



Hawaiian Blood

COLONIALISM AND THE POLITICS OF
SOVEREIGNTY AND INDIGENEITY

J. Kēhaulani Kauanui

Hawaiian Blood

NARRATING NATIVE HISTORIES

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Narrating Native Histories aims to foster a rethinking of the ethical, methodological, and conceptual frameworks within which we locate our work on Native histories and cultures. We seek to create a space for effective and ongoing conversations between North and South, Natives and non-Natives, academics and activists, throughout the Americas and the Pacific region. We are committed to complicating and transgressing the disciplinary and epistemological boundaries of established academic discourses on Native peoples.

This series encourages symmetrical, horizontal, collaborative, and auto-ethnographies; work that recognizes Native intellectuals, cultural interpreters, and alternative knowledge producers within broader academic and intellectual worlds; projects that decolonize the relationship between orality and textuality; narratives that productively work the tensions between the norms of Native cultures and the requirements for evidence in academic circles; and analyses that contribute to an understanding of Native peoples' relationships with nation-states, including histories of expropriation and exclusion as well as projects for autonomy and sovereignty.

We are pleased to have *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* as one of our two inaugural volumes. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui's study investigates how blood quantum politics, first used to define "native Hawaiian" by the U.S. Congress in 1921, became a policy of colonial exclusion and erasure of sovereignty claims, whose effects are still being felt today. Kauanui traces how an indigenous attempt to reclaim lands for displaced Hawaiians was transformed into a project for the "rehabilitation" of "Natives"—ultimately defined in blood quantum as half-blooded or more—who were deemed "incompetent" and thus in need of charity. This racialization of Hawaiian identity, she argues, flew in the face of more inclusive Kanaka Maoli genealogical and kinship practices and concealed the dispossession of Hawaiians as a people and a nation.

Hawaiian / Blood

Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity

J. Kēhaulani Kauanui

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Rehabilitation

1. a. The action of re-establishing (a person) in a former standing with respect to rank and legal rights (or church privileges); the result of such action; also, a writ by which such restoration is made (In early use chiefly Sc.); b. Reinstatement (of a person) in any previous position or privilege; c. Re-establishment of a person's reputation; vindication of character; 2. a. The action of replacing a thing in, or restoring it to, a previous condition or status; b. Restoration to a higher moral state; c. Restoration (of a disabled person, a criminal, etc.) to some degree of normal life by appropriate training; d. The retraining of a person, or the restoration of industry, the economy, etc., after a war or a long period of military service.

—OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

Blood Quantum

By Naomi Noe Losch

We thought we were Hawaiian.
Our ancestors were Līloa, Kūali‘i and Alapa‘i.
We fought at Mokuohai, Kepaniwai and Nu‘uanu,
and we supported Lili‘u in her time of need.
We opposed statehood.
We didn’t want to be the 49th or the 50th,
and once we were, 5(f) would take care of us.
But what is a native Hawaiian?
Aren’t we of this place?
‘O ko mākou one hānau kēia.
And yet, by definition we are not Hawaiian.
We can’t live on Homestead land,
nor can we receive OHA money.
We didn’t choose to quantify ourselves,
1/4 to the left 1/2 to the right
3/8 to the left 5/8 to the right
7/16 to the left 17/32 to the right
They not only colonized us, they divided us.

Thinking about Hawaiian Identity

By Maile Kēhaulani Sing

Thinking about Hawaiian identity
I start to spin in circles easily
Is identity belonging
Or is belonging identity
Do I meet the criteria
A certain textbook definition
Or is being Hawaiian my inheritance
And from my ancestors
Unconditionally given

Full, half, quarter, or eighth
It doesn't take long for
The experts to proclaim
Hawaiians are indeed
A vanishing race
Influenza, vD, and now
We've contracted
U.S. racial rhetoric
That grounds us down
To mere fractions

When my blood is measured
And my features dissected
I start to feel sick
As if infected
By reason and logic
By science and politics
All my life I have swallowed
This blood quantum theory
Like pills from the colonial pharmacy
Prescription strength invisibility
To cure this illness
Of lingering indigeneity

Hawai'i is paradise
Up for grabs
Full of aloha
And hula dance
An image of smiling natives
That everyone would love to be
The only obstacle that complicates
Is the call to discriminate
For the sake of sovereignty
Self determination fueled
By genealogical identity
Hawaiian entitlement to be free
From the thick of
American fantasy

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A Note to Readers

IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, American missionaries applied the term “half-caste” to those of mixed white and Hawaiian parentage, but it was eventually abandoned in favor of the Hawaiian term *hapa-haole* (literally, part-white or part-foreigner) (Wright 1972: 282). Prior to that shift, during the early twentieth century, the terms “Asiatic Hawaiian” and “Caucasian Hawaiian” were used to classify and describe Kānaka Maoli who had Asian or European ancestry.* From the mid- to the late twentieth century, the term *hapa-haole* still had currency within Hawaiian communities—both on- and off-island.**

“Part-Hawaiian” eventually became more common. Fortified by the contemporary sovereignty struggle today, though, the use of the term “part-Hawaiian” (which begs the question, why not “part-white” or “part-Asian”?) has taken a back seat to using “Hawaiian” or “Native Hawaiian” for someone of any Hawaiian ancestry. Similarly, the terms *Kanaka Maoli* (real or true people), *Kanaka ʻŌiwi* (bone people), or *ʻŌiwi Maoli* (true bone) are much more common today because they emphasize Hawaiian indigeneity without referencing blood. The emergence of these terms can be attributed to the contemporary indigenous nationalist struggle and the Hawaiian language recovery movement, both of which tend to advocate for genealogical forms of articulating identity.

Throughout this book, I use “native Hawaiian” (with a lower case “n”)

* These terms did not position “Hawaiian” as a geographical marker; “Asiatic Hawaiian,” for example, could not have meant an Asian person from or in Hawaiʻi.

** Here I use the term “off-island” to describe Hawaiians living outside Hawaiʻi on the American continent. When used while in Hawaiʻi, the term “off-island” refers to individuals who are not on the particular island where they usually locate themselves (e.g., “No, Nani’s off-island on Oʻahu [and not Kauaʻi] today.”). Thus, my use of it to mean those Hawaiians who are diasporic may raise questions. But my usage recognizes the fact that many American Indian and First Nations peoples recognize their continent as Great Turtle Island, and thus another island, albeit outside of the Hawaiian archipelago. In addition, the common usage of “off-island” while *on-island* presumes a return to one island or another by the person “off-island” and thus is appropriate to acknowledge diasporic Hawaiians who continue to return time and again as part of their ongoing on-island attachments. Furthermore, there are issues regarding the political claims of off-island Hawaiians vis-à-vis the sovereignty movement (Kauanui 2007; 1998).

only when referring to the 50-percent definition in any given legal context, whereas I use “Native Hawaiian” (with a capital “N”) when referring to its legal context where it is defined as anyone of Hawaiian ancestry without regard for the blood quantum rule. When not referring to a specific legal definition, I use “Kanaka Maoli” and “Hawaiian” interchangeably to describe those indigenous to Hawai‘i. I do so in order to underscore the shift between the two and to remind the reader that the term “Hawaiian” does not work as a residency marker in the way “Californian” does. As Queen Lili‘uokalani put it: “When I speak . . . of the Hawaiian people, I refer to the children of the soil,—the native inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands and their descendants”—an “aboriginal people” with a “birthright” (Lili‘uokalani 1968: 325).

Finally, a note on the use of Hawaiian diacritical marks: *Kanaka* (without a macron) indicates the singular or the categorical plural, while *Kānaka* denotes a countable plural. Some Hawaiian words inconsistently appear with a glottal stop (e.g., *Hawai‘i*) to reflect historical usage.

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Mahalo nui loa!

INTRODUCTION Got Blood?

TOWARD THE END OF MY TIME IN GRADUATE school in the 1990s, I traveled from California to attend a family *pā'ina* (party) in Anahola, Kaua'i, to celebrate the birthday of my cousin's baby boy. The party was held at my uncle's house, and he was excited to host such a huge gathering to mark his grandson's first year of life. This uncle is my father's younger brother, and when I turned one year old, he helped host a *lū'au* (feast) that my grandparents threw for me as well. My parents brought me to the island from southern California, where I was born and raised, so I could be feted by my 'ohana (family). At this more recent occasion, as I sat between my grandma and my uncle, I was confronted about my light skin color by the baby's other grandfather, who is German and Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian). This was surprising for two different reasons: he himself is very light-skinned, and I had already introduced myself to him earlier to acknowledge the linking of our families. Although his son and my cousin had not married (not a problem given the prevalence of "common-law" partnerships among many Kānaka Maoli), they were, nevertheless, now 'ohana because of their children. He came right up to me and pointed his finger three inches from my nose while he demanded I tell him "how much Hawaiian blood" I have. I smiled politely, reintroduced myself, and reminded him that I was sitting in between my Kanaka Maoli grandma and uncle. Still, he insisted that I recite a fraction to answer his question of "how much?" But I refused.

I felt attacked and disrespected by his choosing my skin over kin—treating me as *haole* (white person or foreigner) and denying my connection to "our" family. I thought his insistence especially rude because he was on what I consider my home turf, even though I don't reside there, because I am part of the host family. He used the question of blood quantum as a stand-in for addressing my geographical distance as a Hawaiian living outside Hawai'i and to negotiate the boundary between insider and outsider, where notions of blood framed his assessment of me in determining my legitimacy and authenticity.

Before I could get into it with him, my grandma yelled, “She’s got more than you! And the next time you see her, she’s gonna be a professor!” Even though both assertions were true, he didn’t look satisfied. And so my uncle then interrupted with something else: “She get, she get about 51 percent.” I found it unsettling that my uncle felt as though he had to qualify me in some way by suggesting I had more than half Hawaiian blood quantum, but this was his way of making sure I was recognized as belonging. I turned away from both men to focus on family members who were playing music and offering special hula for the night when I heard my uncle trying to soothe him: “No worries, you know why? Our grandson, he get plenty Hawaiian blood, plenty.” Here it seemed he was assuring the other man that their grandson would never be questioned in the way I had been.

Among many Kānaka Maoli, my story is typical; we are up against challenges to our racial “integrity” that aim to undercut our genealogical ties. These challenges are tied to popular notions of cultural authenticity and biological difference through the use of blood quantum, notions that have been reinforced by the law. Blood quantum is a fractionalizing measurement—a calculation of “distance” in relation to some supposed purity to mark one’s generational proximity to a “full-blood” forebear ($\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{16}$, $\frac{1}{32}$, $\frac{1}{64}$. . .). Blood quantum logic presumes that one’s “blood amount” correlates to one’s cultural orientation and identity. Thus, it is no surprise that my uncle chose to assign me 51 percent of Hawaiian blood, because the state of Hawai‘i currently defines “native Hawaiian” identity by a 50-percent rule. The basis for my uncle’s defense of me was a direct legacy of this racist policy, the origin of which is the focus of this book.

The contemporary legal definition of “native Hawaiian” as a “descendant with at least one-half blood quantum of individuals inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778” originated in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1921 in which the U.S. Congress allotted approximately 200,000 acres of land in small areas across the main islands to be leased for residential, pastoral, and agricultural purposes by eligible “native Hawaiians.”¹ This legislation originally emerged as an attempt by Hawaiian elites to rehabilitate Kānaka Maoli who were suffering from high mortality rates—connected to the nineteenth-century depopulation brought about by colonial dispossession—as well as disease and poverty tied to urbanization. Yet paradoxically, while the earliest formulations of the proposal leading to the act were

intended to encourage the revitalization of a particular Hawaiian demographic, the act simultaneously created a class of people who could no longer qualify for the land that constitutes the Hawaiian Home Lands territory. This historical division is still at play in the contemporary sovereignty movement and is manifest in the current federal legislation before the U.S. Congress threatening to transform the Hawaiian national independence claim to that of a domestic dependent nation under U.S. federal policy on Native Americans.

This book critically interrogates the way that blood racialization constructs Hawaiian identity as measurable and dilutable. Racialization is the process by which racial meaning is ascribed—in this case to Kanaka Maoli through ideologies of blood quantum. In contrast, I examine Kanaka Maoli genealogical practices and kinship and how they differ from the U.S. colonial imposition of blood quantum. Many Kānaka Maoli contest the federal and state definition of “native Hawaiian” at 50 percent not only because it is so exclusionary but because it undercuts indigenous Hawaiian epistemologies that define identity on the basis of one’s kinship and genealogy. Thus, I emphasize the strategic, socially embedded, and political aspects of these indigenous practices. The blood quantum rule operates through a reductive logic in both cultural and legal contexts and undermines expansive identity claims based on genealogy. While some assume genealogy is a proxy for race, I argue that blood quantum racial classification is used as a proxy for ancestry, with destructive political consequences for indigenous peoples. I primarily focus on the legal construction of Hawaiian indigeneity in order to analyze the implications for historical claims to land and sovereignty. Providing historical context for the hearings on the HHCA, I analyze the debates that led to the passage of the legislation in order to account for how the U.S. government came to racialize Kanaka Maoli through blood quantum and why the definition of “native Hawaiian” was set at 50 percent.

The state of Hawai‘i continues to use the 50-percent blood quantum rule to manage and evaluate claims to indigeneity. Once administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission created by the U.S. Congress, the responsibility for implementing the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920 was transferred to the state in 1959. This directive was set by the U.S. federal government as a condition of Hawai‘i’s admission to the union in 1959, a forcible inclusion that is currently contested by Hawaiian sovereignty activ-

ists who challenge the very legitimacy of statehood. Since 1959, the state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands has administered the program and therefore verifies applicants' eligibility based on the blood rule. Although proof of Hawaiian blood quantum is required to qualify as "native Hawaiian," there has never been any territorial or state administrative mandate for documenting the fractional breakdown of ancestry on vital records.²

In trying to secure lease lands, applicants are required to submit primary documents to show that they qualify as "native Hawaiian." These forms of evidence can amount to up to thirty notarized documents, along with an application more than thirty pages long to substantiate a claim of eligibility. Necessary documents include certified copies of certificate of live birth, certificate of Hawaiian birth (for people who did not have a birth certificate recorded at the time of their birth but can secure a witness who can testify to the circumstances of their birth), and certificate of delayed birth. In the event that the Vital Records Division of the Department of Health does not have a birth certificate for an applicant's parents or grandparents, the department will issue a "no record" certificate, which must also be submitted to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. For applicants who were adopted, the Family Court in Hawai'i may be able to assist, while access to out-of-state adoption records varies from state to state. Secondary documents to substantiate one's identity as a "native Hawaiian" include certified marriage certificates, certified death certificates, and records in relation to baptism, marriage, divorce, military service, death, as well as hospital and employment records from the State of Hawai'i Archives, state courts, public libraries, and U.S. census records. Other document resource centers include the Bureau of Conveyances, Circuit Family Court, and the Kalaupapa Settlement Office (which holds records on Hawaiians held at the former "Leper Colony" who were afflicted with Hansen's disease from 1865 on), and of course, the vast Family History Centers of the Church of Latter-Day Saints.

As a result of gross mismanagement on the part of the state—violations of the congressional stipulation to administer the lands in trust—over 20,000 "native Hawaiians" remain on the waiting list, while only 8,000 have been granted leases since 1921.³ Still, there are numerous benefits for those who do manage to secure a lease. The annual lease rent is only one dollar per year with a ninety-nine-year lease, and a lease term that can be extended for an additional hundred years to allow a lessee to pass a homestead from genera-

tion to generation. There is also a seven-year exemption from real property tax, complete exemption of tax on land, with minimal real property tax after the first seven years (in select counties). Although lessees cannot use the lease land as equity to obtain loans, they have access to low-interest government loans (subject to the whims of Congress) and can use the equity in their property to obtain loans.

A modest breach in the 50-percent rule was registered in 1992, when the state of Hawai'i passed statutes allowing "native Hawaiian" leaseholders to designate a direct descendant as a successor under the lease if they meet a blood quantum criterion of one-fourth Hawaiian blood. And in 1994, the state extended this provision to permit grandchildren of native Hawaiian leaseholders to become successors if they meet the quarter blood rule (Garcia 1997: A1).⁴ U.S. Congressional amendments to the act in 1997 now allow direct descendants of "native Hawaiians" to inherit family leases so long as they can prove they are at least "1/4th Hawaiian" (B4). Prior to the 1997 congressional amendments, a grandchild of a leaseholder had to qualify as "native Hawaiian" by the 50-percent rule in order to become a successor to a lease, even though in 1982 the Hawai'i state legislature provided for a spouse or child of a leaseholder to inherit a lease if an individual can prove one-fourth Hawaiian ancestry (*ibid.*).⁵ The 1997 amendment to the HHCA begs the question as to why these lands should not be opened up now to those who can prove one-fourth Hawaiian ancestry, as direct lessees. Also, despite this amendment, the requirement of having to prove eligibility based on blood quantum in order to secure a lease to Hawaiian Home Lands has led many Kānaka Maoli to see "50 percent" as the authenticating criterion for Hawaiian identity, the acceptance of which reveals an uneasy contradiction. On the one hand, those who abide by the rule in social contexts are acquiescing to the U.S. government's dictate as to who counts as "native Hawaiian," while, on the other hand, they disregard the U.S. government's revision of that standard. Hence, those who do not meet the 50-percent blood rule are often seen as "lesser than," where Kanaka Maoli are divided into two classes with one assuming dominance over the other.

Many Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians have become invested in blood quantum as proof of indigeneity and rely on the fractionalizing measurements of one's "blood amount" as a marker for cultural orientation and identity, even though the racial categories this logic depends on are the

product of relatively recent colonial taxonomies.⁶ These concerns with “measuring up” reflect a growing anxiety among Hawaiians that is all too common. In both day-to-day and legal contexts, blood is often evoked to stand in for race, indigeneity, and nationhood—and it can be used to mean any or all of these depending on the specific political agenda of any given moment.

Why 50 Percent?

There are multiple investments in changing the legal definition of Hawaiian identity, and the law itself becomes the ground upon which Kanaka Maoli are compelled to negotiate the politics of identity on American terms. As aspects of identity concerning collective property entitlements are often consequential with respect to the law, the legal definition also implicates the construction of Hawaiian peoplehood. In *Colonizing Hawai‘i: The Cultural Power of Law*, Sally Merry examines the imposition of Western law in Hawai‘i in the nineteenth century and how it transformed the community of Hilo (2000). Her important study specifically examines American colonialism and the racial and cultural subjugation of Native Hawaiians, where law served as a core institution of colonial control and therefore an important site of struggle implicating social relations, and thus identity.

The congressional hearings on the HHCA legislative proposal provide a critical genealogy for the 50-percent racial criterion that continues to determine land leasing eligibility. I analyze the congressional debates leading up to the HHCA between February 1920 and December 1921, before the Committee on the Territories, and include an examination of the role of Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian elites in the territory. Three sets of hearings were held between 1920 and 1921: first, the U.S. House of Representatives Hearings before the Committee on the Territories in February 1920; second, the U.S. Senate Hearings before the Committee on the Territories in December 1920, during the Sixty-Sixth Congress; and third, the U.S. House of Representatives Hearings before the Committee on the Territories in June 1921, during the Sixty-Seventh Congress. The transcripts from these hearings serve as the primary documents for my case study.

I focus on this particular period and legal context to see how the U.S. government redefined Kanaka Maoli identity through blood racialization. By analyzing the debates and discussions held within hearings, I theorize the

racialization of Hawaiians through the enactment of the HHCA, examining how it undermines broader land and sovereignty claims. This book, then, accounts for the ways the blood quantum definition of 50 percent was determined as the criterion for Hawaiian land leasing eligibility within the context of U.S. colonial land appropriation and its implications for the contemporary sovereignty struggle.

The legal construction of Hawaiian identity has received little to no attention from scholars or activists. While the 50-percent blood quantum standard is common knowledge among Kanaka Maoli, no one has previously undertaken a comprehensive history and analysis of what led to this particular determination.⁷ It is most common for people in Hawai'i to suggest that the 50-percent rule was created because the U.S. government thought that Kanaka Maoli would die off to the point that eventually no one would count as Hawaiian using that criterion. Because the 50-percent rule is the legacy of the colonial sugar industry in the Hawaiian Islands—where the white Americans controlling sugar plantations helped to establish a minimum blood quantum requirement so they would eventually gain control over more Hawaiian land—many Kānaka Maoli assume that they also anticipated (and even hoped for) Native demise. In other words, it is thought that, by measuring identity through 50-percent blood quantum, U.S. legislators presumed Hawaiians would eventually no longer qualify for lands. However, the expressed purpose of the Kanaka Maoli elites who first proposed the HHCA was to save the “dying Hawaiian race” by restoring them to rural life.

So, paradoxically, the 50-percent rule was in part created to encourage Hawaiian survival and physical rehabilitation, not the disappearance of Kanaka Maoli; the original concern with Hawaiian rehabilitation was figured as an intervention in the condition of an endangered people. The 50-percent rule was first used by congressional representatives who distinguished among Kanaka Maoli in order to identify those whose very existence was viewed as threatened and thought to be in need of social and biological regeneration. The stated aim of the legislation was to enable Hawaiians to escape the tenements and slums in Honolulu; back on the land, they might “till the soil and become self-supporting and raise healthy, happy families and become homeowners, new blood would be gradually infused into the race and it would thrive as it did in the days when it was in its prime” (Hawaiian Homes Commission 1922:3). A gesture toward that time of Ha-

waiians’ “prime” entailed a valorization of the rural, where identification with the soil was part of a broader American social movement as it neatly coincided with distorted notions of Hawaiian “tradition” in relation to land.⁸ A key part of the HHCA’s attempt at repopulation through relocation was the link between the renewal of Hawaiian “blood” and reconnection to the soil that would tie Kānaka Maoli back to land and agriculture rather than technology and industry.

Initially, Kanaka Maoli leaders’ calls for Hawaiian rehabilitation focused on indigenous mortality and reproduction, where they linked Kanaka Maoli survival to the reoccupation of Native lands. Their proposal was premised on recognition of Hawaiian citizenship under the kingdom as they dealt with unresolved land rights. But the problem was in articulating that awareness of these historical claims within the confines of American law, citizenship, and racial categories. Although billed as a proposal to allot lease lands for Kanaka Maoli rehabilitation, in the end the HHCA actually served as a policy of broad land dispossession, which accounts for why it is still looked upon with some suspicion—especially given its massive failure. The different arguments about who exactly needed rehabilitation and what constituted rehabilitation, given its broad meaning, and how Kanaka Maoli eligibility would be defined raised many historical questions—most notably the matter of how the United States came to claim the land in the first place. After the unilateral U.S. annexation of Hawai‘i in 1898, the U.S. government’s favored option of “returning Hawaiians to the land” rather than returning land to the Hawaiians was a typical colonial stance. It is not surprising, then, to find that Hawaiian blood quantum classification originates in the dispossession of Native claims to land and sovereignty.

The blood criterion emerged as a way to avoid recognizing Hawaiians’ entitlement to the specific lands that were desired for the leasing program. I document here the discursive shift from a reparations and entitlement framework to one formulated on the basis of welfare and charity. The key players in the HHCA hearings redefined “need” in racial terms by using blood quantum as an indicator of social competency, where those defined by the 50-percent rule were deemed incapable of looking out for themselves. As Linda Gordon puts it in another context, regarding the history of welfare from 1890 to 1935 for single mothers, they were “pitied but not entitled” (1994).⁹ Hence, in the quest to control Hawaiian land and assets, blood

quantum classification emerged as a way to undermine Kanaka Maoli sovereignty claims—by not only explicitly limiting the number who could lay claim to the land but also reframing the Native connection to the land itself from a legal claim to one based on charity. I make the case that blood quantum was not necessarily an inevitable way of defining who would count as Hawaiian in the act and I further map the alteration of an open definition of “native Hawaiian,” where at first there was *no* designated blood quantum—since the program was intended for all Hawaiians “in whole or in part”—to the end result of the 50-percent determination. In tracing the shift, this case study explores the discursive constructions of “full-blood” and “part”-Hawaiians that emerged in the debates.

Blood quantum is a manifestation of settler colonialism that works to decimate—to pull out by the roots—and displace indigenous peoples. Because Hawaiian racial and legal definitions are intricately connected to struggles over indigeneity and political status, this book asks how the HHCA land policy relates to concepts of citizenship, native rehabilitation, and entitlement—all of which are inflected by race, class, lineage rank, and gender differences among Hawaiians. How is Hawaiian indigeneity made and unmade in the service of competing political interests of different nationalisms—those of the Hawaiian sovereignty struggle and the United States—that can support or erode sovereignty claims? In the context of the HHCA, and indeed U.S. policy in general, the logic of blood dilution through legal and popular discourses of race displaces indigeneity and erodes indigenous peoples’ sovereignty claims.

Indigeneity is tied to sovereignty (Wilkins 2007: 45, 51), where the definitions of both are constantly negotiated and constructed in terms of competing interests (for example, vis-à-vis tribal nations and the United States). But in the realm of U.S. recognition of indigeneity through federal policy, a people’s racial difference has to be proved as part of their claim to sovereignty. That “race,” “culture,” and “nation” are always inextricably linked presents a further paradox, since federal recognition of Native status is primarily framed as a political category, not a racial one (Wilkins 2007: 45–65). And because indigenous self-determination can never be untangled from discourses and relations of domination, as Native peoples struggle for greater self-determination and political power, they simultaneously challenge and reproduce some of these very same dynamics and processes. Blood