NAVIGATING THROUGH REPOSITORIES: MAKING MOOKU’AUHAU RESEARCH USER-FRIENDLY

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Introduction

Moʻokūʻauhau is the Hawaiian term for the genealogical succession of a family. Through this genealogical succession is a family’s story; their history woven throughout generations. To Native Hawaiians, moʻokūʻauhau represents a connection between each of its members, also reminding one that if it were not for his or her predecessors, they would not exist.

I chose to focus my project on moʻokūʻauhau and its connection with Native Hawaiians today. Each person has a moʻokūʻauhau, but how does one begin to research a moʻokūʻauhau? This question has led me to create a guidebook to assist with the researching of a moʻokūʻauhau. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide clear and basic information to simplify the often-difficult process of researching moʻokūʻauhau. It is presented with hope that its guidance will assist with the development and empowerment of cultural knowledge, identity, and pride among individuals, families and communities.

This project essentially began the very moment I was introduced to doing genealogy research in a college class. Researching started off as an unpleasant and difficult experience, but with time and practice I became more familiar with and more interested in researching. I was very fortunate in receiving aid from a few nurturing teachers and helpful staff which allowed me to figure my way through, making the research enjoyable. The guidebook for moʻokūʻauhau research is a way for me to play the same role toward helping interested
beginners with their mo‘okū‘auhau research. It is my hope that this guide can eliminate some of the intimidation and difficulties that arise when one begins researching a mo‘okū‘auhau. It was my journey that shaped this project and paper so my personal accounts are blended throughout this paper to illustrate the nature of mo‘okū‘auhau research and to emphasize its importance.

Purpose of Project

The ultimate purpose of this project is to bring accessibility, awareness, and empowerment to the Native Hawaiian community through mo‘okū‘auhau research. Mo‘okū‘auhau is a significant aspect of the Hawaiian culture, yet sometimes it is considered difficult to access and obtain the information needed to conduct the research for a mo‘okū‘auhau. The intention of this project is to provide a resource that is informative and easy to understand for the community about mo‘okū‘auhau research and its process; to also assist and support novice researchers as well as researchers needing a quick reference guide.

There is a need of resources for mo‘okū‘auhau research within the Hawaiian community, and a need to help the community to become comfortable and confident in doing the research. While there are several repositories on O‘ahu that have resources that pertain to mo‘okū‘auhau research, it is difficult for the Native Hawaiian community to access. First of all, researching a mo‘okū‘auhau is a rather intimidating effort; knowing where and how to start
are the initial obstacles. Some people know of the different repositories, while others are not aware of their existence. Some people know of the kinds of information that are essential, while others have no prior knowledge about mo‘okū‘auhau. This guide is a tool that bridges the gap for those novice researchers within the Native Hawaiian community who are interested in researching their mo‘okū‘auhau. This guide will provide the user with basic knowledge about the kinds of information used for a mo‘okū‘auhau, while navigating the user through the places of research and the research process in an easy, user-friendly manner. The user-friendly format allows the research guidebook to function as an access point to helpful tips, directions and general information that mo‘okū‘auhau researchers should know. Suggestions and clarification of the various kinds of information and the types of resources that are useful for a mo‘okū‘auhau are offered. Blank charts are also provided in the guidebook for the user to collect data for his/her mo‘okū‘auhau research. This research guidebook also highlights the numerous mo‘okū‘auhau resources in a visual aid, comparing the resource overlap at the different research institutions.

Researching a mo‘okū‘auhau becomes a feasible project with help from this guidebook, which will allow for more members of the Native Hawaiian community to participate in this tradition and feel comfortable about it.
Significance of Mo‘okū‘auhau in Hawaiian Culture

Native Hawaiians are one of many cultures and religions around the world that value genealogy. Mo‘okū‘auhau was a significant part of the Native Hawaiian culture in the past and continues to hold importance today. Since the Western colonization of Hawai‘i, many traditions of the Native Hawaiian people have changed, including the practice of mo‘okū‘auhau. In early Hawai‘i, mo‘okū‘auhau was internalized and reserved only for the ali‘i, for it showed their rank and status within the class system of that time. The ali‘i’s mo‘okū‘auhau displayed an actual bloodline lineage which also told the story of their ancestors, marking their place in history and preserving their ‘ohana’s status. The transmission of mana was also displayed through the ali‘i’s mo‘okū‘auhau.

King David Kalākaua acknowledges in his book *The Legends and Myths of Hawai‘i* that genealogical records were necessary to confirm “noble blood” of chiefs of a higher class status. Mo‘okū‘auhau was what distinguished the bloodlines of the chiefs, displaying their rank among the higher and lesser chiefs.¹ It was not common practice for the maka‘āinana to know their mo‘okū‘auhau. As the times and people in Hawai‘i changed, so did the culture. In 1865, Samuel Mānaiaikalani Kamakau acknowledged this change about ali‘i

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and moʻokūʻauhau in the newspaper, *Ka Nūpepa Kūʻokoʻa*. At the time of the article, the Kingdom of Hawai‘i had already established private property and been through three constitutions. Kamakau grew up at a time of a cultural shift; still he advocated the concept of preserving and maintaining a link to his ancestors. While he knew that moʻokūʻauhau was reserved for ali‘i, Kamakau also recognized the alteration of the ali‘i in a Western world where a moʻokūʻauhau was not important in keeping one’s status as it once was. The government would no longer be run by the ali‘i due to his/her moʻokūʻauhau and no longer succeeded by their offspring with the highest *piʻo* ranking. Kamakau encouraged his audience through his writing to learn their moʻokūʻauhau for the sake of bettering their children; to recognize that the times had changed, and that it would be beneficial for all to know. His writing is almost like a subtle warning for the readers to hold fast to their roots. The tradition of moʻokūʻauhau is still practiced, however not to the extent of what it once was.

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3 Lilikalā Kameʻeleihiwa, “Hawaiian Studies 342 Post-Contact Chiefs” (lecture, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Honolulu, HI, April 3, 2003.
4 With *piʻo*, I am referring to the marriage statuses held by the ali‘i. Marriage between a full brother and sister of nāʻau pilo ranking would present the highest ranking union.
5 Moʻokūʻauhau was kept for the reasons of political power for chiefs in early Hawai‘i. Today, moʻokūʻauhau is commonly used as another term for Hawaiian genealogy, changing the reasons for why it is preserved. Some cultural practitioners still acknowledge and use moʻokūʻauhau in its traditional manner.
Martha Beckwith, a prominent figure in Hawaiian history research, shared the idea that moʻokūʻauhau comes from “interrelations of god with nature and man.”⁶ She explained that the terms akua, ʻaumakua, and kupua all intertwine with one another, each very relevant to the existence of the other.⁷ There were akua in every aspect of nature. These akua could also be ʻaumakua to a family, thus possibly producing kupua offspring to that family. This theme of life that links all aspects of nature, gods, and man along with their interdependent relationship to one another illustrates the importance of moʻokūʻauhau in the Hawaiian culture. Genealogy alongside the stories and events of that time period was the substance of a moʻokūʻauhau.

With reference to the traditions of old Hawaiʻi, Beckwith refers to some customs that made an aliʻi a true aliʻi. She writes that a true aliʻi was one from whom, “a family genealogy tracing back to the gods through one of the two sons of Kiʻi, Ulu and Nanaulu, and by as many branches (lālā) as a family relationship could be stretched to cover.”⁸ The references continue with a name chant “that [glorifies] the family history not only of persons concerned but also of places made sacred by particular events or association.”⁹ These two customs clarified the importance of one’s moʻokūʻauhau and the family’s connection to place and

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⁷ Beckwith: 2.
⁸ Beckwith: 376.
⁹ Ibid.
event. Supporting the above customs, the third custom was of “signs in the heavens by which ‘aumakua of the day recognized their offspring on earth.”\textsuperscript{10} The connection of akua, the “heavens”, and ‘aumakua all refer back to their offspring; their familial ties to one another are represented by mo‘okū‘auhau.

\textbf{Mo‘okū‘auhau in Present Society}

Mo‘okū‘auhau is valued today for different societal reasons. Due to the nature of historical events that occurred in Hawai‘i over the past two hundred years, while bittersweet, a sense of pride is attached to the present-day Hawaiian cultural identity. An individual or a family’s cultural identity can be defined through their mo‘okū‘auhau by knowing from whom and where the family descends, along with their accounts. It is a way to recognize traditional Hawaiian culture in today’s society.

Mo‘okū‘auhau are researched today for several major reasons. There are persons who research and record their mo‘okū‘auhau to keep their family traditions. Some families have a designated member who maintains their family record. Another common reason to do research mo‘okū‘auhau is to prove one’s Native Hawaiian ancestry. This verification is significant in today’s society in Hawai‘i because there are many programs that require proof of Hawaiian

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
ancestry to receive certain “benefits”.\textsuperscript{11} For example, the Hawaiian Home Lands Act was passed into law along with the creation of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands in 1921. It was a program established to “provide for the rehabilitation of the native Hawaiian people through a government-sponsored homesteading program.”\textsuperscript{12} With proof of Native Hawaiian ancestry along with a blood quantum minimum of 50\%, one can apply for a lot of land for residential, agricultural, or pastoral uses for a 99 year lease costing $1.00 per year.

Applying for financial aid and scholarships for schooling is another motive for proving Native Hawaiian ancestry through moʻokūʻauhau research. There are several agencies and programs that give monies and benefits with preference to applicants of Native Hawaiian ancestry.\textsuperscript{13} My family has benefited from scholarship programs that assist with preschool tuition as well as college tuition and expenses. Some of these organizations that have helped my family include The Kamehameha Schools, Liko Aʻe Native Hawaiian Scholarship Program, Native Hawaiian Leadership Program, and Kuaʻana Native Hawaiian Student Development Services. Each of these programs requires proof of Native Hawaiian ancestry through birth certificates. There are other scholarship

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} “Benefits” is used to describe the services, monies, programs, lands, etc. that require proof of Hawaiian ancestry. There are Federal, State, and private funding that provide for such benefits.
\item \textsuperscript{12} \url{http://hawaii.gov/dhhl/laws}, accessed on June 14, 2010.
\item \textsuperscript{13} On a side note, there are other organizations who give scholarship monies to a specific ethnicity as well, so it is beneficial to have genealogical research done for this reason regardless of your ethnicity.
\end{itemize}
programs that require the same documentation of Native Hawaiian ancestry during the application process in order to receive benefits.

Moʻokūauahau research is also important for providing the future generations with a means to connect themselves to their family and to those who have passed. Understanding one’s ancestral past and knowing where and from whom you derive place importance and honor on familial ties. It is a common practice to pass down the kuleana of maintaining a family’s moʻokūʻauhau, which in present times means knowing and recording the ʻohana names. I plan to share my moʻokūʻauhau research with my children as soon as they become old enough to understand it, and have them follow up and continue it throughout their own lives.

Moʻokūʻauhau Research Process

The research process that I describe models the process in which I have learned, and to which my research has been adapted. A broad spectrum of resources can be used to research moʻokūʻauhau. A moʻokūʻauhau is more than a pedigree chart with names and dates; it encompass a family’s story and history. Names and dates are important, but the story that weaves through the generations of the family is also deeply valued.
The first resource that should be used when beginning mo‘okū‘auhau research is the family to whom the mo‘okū‘auhau belongs. Speak with your parents, grandparents, aunties and uncles, cousins, siblings, other relatives, and family friends. Their personal stories and memories about family members make good contributions to mo‘okū‘auhau research and the “family story”. There are some cases in which speaking with family members proves difficult due to lack of information, unfortunate fall-outs within a family, or deceased family members. However there are many other public resources that can provide assistance.

Vital records are significant sources of information which include birth, death, marriage, and divorce records, certificates, and other documentation. Certified records of these documents can only be found at the Hawai‘i State Department of Health. Noted on their website is: “any applicant seeking issuance of copies of vital records of events that occurred seventy-five years or less prior to the current date must establish a direct and tangible interest in the records to be eligible for them.”¹⁴ It also states that if the records requested are over seventy-five years from the current year, direct and tangible interest is not required.¹⁵

June 22, 2010  
¹⁵ Ibid.
Other resources used for moʻokūʻauhau research include old and new newspapers in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, English or other languages; probate estates and wills; journals; genealogy books; genealogy charts; government documents; ship passenger manifests; photographs; biographies; newsletters; city directories; obituaries; land documents; Kūʻē Petitions and the Native Register and Testimony. The kinds of information that are extracted from these resources are names of parents, spouses, children, adopted family names, former names, name changes; birth, death, marriage and divorce dates; addresses (some may be outdated but can sometimes lead to other interesting information through tax maps, etc., also showing places of residence); work places, occupations, organizations; ethnicities; political views; religion, etc. Through personal experiences, I have learned that any kind or type of information about the family you are researching is significant to the moʻokūʻauhau. Any type of information pertinent to piecing together and telling a story about one’s family is a success in moʻokūʻauhau research.

Identifying possible resources for moʻokūʻauhau research is followed in importance by availability of and access to those resources. Presently on Oʻahu, there are several places around the island that have genealogical-type resources, most of them located in Honolulu. The information repositories included in the guidebook consists of those that house genealogical-type resources that would be
helpful for moʻokūʻauhau research. Here are the places of research that are included in this guidebook:

- Hawaiʻi Department of Land and Natural Resources Bureau of Conveyances
- Hawaiʻi State Archives
- Hawaiʻi State Department of Health
- Hawaiʻi State Library (Main Branch)
- Hawaiʻi State Judiciary Court- Family Court (Oʻahu First Circuit)
- Bishop Museum Library and Archives
- Hawaiian Historical Society
- Hawaiian Mission Childrenʻs Society Library
- Kalihi Family History Center- The Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints
- University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa Hamilton Library- Hawaiian Collection
- University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa Sinclair Library Wong Audiovisual Center-Hawaiian Collection
- Oʻahu Cemetery
- Ulukau.org

This is not a complete list of places for researching a moʻokūʻauhau on the island of Oʻahu; these are just common places of research for helpful resources to conduct moʻokūʻauhau research. Many of the resources overlap at some of the places however there are other factors that would make the researcher choose
one place over another. Those factors include location, business hours, parking, and copy costs. It becomes a personal preference of the researcher to choose where they would rather research. While some repositories carry several of the same resources as others; each place is unique, offering different atmospheres and supplemental resources.

An organized system of research simplifies the process of recording, filing, displaying, and retrieving the collected information. There are several genealogy websites, magazines, and other guides that offer free templates of forms that make gathering, recording, and organizing information for a moʻokūʻauhau easier to manage and more efficient. These forms include pedigree charts, family history records, research history logs, and documentation logs. Using these forms provide organization for the project, which later allow the researcher to re-retrieve documents if necessary without having to conduct the search all over again. The forms also provide the researcher with notes for future searches so that when searching for a specific type of record, the researcher knows exactly where they might look first. Researching can take anywhere from a few minutes to many years to document, depending on your success in finding the documents and the depth of information you desire.

16 There are times when a document needs to be re-retrieved and rather than conducting the search all over again, the documentation of the original search provides a much easier retrieval.
Resource Review

Regarding moʻokūʻauhau, there are several sources that provide assistance for researching genealogy in Hawaiʻi. The Hawaiʻi State Library and the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa Hamilton Library Hawaiian Collection have compiled lists of genealogy bibliographies for the resources available in their particular libraries. The Hawaiian Electronic Library Ulukau.org has a genealogy database on their website which allows for users to search through genealogy records already digitized. Ulukau.org also has available on their website, “A Research Manual on Information Access and Retrieval of Genealogical and Land Information from Government Repositories in the State of Hawaii”¹⁷ which is a guide that tells of the resources the State Agencies have regarding genealogies. This research manual has detailed maps of the repositories, examples of charts used to track information for genealogical and land resources, and copies of repository policies and handouts.

There are also genealogy workshops available. One workshop is run by Fran McFarland at ʻIolani Palace. Her workshop consists of two days for $75

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including a workbook. There is class information and schedules available on the ‘Iolani Palace website.\(^{18}\)

Also available are two local published leaflets about researching genealogy. One of them is by John V. and Rose Marie H. Duey of Maui, Hawai‘i. “A Beginner’s Guide for Genealogical Research in Hawai‘i” was originally compiled for the Maui Historical Society in 1989 with Alu Like, Inc.\(^{19}\) This publication provides basic information about various institutions for genealogy research along with helpful forms and charts to use for recording genealogy information.

Another leaflet, “Genealogical Sources in Hawai‘i” was published in 1974 by Agnes Catherine Conrad.\(^{20}\) Conrad was a Hawai‘i State Archivist. Her guide also has some basic information about some of the places where genealogy information can be found.

Libraries often create guides and aids to research. For example, on the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library website is an online Libguide with helpful information sources for researching Hawaiian genealogies within the

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\(^{20}\) Agnes Catherine Conrad, *Genealogical Sources in Hawai‘i*. (Honolulu, 1974).
University of Hawai‘i Library system as well as online.\textsuperscript{21} This Libguide offers many suggestions of resources to search through for genealogy research; however it is geared toward the University student user population.

All of these guides and bibliographies prove helpful for those seeking information about researching genealogy. While they fulfill the purpose of offering aid to those in search of genealogical information, my project extends the concentration to mo‘okū‘auhau and its connection to Native Hawaiians. My guidebook on mo‘okū‘auhau research can also be used as a resource to help with the search and collection of documents regarding mo‘okū‘auhau for scholarships and benefits.\textsuperscript{22}

Conclusion

We live in a very different time than our ancestors. The displacement of the land and culture of Native Hawaiians has bequeathed an obvious disconnection between the Native Hawaiians of today and the traditional native culture. Numerous efforts throughout the Native Hawaiian community today strive to invigorate the people and their culture. This project provided a

\textsuperscript{21} \url{http://guides.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/hawaiigenealogies}. This Libguide was originally designed to help with the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s Hawaiian Studies 341 Hawaiian Genealogies course.

\textsuperscript{22} Some of the resource guides previously described were published twenty to thirty years prior, so my project offers several updated resources as well.
personal opportunity to contribute toward the perpetuation of Hawaiian culture by means of researching moʻokūʻauhau.

The moʻokūʻauhau research guidebook provides suggestions of the various kinds of information that are useful for moʻokūʻauhau and clarifies the types of resources each research institution has to offer. While new technologies and resources regarding information used for moʻokūʻauhau research become available, the basic content of the information needed to conduct the research remains the same. The methods of collecting and extracting the records and resources important to moʻokūʻauhau research may change, but the formats of microfilm, card indexes, and print resources with their proper indexes and finding aids continue to exist. At the same time increasingly more resources, indexes, books, etc. are being digitized and uploaded to the web, thereby enhancing accessibility. Knowing this, I attempted to construct this guidebook in as timeless of a manner possible by including the traditional resources used for researching a moʻokūʻauhau while still acknowledging the newer resources.

This project is a small tool with big hopes of providing important and helpful information to interested individuals wanting to take the initiative to research their moʻokūʻauhau. Whether a family has a documented moʻokūʻauhau or not, anyone interested in learning about their ʻohana should know where they can get information, what kinds of information are available, and how to get that information. The impetus for moʻokūʻauhau research might
be personal interest, a request of a relative, or a requirement for an application for Hawaiian Homelands or a college scholarship. It is the goal of this guidebook to expand awareness of information resources and to encourage the use of these resources. With the knowledge and availability of these resources, individuals are less likely to falter and give up. This moʻokūʻauhau research guidebook provides beginners with enough information to endeavor researching on their own, thus empowering them to continue.
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