exist, the best is from the 1993 version, a video/live audience media that took place in London's west end in the Donmar Warehouse. The director Sam Mendes, with his interpreted story writing of the musical, alternated different parts comparatively to other versions of the musical, especially within remarks of the ending, to equally show how each actor interperated their own character in fantastic ways, leaving a permanency in how that character should be played.

The 1993 version of *Cabaret* is the standout version of all revivals and interpretations, featuring actors with amazing range like Alan Cumming, Jane Horrocks, Sara Kestelman, and Adam Godly. Not only were they the

first actors to be in the 90's revival, but they did an outstanding job at characterization, especially with characters like Sally Bowles (played by Jane Horrocks), and The Emcee (played by Alan Cumming). In film media, *Cabaret* had starred even more well-known actors, from 1972's *Cabaret* movie with Liza Minnelli as Sally Bowles and Joel Gray (both Emcees in the movie adaptation and the original 1966 production.). Then a rather small revival in 1987 featured Joel Gray as The Emcee once more. After six years, *Cabaret* returned with an amazingly creative director, Sam Mendes, reviving *Cabaret* two times both in 1993-1998 and into 2014 with Alan Cumming being the consistent actor to play the Emcee, much like Joel Gray. After the 2014 Revival *Cabaret* wouldn't return until December of 2021 in West End London, before moving to Broadway in 2024, featuring big actors such as Adam Lambert, and Eddie Redmayne, as Emcees in separate shows throughout the production that year. It is not only the actors that bring out this outstanding revival, but it's the different ways the actors portray the characters that totally change some points and direction into how different scenarios in the revival should go, such as enhancing the original 1966 story completely. An example of this is showing more of a downward mental spiral to the Sally Bowles character as a whole, an extremely complex character than can only be shown this complexity though how the actor chooses to act. Jane Horrocks in the 1993 version, completely perfected Sally Bowles as a character by depicting the way Sally has internal conflicts involving how she should act politically and how she should

act as a mentally unwell woman in the 1930's.

The story of *Cabaret* follows an “upcoming” novel writer named Cliff Bradshaw, visiting Berlin as a source of inspiration to write his book, though soon after moving into a boarding house, owned by a German proprietress named Fräulein Schneider, Cliff succumbs to the nightlife Cabarets, eventually meeting Sally Bowles at the infamous Kit Kat Klub. Throughout the Musical there is one consistent character, always on screen, and that is the Emcee. They catalyze the story, to tempt the viewer with scandalous acts/songs, before whiplashing the viewer into realizing what reality is going on, even in the story of the Musical itself. Sam Mendes created big changes to the Musical as a whole by stripping down to the bare material. He had, in the first place, something that was both exciting for the audience and actors, including a unique set: “One of the most notable changes that Mendes’ vision brought to *Cabaret* was the set. Rather than be seated at a theater, Mendes reconfigured the environment to model a club” (Gut Instinct). The audience would be almost a part of the act, with Gut Instinct stating, “Additionally, the waitstaff were garish, bruised, and tattooed. They doubled as dancers and members of the orchestra, stretching on stage and interacting with the audience. At the Kit Kat Klub audiences weren’t watching the show, they were part of it.” This although could not be fully seen in the video release of the 1993 West End London version of the musical, can be visually implied by how immersive the audience and actors convene together. There’s almost something surreal in watching the 1993 video version. It is one of the first shows of the musical Sam Mendes directed, and due to the way he coordinated the story with the audience, by the end it almost gives the viewer a sense of dread, that even in a story such as *Cabaret*, it is a chilling reality that such events could happen again.

Though there are differences in how the actors

portray every one of the characters featured in the musical, Sam Mendes’s rewriting of the characters and the outstanding performances from the original actors in the 1993 West End London cast overshadow even the revivals after the 90’s. As mentioned in the article, “Tomorrow Belongs to Me” by Youffrait, Sally Bowles as a character is supposed to be a mediocre singer, though from both the movie and previous revival before the 90’s, Sally was always played by an incredibly capably talented singer, such as Liza Minnelli in the movie, portraying her as an almost soulful, carefree, character. The 90’s versions of Sally Bowles featured actors such as Jane Horrocks and Natalie Richardson, bringing a fresher idea to the character, showing the feminine mental spiral Sally goes through, from both the beginning of the show until the end. The title number in both the musical in 1993 and the movie in 1972 offer performances that are starkly different: Jane’s interpretation of the song is gut-wrenching and shows a clear mental breakdown of such a overall cheerful character, while Liza Minnelli’s performance depicts Sally as overly cheerful and an ‘amazing singer’. Jane Horrocks’ characterization of Sally would be far more pertinent to what the story of the Musical is trying to get across rather than Liza Minnelli’s Hollywood simplification of the character. Sam Mendes’s version of Sally Bowles openly gave the actors more free rein over how the character could act, rather than just going on with what is written in the script. In the title number “Cabaret,” Jane Horrocks delivers an emotional portrayal of a woman breaking down singing on stage. This was not because the script told her to, but because Jane chose to portray Sally in that way; that would equally change how Sally Bowles as a character would be portrayed for the rest of musical history.

Out of all revivals of the musical, one stands out incredibly, both musically and in storytelling. Though each of the revivals shares the same formula in both story and music, Sam Mendes takes his revivals in both

literal senses of bringing out the subjects of the story, in standout outrageous acts, or even lewd innuendos by the Emcee, and even changing the entire set of the musical itself, to imbue the audience a almost authentic experience into what it must have been like in those types of cabaret's in the 30's. In comparison to the endings of other productions, this ending in particular that Mendes kept up till his last directory of *Cabaret* in 2014, was a humongous change, showing that not only is the story about the rise of Nazism and fascist ideals and the result of standing by, but also emphasizing that *Cabaret* is also about the victims. Due to the nature of social media, this awareness of the general context of the musical is completely overlooked. Social media's recent fascination is with Alan Cumming, specifically in *Cabaret*, where he portrays an openly gay/flamboyant character. The point of the ending often gets overshadowed, but Mendes's version slams the viewer and audience with the realization of its gravity when "Cumming's Emcee removes his coat to reveal a concentration camp prisoner's uniform with a pink triangle, indicating a person imprisoned for their sexuality." (Douglas). This shows how despite *Cabaret's* flashy numbers and engaging story, there was still a sinister undercurrent of the rise of Nazism, culminating at the end with one of the main characters (The Emcee) ending up in a concentration camp, leading to his death. The Emcee is implied to be throwing himself towards an electric fence, as in the ending The Emcee throws his arms open followed by a flash of strobing lights. This ending from Sam Mendes differs from all the other productions. The renditions of the 1966 and 1988 versions of the show, all have a rather on-the-point ending showing a mirror to the audience to imply that people were too busy watching something like Fascism and Nazism happen than do something. The more recent renditions show the gradual progression of Fascism and Nazism into the cast, and by the end, almost all the characters turn into ideals of the Nazi elite with The

Emcee, being a conductor of sorts. The difference between the Sam Mendes ending from the others is the blatant vulnerability the ending shows, and the impact it has, showing that not only is the show about awareness of the rising oppression, but also the exact result of it through The Emcee.

The movie *Cabaret* stands out in a way that almost doesn't even follow the material, at all. The movie is what you'd expect a musical movie to be: rather lifeless, and full of Hollywood concepts. "The film cut out entire subplots from the stage show—Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz's doomed romance was replaced with a new (though no less tragic) love story between the much younger German Fritz Wendel and Jewish heiress Natalia Landauer. Plus, the character of Sally Bowles was changed from British to American (to suit leading lady Liza Minnelli), and the point-of-view character Clifford Bradshaw was renamed Brian Roberts" (Diep). This quote rather sums up why I would be rather opposed to watching the movie from watching the video release of Sam Mendes's revival of the musical. The movie gets rid of almost vitally important subplots of the original show. Even with the song (If You Could See Her), "The final lyric in "If You Could See Her" that's in the film ("She wouldn't look Jewish at all") is sung as "She isn't a meeskite at all" in the 1966 cast recording. That's because the "Jewish" line so angered live audiences during previews of the stage show that Ebb changed it to the apparently less offensive slur "meeskite" before reinstating the original lyric for the film" (Diep). This also just does not bring context to any of the songs themselves. The song (If You Could See Her) is supposed to depict a story of a couple and the backlash, oppression and retaliation the female in the relationship gets for being Jewish. This is a point showing the overarching oppression that is happening behind the show's facade, so the movie removing it somewhat undermines the meaning of the song as a whole. This is also

important, since one of the original subplots of the show involved Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz. There is a tragedy there of the two characters being so close, but inevitably ending, from the power the Nazi's had in funding Fraulin's boarding houses, and the risk the both of them would have if they were to ever get married. Replacing this storyline with a rather quick subplot of forbidden love (that gets forgotten almost entirely from the movie after the two are married) is rather insulting to the source material of the musical. Sam Mendes's version perfectly depicts the relationship between Fraulein Schnider and Herr Schultz with its comedy and its utter sadness with how the couple has to end things.

Overall, Sam Mendes's version of *Cabaret* is almost the pinnacle of perfection that this musical has to offer, with its raunchy acts on stage and the exuberant numbers sung. Sam Mendes's 1993 version of *Cabaret* was almost a "you'd have to be there" type of experience, and though there were other versions he had worked on such as the 1998, and 2014 revivals, almost nothing can compare to how the 1993 version got its message across to the viewer. There will never be another revival like the 1993 version from West End London.

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# Cultural Misconceptions: A Deeper Dive Into Hula and Lū'au Shows

CHARLI ROSE OMURA

ENGLISH 100

Living on O'ahu, I see how much of a tourist destination Hawai'i has become. Tourists travel from around the world, drawn by an image of the islands being paradise, but few take the time to learn about Hawai'i's true history and culture. As a Native Hawaiian, I share my heritage through hula, a form of art that carries deep cultural significance beyond the entertainment tourists experience. I have danced in hālau since the age of four and work with Hawai'i's largest entertainment company. While hula is a form of entertainment, it also deepens my connection to my culture, as it is a way for our people to share mo'olelo or stories. Sadly, tourists often come with stereotypes that trouble their understanding. However, if they seek our authentic shows and resources, tourists can gain a deeper appreciation for Hawai'i's culture and people. When visiting, respecting the land and its people by learning their history is important and as it applies to hula, part of that respect ought to extend out to our cultural arts.

The art of hula originated during ancient Hawai'i and has a deep cultural significance that has grown greatly, but is continued to be misrepresented in the tourist industry. According to an article written by the Ka'imi Na'auao O Hawai'i Nei Institute titled, "The History of Hula," various legends tell of the first hula deities, including Laka, Hopoe, Kapo'ulakina'u, and Keaomelemele, who are all tied to Hawaiian mythology. Over time, hula, along with the Hawaiian language 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, were banned. However, King

Kalakaua brought back hula during his reign, which is why he is called the Merrie Monarch; Kalakaua was central towards re-establishing and vivifying hula's role as a traditional art, way of life, and celebrated act of community and heritage. As tourism expanded in Hawai'i starting in the 1860s and growing in the 1950s, hula attracted visitors. Waikīkī became a popular place for shopping, hotels, and entertainment, where a new genre was created. Hapa-haole hula was created in the early twentieth century after Hollywood filmmakers adopted hula to their own fantasies, fantasies that often had a sexualized, Orientalist mindset and sensuality. These hapa-haole songs are based on Hawai'i and Hawaiian tunes, with foreign language (History). Today, hula is only seen as entertainment at tourists lū'aus, which are full of dance, music, and food, but the deeper meaning of these cultural dances is often missed. Although hula is an expression and a way to tell stories for us Native Hawaiians, many tourists still view it only as a show, and they often hold stereotypes, and few of those stereotypes are actually positive.

The commercialization of hula has not only spread around the world but has also reinforced harmful stereotypes that misrepresent Hawaiian culture. Adria Imada, in her article, "The Army Learns to Luau: Imperial Hospitality and Military," explains how U.S. college fraternities often host lū'au-themed parties, where participants wear fake grass skirts and leis, allowing them to

'play Hawaiian' without understanding the cultural significance. These stereotypical portrayals are carried on by decoration and costume stores like Party City, which sell items like plastic leis, coconut bras, and tan skirts. For instance, advertisements and internet templates, similar to Figure 1, feature pineapples, plumeria, tikis, and "hula girls," creating an image of Hawai'i based on outsider fantasies rather than the real, authentic Hawai'i. These stereotypes disrespect Hawaiian culture by ignoring its history and are offensive to us Hawaiians because they diminish our identity, making us feel less than who we truly are. Assumptions and stereotypes such as the figure below, can be the reason why tourists have misconceptions when they visit Hawai'i.

Figure 1:



Many tourists arrive in Hawai'i with many misconceptions and fantasies shaped by advertisements, media, and continuous stereotypes that all misrepresent Hawaiian

culture, but there are different ways to end these fantasies. For example, in the entertainment industry, hula has been portrayed with a sexualized manner, which has reinforced misunderstanding of its true purpose and significance. Misty Tufono, the Vice President of the company I work for, ensures that research is done on the places and songs represented in our dances. Additionally, she notes that tourists commonly mistake traditions of other Pacific island cultures, such as fire knife dancing from Samoa or Tahitan drumming, as Hawaiian, revealing how misconceptions appear from other personal assumptions and tourism marketing. In addition to hula being viewed sexually, visitors also tend to see Polynesian men as 'savages,' which can be a harmful image as it can impact the way tourists interact with locals through their misunderstanding of Hawaiians and Polynesians. Haunani Kay Trask, an important Native Hawaiian activist, has criticized capitalism as a force that causes the destruction of land and culture (Dolim 1). Before arriving in Hawai'i, tourists should make an effort to learn about its culture and history, especially if they wish to be respected by the local community. Rather than traveling to their "paradise," tourists should put in more effort to understand their destination, as this could build a better tourism that respects Hawaiian land, culture, traditions, and people.

The way lū'au companies choose to portray Hawaiian culture greatly impacts tourists' understanding of it. Misty Tufono, Vice President of the company I work for, shared in an interview that while some lū'au companies focus on profit, our company strives to "both entertain and enlighten visitors with integrity and aloha." As a dancer for this company, I've observed the prominence of cultural education firsthand. For instance, during our shows located at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, the emcee shares the history of both the hotel and Waikīkī, guiding the audience through key events in Hawaiian history— like

days where our kupuna made kapa, the time period of our royalty, interactions with the military, and dances shared by other Pacific Islander cultures. Through my time at this company, I've learned that Waikīkī is often commercialized and hated on by locals, but it holds much significance to our island and history and can still serve as a locus of learning and community. Providing this background can help tourists to look beyond surface-level entertainment, strengthening respect and a deeper connection for Hawaiian culture.

Educating visitors about Hawaiian culture through lū'au shows can create connections, especially through one-on-one interactions—a process I am continually learning. Tufono shared that these exchanges between performers and audience members allow for genuine relationships. One approach is for cast members to share their own knowledge of hula, arts, and culture with individuals from the audience. Tufono explains, “For instance, if a cast member is Samoan, he shares with the visitor his own cultural background and helps the visitor understand the distinction and the connection between the two cultures. But he does not try to pass himself off as Hawaiian.” This shows that despite our diverse backgrounds, we are one family who are united by a shared love and respect for Hawaiian culture. Although I have not yet experienced these interactions personally, working at this company has taught me that performing hula is both a privilege and responsibility. I've learned to balance my hālau hula, taught in a traditional setting, with my lua'au hula which is shared with visitors from around the world. Each style of hula has its own significance, and this company respects that by consulting with kupuna and kumu who are the keepers of our cultural dances and stories. This guidance from both hālau and lua'au reminds me of the importance of hula and pushes me to stay committed to sharing hula.

To solve the issue of stereotypes and misconceptions about Hawaiian culture, both lū'au companies and tourists must take action. One solution is for lū'au companies to take initiative in educating visitors by incorporating cultural history into their shows. For example, companies can focus on telling deeper stories behind the songs, places, or people they are showcasing. As Tufono emphasizes, lū'au shows should not be just about profit, but serve as a platform for cultural education. Furthermore, lū'au companies could work on their advertisements to ensure that they don't feed into the stereotypes, such as the “hula girl” image. Another way to engage tourists is during pre-arrival which could be achieved by using social media or even short educational videos shown during flights to Hawai'i. By prioritizing authenticity in both advertisement and performances, companies can create a more respectful and educational environment for visitors. Ultimately, I believe that with a commitment to a culturally accurate portrayal of hula and culture, lū'au companies will gain more credibility, knowing they are doing their part by helping visitors to receive knowledge of Hawai'i and a genuine appreciation of the culture.

In essence, the portrayal of hula and Hawaiian culture in lū'au shows is crucial, as these performances are some of the biggest tourist attractions in Hawai'i. By prioritizing cultural education, lū'au companies have the power to challenge the misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding hula. If both locals and tourists take responsibility for learning and respecting the culture, it can gain mutual respect and understanding. When performances focus on the authenticity of hula, tourists will not only be entertained but also gain appreciation and knowledge for the culture. Through education and cultural preservation, we can ensure that the beauty of hula is properly understood and shared, rather than reduced to a tourist attraction.

Ultimately, this approach will allow tourists to leave Hawai'i with a greater understanding of its history, traditions, and people.

### Annotated Bibliography

Dolim, Noah. "Misperceptions of the 'Hula Girl.'" *University of Hawai'i at Hilo*, <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/campuscenter/hohonu/volumes/documents/MisperceptionsoftheHulaGirlNoahDolim.pdf>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024

This personal essay focuses on the many stereotypes that are held over the "hula girl" image, and how it eventually spread throughout America. This article shares the history of hula from ancient times and talks about the tourist industry. Other misconceptions are shared in this essay as it covers when tourism first started and lū'au shows. There isn't much improvement needed as it covers important times of Hawai'i's history. This is a strong article because the author shares different stories or perspectives of Native Hawaiian teachers or activists. I know that this is a strong source because Dolim shared Haunani Kay Trask's view on cultural prostitution. Dolim also included many valuable resources, whether it was through people or articles.

Imada, Adria. "The Army Learns to Luau: Imperial Hospitality and Military Photography in Hawai'i." <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/5103337.pdf>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2024.

In this article, Imada focuses on Hawai'i when the army was already in Hawai'i and when tourism grew, especially through lū'au shows. In this

source, it is shared how the military was served or entertained by the lū'au casts, in addition to them learning hula. Overall, the source covers the history of lū'au shows and the military, with connections or interactions they may have had. I don't believe there needs to be much improvement in this source as it covers an important time of the history of tourism in Hawai'i, so the accuracy of the piece seems sound. This source goes into lots of detail about events experienced by the military and it also provides dates which is helpful on a logical path, and because of the inclusion of logos, I have no reason to believe that the accuracy of this piece is suspicious. In addition, this article mentions other cultures and places in the Pacific—which is good, as many cultures are now shown at lū'au shows. As a result, the inclusion of these other cultural nuances that have become now what we see at lū'au reveals a strong relevance for my own project. This source is useful because it was one of the only sources that really talk about the military and lū'au shows - which is a connection to one of my shows as we dance a hapa-haole song that is based during this time in Hawai'i. It is also useful because it shares the interactions the military and dancers had, as well as pictures.

"The History of Hula." Ka'imi Na'auao O Hawai'i Nei Institute, <https://kaimi.org/education/history-of-hula/>. Accessed 28 Oct. 2024.

This article focuses on the History of Hula from ancient times, early 20th century, and the present time. From talking about the different beliefs of hula gods to the Merrie Monarch, this source helps to capture the importance of hula and its role in Hawaiian culture.

In addition, this covers the different styles of hula that may be shown at lū'au shows, and why it is more than just a lū'au show to use Native Hawaiian performers. It covers logos and pathos because it shares facts and history, as well as a personal connection that hula shares with the Hawaiian people, therefore, there does seem to be qualities of accuracy and relevance in terms of bolstering my own thesis statement, per the rules found within the CRAAP test. Personally, I think it would have been good if the source was able to go more in depth about where hula stands now, and how it is shared, for example, through lū'au shows. In a way that it could be stronger, it could show more ethos, possibly by mentioning professional hula dances or kumu's. Therefore, the lack of specific authority figures within the realm of AUTHORITY in the CRAAP test would have made this article far more convincing. This is a useful article because it shares the history of hula which is good when talking about logos. It also covers some of the different hula styles: kahiko (ancient), 'auana (modern), and hapa haole, which are the hula I perform at my lū'au shows. At the end of the article, it shares why hula is important to Hawaiians and why we need to keep the connection strong, because it is more than just another dance style, it is who we are, and it is important for tourists to learn our history and traditions, especially if they want to spend their time visiting our home.

# Improving Sleep

NAOMI LOWE

ENGLISH 100

## ABSTRACT

For over one month, I participated in a self-experimentation journey to fix my horrible sleep schedule. I realized how my poor sleep habits impacted my mood and overall well-being. I tracked when I put my phone away, my sleep and wake times, and how I felt each day. I also read two University articles and one government article offering tips for improving sleep. The results suggest that gradually putting my phone away earlier helped me fall asleep faster, wake up more consistently, and feel more productive. Though not every day was perfect, small changes had a noticeable effect on my routine.

## INTRODUCTION

According to Dr. Taupōuri Tangarō (2020), the Ka'ao is our journey through academics and life, and it closely mirrors the research process. We begin with Hua, the egg or beginning. This is when we ask ourselves why we are here and what we want to know. In research, Hua represents the spark of curiosity and the initial step of choosing a topic or exploring ideas. Then comes Ha'alele, the departure from our comfort zone. This is when we dive deeper, leave behind easy answers, and challenge ourselves to look beyond surface-level sources, like Wikipedia, in search of credible, peer-reviewed information. The third node, Huaka'i, is the journey itself, where we synthesize sources, analyze what we have gathered, and begin to see our project take form. It is often a long and sometimes frustrating process, but one that leads to growth. Finally, we reach Ho'ina,

the return—our project is complete, and we come back with results and the wisdom gained from the process. In research, this is the satisfaction of submitting a well-done paper or presentation, feeling confident in our knowledge and proud of the effort it took to get there. The Ka'ao framework reminds us that research is not just academic but a transformative journey.

For this research project, we follow the four nodes of Ka'ao by figuring out which research topic we would like to do a self-experiment on or whichever topic we find the most interesting. Then, we will research different articles on that topic and plan out how to conduct our self-experiment. We plan out what tactics we will use to stay on track and how to track our progress or results. The next step would be to put it all together by writing every result daily, whether or not it is valuable to the project. Some days, there might not be any progress, but some days, there will be a ton of progress. The final part of the Ka'ao in our research project is when we present the results from our self-experiment. The hard work is over, and we can pat ourselves on the back for not giving up.

The research topic I chose was to improve my mental health. My research question is: How will I improve my sleeping habits between March 5 through April 5? Fixing one's sleep schedule is physical health maintenance, yet it strongly affects physical and mental health. Your entire system begins to deteriorate when you lack sufficient rest because your body feels drained, while your mind becomes

hazy with anxiety and lack of motivation. My mental health issues have persisted for a long period of time, and I previously believed that spending late nights on TikTok and Instagram helped me escape my racing thoughts. Reality proved that my late-night activities were causing all my problems to worsen. My daily pattern has become destructive—since I go to bed at 3 A.M., followed by school at 6 or 7 A.M., I spend the day feeling like a mindless robot. There were times when I stayed awake completely through the night while drinking caffeine and fidgeting with my hands before hoping no one would see me fall asleep in class. The absence of sleep worsened my anxiety while making it difficult to concentrate on anything and feel optimistic about my life. I understand that I need to make a change. I intend to end my screen time two hours prior to bedtime by either writing in my journal or listening to relaxing music. This experiment goes beyond scientific testing because I perform it to achieve mental serenity. I strongly desire to experience a morning that does not bring instant regret about the previous night.

### LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION

According to a sleep health guide from Cornell University, sleep is not just important but essential for both physical and emotional health. The guide explains that "sleep is a necessity, not a luxury. Your top performance (academic, athletic, etc.) – and your emotional health and well-being (self-esteem, confidence, and social relationships) – depend on adequate sleep" (Cornell Health, n.d.). That line sunk in for me. It made me realize that my lack of sleep was not just making me tired but also affecting my ability to focus, regulate my emotions, and feel confident throughout the day. I also learned that many college students, including myself, do not get the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep and are unknowingly sleep-deprived. Because of that, I decided to track

how long I was sleeping and how I felt the next day, physically, mentally, and emotionally. The Cornell University article also offered realistic tips for improving sleep hygiene, such as having a consistent bedtime, cutting screen time before bed, and avoiding caffeine late in the day. These ideas gave me a starting point for my self-experiment. I did not want to rush or go cold turkey and set myself up for failure, so I followed their advice about making small, manageable changes. I started by putting my phone away fifteen minutes earlier than usual and gradually worked up to a full hour.

According to the second source, an article from the National Institutes of Health titled "Good Sleep for Good Health," sleep plays a significant role in how the body heals itself. The article explains that "when we sleep, the brain totally changes function... It becomes almost like a kidney, removing waste from the system" (News in Health, 2021). That comparison helped me see sleep as something active and necessary for my brain to work correctly, not just a break. It was especially motivating because I had never thought about what my brain might be doing during sleep. I used to see sleep as time lost, but I now understand it as time gained for recovery and restoration.

Another thing I learned from the National Institutes of Health source was that sleeping in on the weekends does not make up for sleep loss during the week. The article said, "If you have a week's worth of getting too little sleep, the weekend is not sufficient for you to catch up. That is not a healthy behavior" (National Institutes of Health, 2021). That changed how I viewed my sleeping habits. I used to think my weekend sleep-ins were helping, but now I know they were not doing anything positive for me. Because of this, I committed to setting a consistent sleep and wake-up schedule, even on the weekends, and tracking how that impacted my energy and mood.

In the third source, “Sleeping Well in the Digital Age,” screen use can throw off your body's natural clock or circadian rhythm, especially at night. This was relatable because I often use my phone before bed. The article reported that "short-term use of screens before bed delays time it takes to fall asleep by an average of about 10 minutes...reduces REM sleep... and increases the amount of time – by hours – it takes to fully wake up" (University of Southern California, 2021). That convinced me that my nighttime screen use could be one of the main reasons I woke up tired, even after a whole night's sleep. The article also explained the science behind blue light and how it signals the brain to stay alert. Because of that, I set a clear boundary for myself: no screens at least one hour before bed. I used the Screen Time app to limit how long I could be on TikTok, Instagram, and Netflix in the evening. I also bought a phone lock box and started journaling and reading instead of scrolling before bed. These changes were complex at first, but they got easier over time, especially as I noticed improved mood, alertness, and productivity.

These three sources helped me understand how important sleep is and what small changes I could make to improve it. They showed me that sleep is not just a break from the day but a key part of staying healthy, balanced, and emotionally intense. Because I followed the research and stayed committed to this experiment for a month, I created better habits that I plan to continue.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

For my self-experimentation, I bought a phone lock box from Amazon and used the screentime app available on my phone. I set time limits on all social media apps, TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram. I also set time limits on Netflix, YouTube, Disney+, and every movie app I subscribed to. On a piece of paper in my notebook, I recorded the time I put my phone

away, the time I remember falling asleep, the time I woke up, the time I got out of bed, and my mood from the moment I woke up and throughout the day. I did not overthink the mood part; I just used whatever words felt real at the moment, like anxious, tired, happy, lazy, and/or productive. I went with this method because it was the easiest way to keep track of my data without using electronics. Writing it out by hand and finalizing it in a Google Doc made it feel more personal and helped me pay attention to how I felt. Here is what one entry looked like: 3/12 | 10:15 P.M. | 11:45 P.M. | 8:00 A.M. | 9:45 A.M. | Productive, Anxious, Lazy

It helped me spot patterns and notice if my habits were making a difference.

## **RESULTS**

I started with baby steps, and instead of going cold turkey and locking my phone away on the first night, I put my phone away earlier than normal but not at a shocking time so my mind and body could slowly adapt within ten to fifteen-minute increments. I turned off my lights and set my phone on my bedside table at 11:00 P.M.. I kept my digital alarm clock on my bedside table so I could still keep track of time. I tried to remember the time on the clock before I fell asleep. The first day, I woke up around 8:30 A.M. but did not leave my bed until around 10:15 A.M.. I wrote down my mood when I first woke up and my mood throughout the rest of the day. A visualization comparing my wake-up time to when I got out of bed shows an average gap of about 1 to 1.5 hours, which stayed relatively stable even as my phone usage habits changed. However, my wake-up time became earlier and more consistent, especially as my phone curfew moved from 10:45 P.M. to 9:45 P.M.. On March 12, I put my phone away at 10:15 pm and went to bed at 11:45 P.M.. The next morning, I woke up at 8:00 A.M. and was out of bed by 9:45 A.M.. My mood was surprisingly energetic, as I recorded feeling productive, anxious,

and lazy. While my anxiety was still present, I managed to accomplish my apartment chores and knock out some last-minute assignments that I had been procrastinating. Compared to earlier in the experiment, like on March 5, when I put my phone away at 11:00 pm and did not get out of bed until 10:15 A.M., I noticed a big difference in how productive I felt. Giving my brain more time to relax without my phone seemed to help boost my daily mood. On March 13, even though I had put my phone away by 10:00 P.M. and had woken up earlier than usual, I still felt anxious and moody that day. It was a good reminder that while getting better sleep helps, it does not magically fix everything. My emotions were still affected by everything else going on in my life. However, it did show me that solid sleep gives me a stronger foundation to handle my ups and downs.

By March 14, I had put my phone away at 10:00 P.M. and again, fell asleep around 11:45, and woke up at 8:00 am. My mood that day was a mix of feeling anxious, tired, and happy. While I was tired, I still had my class to attend. Usually, I skip my Friday class since I do not like the class, but a part of me felt like I should go. I walked to the bus stop and went to class. On the way home, I felt a sense of accomplishment, which is most likely where the happy feeling came from. I would not have had that kind of dopamine boost if I had stayed in bed until 11, as I did earlier in the experiment. In the earlier part of the experiment, from March 5 to 9, I usually put my phone away around 11:00 p.m. but did not fall asleep until past midnight. I would wake up late, and even then, I would stay in bed for another hour or two before getting up. My mood during those days was always depressed, lazy, and anxious. On March 8, for example, I put my phone down at 10:45 P.M. but did not get out of bed until 11:00 a.m., and my mood was exactly that: depressed, lazy, and anxious. Looking back, it was pretty clear that the late nights and sluggish mornings were tied to how low and unmotivated I felt.

By the last day of my self-experiment, April 5, I was putting my phone away by 8:30 P.M., two and a half hours earlier than when I started this experiment. I remember waking up earlier and feeling more balanced. I cleaned my room, helped my friend study, and even ate breakfast that weekend. I accomplished things I normally would never do. It felt like all the small changes had finally added up, and I was seeing my self-experimentation payoff. The biggest pattern I noticed during this experiment was that the earlier I put my phone away, the easier it was to fall asleep, wake up around 8:00 to 8:30 a.m., get out of bed quicker, and feel more productive and emotionally steady throughout the day. The data chart backed this up as it shows that the time between waking up and actually getting out of bed started to shrink, and I started waking up earlier and earlier. That said, not every day was perfect. There were still mornings when I felt anxious, even if I put my phone away on time the night before. The real win was building a routine. Once I made a habit of winding down at the same time each night, my body started to catch on, and mornings did not feel so hard anymore.

There were, of course, some challenges and limitations during this experiment. One of the biggest things I realized is that mood is not just about sleep. It is affected by so many factors like what I eat, my hormones, how much work I have, etc. Even when I went to bed earlier, that did not always mean I slept well. Some nights, I still found myself lying awake, even without my phone. Additionally, things like traveling back home for spring break, daily stress, and assignment due dates, especially during the experiment, threw off my routine. Putting my phone away earlier helped me bounce back faster from the nights when my experiment's challenges and limitations threw off my sleep schedule. It would have taken me much longer to get back on track in the past, but this time, I recovered quickly and returned to a more balanced schedule.

## DISCUSSION

Looking back at my results, this experiment opened my eyes to how small changes in my nighttime routine can impact how I feel and function the next day. All of this made it clear that while better sleep habits helped, they are just one piece of the journey regarding feeling mentally and emotionally okay. This self-experiment showed that cutting back on my phone use at night helped my sleep and mood. On the days I put my phone away early, I woke up earlier, spent less time lying in bed, and felt more emotionally balanced, sometimes even genuinely positive. The changes were not huge every day, but when I looked at the difference between the start and end of the experiment, I saw a big difference. Looking at the numbers, like bedtime and wake-up times, and the more personal side, like mood logs and daily reflections, I could see how one thing influenced another. Now, I am more aware of how late-night screen time messes with my mornings.

Going forward, I want to keep putting my phone away by 9:00 P.M. and stick to a steady bedtime routine. I feel more productive and balanced when consistent, so I want to keep those healthy habits. I also plan to pay more attention to other things affecting my sleep and mood, like what I eat, how stressed I am, or how busy my days get. If I stay on top of those things and keep making small, intentional choices, I know I can keep feeling mentally and physically better.

If I were to do this experiment again, I would try to track more things. It would have helped to write down what I ate that day, or how stressed I felt because that can affect how I sleep and feel the next day. I also wish I had started my phone curfew earlier instead of slowly easing into it. That way, the difference between nights with late phone use and nights without it would have been more obvious. Lastly, keeping a short journal daily would have helped me remember little things that

might have impacted my mood. It would have made my data feel more personal and help me understand my results better.

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# Discrimination of Hansen's Disease Patients

ERIN YOSHIKAWA

ENGLISH 100

Hansen's disease is a condition Americans living in the continental U.S. do not consider worrisome. Many view it as a relic of a bygone age or a monster defeated through modern medicine. Many Christians who read the Bible know of "leprosy" the former name of Hansen's disease, as a debilitating condition that required the holy intervention of God for a cure. Other people see grainy sepia-toned photographs of disease-afflicted individuals and may feel distant pity and horror. Schadenfreude, the feeling of relief when faced with another person's tragedy, comes to mind when faced with ghosts of medical history. It is a fading memory for most people worldwide, where most cases receive treatment quickly before significant symptoms appear. However, in Hawai'i, Hansen's disease affects public policy and colors our view of infectious diseases in our community. The shrinking settlement of Kalaupapa stands as a living reminder of our past mistakes in the name of public health. Similar mistakes continue to be made worldwide due to stigma and lack of awareness, which plague the Global South. Kalaupapa and its people also contextualize the concept of medical racism, something people of color have long suffered but have only recently confronted.

The first documented reference to "leprosy" as a condition dates back to India, and the writing of the Atharva Veda dates back to around 2000 B.C. (Bloomfield). Whether the condition described in the text was Hansen's

disease or another skin condition remains debatable. Archaeological evidence suggests the disease first appeared in Eastern Africa and followed human migration into Asia and Europe. The route this disease takes directly relates to humanity's migration. It inevitably followed the spread of colonialism, infecting the native populations wherever they intersected with newcomers.

According to Truman et al., Hansen's Disease was absent in the Americas until European settlers began colonization (1626). Its presence in the Pacific and the Americas can be linked directly to colonization, where trade and settlement brought new infectious pathogens to populations without natural defenses. Hansen's Disease, for which 95% of the world's population has immunity ("Clinical Overview of Hansen's Disease (Leprosy)"), was mistaken as a disease of the "lower class" people of color. The native populations of a country moved into urban centers with unsanitary conditions and little access to clean water or facilities to keep their personal belongings clean.

Hansen's disease is a bacterial infection caused by bacillus *Mycobacterium leprae* and *Mycobacterium lepromatosis*. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, it is a rod-shaped bacteria arranged in a spiral that replicates very slowly, doubling every thirteen days. The bacteria spread through aerosolized droplets created by coughing or sneezing, not through direct contact with an

infected person. The method of transmission reminds modern readers of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rapid transmission that occurred in its early days and later when governments lifted social distancing regulations. It is a chronic infectious disease that manifests in several different ways. It affects many systems, primarily the nervous and integumentary systems (i.e., nerves and skin). Initial symptoms can take many years to present, making it difficult to ascertain the origin of the infection. Most people are familiar with skin lesions and nodules on an individual's face or fingers that appear to have fallen off. The extraneous digits do not fall off but become reabsorbed into the body. Nerve damage meant infected individuals could injure themselves and not know, leading to further injuries. In an interview conducted by Gugelyk and Bloombaum (1996), a patient from Kalaupapa said, "A friend's father told me to test myself. They said to hold a lighted match to myself. If you don't feel the burn, you got the Moloka'i disease" (67). Injuries, left untreated, became infected, and ran the risk of becoming septic. With little access to care, amputation of limbs was commonplace. Many with Hansen's disease report losing sensation in their extremities. Affected individuals neglected to receive care simply because they were unable to feel pain. The lack of doctors and nurses further complicated the issue. Individuals may have generalized muscle weakness and inflammation of the mucosal sinus tissue, which can lead to further disfigurement through injury or untreated development of growths or macules. Hansen's Disease is also understood to affect the optic nerve, causing blindness.

Historically, according to Anne Perez Hattori, Hansen's disease was only documented in the Pacific Islands during the nineteenth century by naval shipboard doctors (66). Without colonialism and imperialism, the disease may never have spread to such isolated lands, thereby sparing the native population from

the stigma of Hansen's Disease. A Hawaiian euphemism for the disease was *mai pake*, alluding to the fallacious idea that Chinese immigrants brought the disease to Hawai'i. Another one was *ma'i ho'oka'awale*, meaning separation sickness, according to Wiki Wiki Wehe Wehe. During the height of Hansen's Disease infections, a medical station in Kalihi processed and diagnosed the disease, whereby newly diagnosed patients received sentencing to Moloka'i. The first patients landed at Kalawao in 1866, a tract of land on the east side of the peninsula ("Frequently Asked Questions."). The land, while inhabited and used for farming and fishing before its declaration as a leper colony, proved challenging to newcomers, particularly for patients with peripheral nerve damage. Other infrastructure, such as permanent homes, roads, or centralized community gathering facilities, were delayed in coming.

Supplies came infrequently and never in the quantities needed for comfort. Kalaupapa had no serviceable dock for large ships, which complicated arrival. Patients had to swim to shore despite their illness, and many died trying to reach land. Family members who came to support the patients were called helpers and ran the risk of infection, further contributing to the resource shortage. Doctors and nurses actively avoided positions in the colony for fear of the disease. Father Damien, now canonized as Saint Damien, made landfall in 1873 when he began advocating for infrastructure and better patient support. Waste management, roadways, and schools came into being thanks to Father Damien's efforts until his passing in 1889. While the government of Hawai'i sentenced people to life imprisonment in Kalaupapa, it cared little for patients, most of whom were Indigenous Hawaiian people and other non-white ethnicities. In all, life in Kalaupapa was, at best, uncomfortable. At worst, it accelerated death for many patients. Early treatments for the disease

were sparse and ineffective. According to patients, oil extracted from the Chaulmoogra plant (best known in Hawai'i as Kava) was one of the treatments yielding limited results (Gugelyk and Bloombaum, 1996, p. 32). It was, however, emetic when ingested and caused vomiting. Topical application caused burns, and injectable application led to abscesses at the site. It was not until Alice Ball, the first woman and Black person to earn a Master's degree from the University of Hawai'i Manoa, innovated a way to make the Chaulmoogra oil water soluble and, therefore, safely injectable. Notably, a white man presented Ball's research as his own until her colleagues intervened (Ellis). Eventually, multi-drug therapy involving the use of dapsone in 1945, followed later by rifampicin and clofazimine, signaled the end of Hansen's Disease as a death sentence in isolation.

While the territorial government rewrote more humane laws that acknowledged the personhood of the affected patients, the consequences lasted a lifetime for many. According to a Kalaupapa resident, a sterilization program lasted from 1938-1942 (Gugelyk and Bloombaum). Hansen's disease can affect fertility. However, no medical reason exists for such a policy. It may be related to another program, in which babies born in the village were taken by the state from their parents and placed with family off-island. This program mirrored another policy in which children were sent to Kalaupapa without a guardian, ostensibly to be reunited with their family members who preceded their arrival, only to find they had already passed. Many children grew up without their parents, both in Kalaupapa and other islands. Notably, most patients were people of color, with Kanaka Maoli representing a large percentage.

Today, the last residents of Kalaupapa live in peace, protected in many ways by laws written with their input. The medical station in Kalihi is no longer there, and the Leahi Hospital of

Diamond Head treats other diseases while holding humanity and personhood at its core. Kalaupapa will eventually be converted to a protected site under the jurisdiction of the U.S. National Parks Service and will exist as a monument to the Hawaiian government's earliest attempts at public health policy. It will also stand as a testament to our failure as a species to remove our biases from laws and our inability to treat humans with respect regardless of their race and ethnicity.

We may believe Hawai'i's treatment of Hansen's disease patients with visible disfigurement was insular, but that is far from the truth. Carville, Louisiana, housed the National Leprosarium of the United States (Gaudet 11). Closing only in 2005, Carville was the most extensive treatment center for Hansen's disease. The facility was considered the pinnacle of medicine in the fight against Hansen's disease, receiving the majority of government funding and public donations. It may be a matter of location and proximity to money that afforded better facilities and patient treatment. However, Carville also housed more white patients than Kalaupapa and, therefore, was deemed more worthy of funding, which needs to be acknowledged. That is not to say living conditions or treatment were idyllic, but with more resources available, the patients saw better outcomes.

At the other end of the funding spectrum, Guam suffered at the hands of the U.S. Navy, which dictated the creation of a colony in Tumon. Anne Perez Hattori states that less than fifteen percent of the \$15,000 allocated by the U.S. government went to care for Chamorro Hansen's disease patients (p. 78). Early in its inception, the colony included patients with hookworm and syphilis merely because medicine had not established guidelines for recognizing the differences between the three infections. Each disease infected people through different and poorly

understood mechanisms. Cross-infection became a regular occurrence for the people incarcerated. By then, the Navy had created a secondary site in Culion, Philippines, to reduce the expenditure and workforce necessary to staff a forced isolation colony. The annual budget for Culion was \$4,000, a mere pittance compared to the Tumon colony. Patients willingly boarded a ship to Culion, only to arrive and find out they would never leave their new prison. The presence of Filipino, Chamorro, Spanish, German, and French speakers created a challenge in communication when the guards and most doctors only spoke English. Many Chamorro women were nurses receiving training through the Navy; therefore, they acted as uncompensated interpreters for the imprisoned residents. The Culion colony seemed like a prison camp instead of a medical treatment center, with few basic needs being sufficiently met. Cross-infection with the parasite hookworm ran rampant because it is transmissible through improper human waste removal (Hattori 74).

In the modern world, the stigma of Hansen's disease continues. A colony still exists in Nepal, close to the Indian border. While the patients need not reside or participate in clinics, many continue to hide their symptoms, reducing the efficacy of treatment. Marahatta et al. conducted a study of community members near the colony (p. 2). Due to a lack of education about Hansen's disease, many incorrect assumptions about the illness remain throughout the community. Many of the surveyed participants reported they avoid people with visible wounds, do not visit patients' homes, and the idea of marrying an infected individual's family member was inconceivable. Despite access to education via the Internet and schools, many people harbor outdated ideas about the disease. Many remain ignorant of the fact Hansen's disease patients lose limbs because they are susceptible to wounds and infections due to

nerve damage. The disease itself is treatable with consistent use of drug therapies. Hansen's disease stops being transmissible after starting the regimen. According to the Centers for Disease Control, sixty percent of newly reported infections come from India. There is no medical reason to avoid contact with Hansen's disease patients or their family members.

An unintentional side effect of discrimination is a reluctance to seek treatment. Many young people, especially women, attempt to hide their symptoms, only to find their infections worsen over time. Permanent nerve and tissue damage accumulate until the affected individual can no longer hide their condition. Hiding their infection causes mistrust in the community, which feeds the fear of the disease. It is a cycle that ends only with communication and education reaching as many people as possible.

With education and more community engagement, we may see a reduction in stigma and a rise in treatment compliance. Legislation surrounding Hansen's disease affected people of color unfairly. Many lost their livelihoods, reproductive rights, and, ultimately, human rights because of a disease brought by colonization. While government and public health entities work to undo the stigma, we still see the effects of institutionalized racism in the way clinicians and community members treat the affected.

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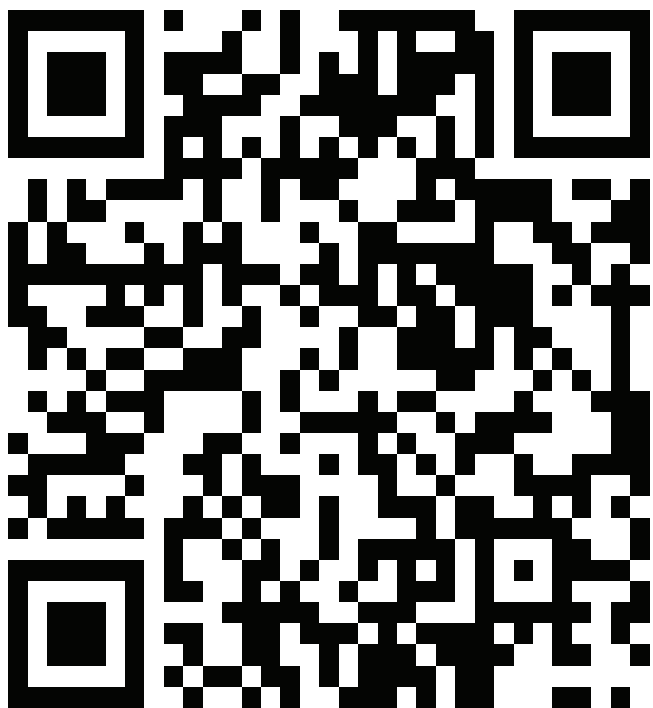
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