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ABSTRACT

Plagued with a history of division, confusion, and radicalism, the feminist movement, specifically in the US, is fractured. Some academics purport that a return to the notion of embodied politics is insufficient and juvenile, claiming that the contemporary feminism, or the third wave, is ignorant of its historical predecessors. This claim is valid to some extent, for the majority of conflict present in second-wave feminism of the 1960’s and 1970’s stems from its narrow parameters. Mainly a white middle-class endeavor, the focus of the second wave, whether intentional or not, failed to address issues of a broader scope. This discussion identifies one aspect of third wave feminism, multicultural feminism, as a necessary evolution as women of color challenge the limitations of traditional feminism.

For practical application of a multicultural feminist theory I will be looking at the life and works of Haunani-Kay Trask, a Hawaiian Native and activist as well as a feminist. Trask’s life and work demonstrate the necessary evolution of feminism into a multicultural perspective. A look inside the Hawaiian traditions and Trask’s feminist approach to Hawaiian sovereignty reveals how the two systems, feminism and sovereignty, coalesce and provide a model for a global feminist ideal, materializing in a new multicultural feminist perspective.

Key Words: Multicultural Feminism, Haunani-Kay Trask, Hawaiian Sovereignty, Third Wave Feminism.
In November of 1999, I moved sight unseen three thousand miles across the Pacific Ocean from my long-time home of California to the beautiful paradise of the Hawaiian Islands, O'ahu to be exact. This move was part of a military relocation; my husband at the time was in the United States Navy, and we chose to be relocated to Pearl Harbor Naval Station. I knew nothing of our fiftieth state, other than it was far from everything I knew; this excited and enthralled me. Even with a complete ignorance to the history, economy, and culture of Hawai‘i, I engaged it with a sense of awe and respect. I was prepared to make Hawai‘i my home, my community — at least as much of one as a military family can have. Upon arrival we were greeted warmly by our military brethren. But where were the hula dancers and lush fragrant flower leis? While awaiting the shipment of our belongings and the preparation of our new home, we were afforded a room at an exclusive military resort hotel right in the heart of Waikiki. Not bad. The next four years would be like an extended vacation! And our assigned quarters did not disappoint this image. We were a mere two blocks from the beach! Sure Hawai‘i has a high cost of living; not to worry, we had access to military grocery stores, gas stations, and shopping malls, all in close proximity to
those beautiful beaches. This military privilege allowed us to shop at a
fraction of the price of the regular market.

Once settled, I began to explore my new surroundings. My first
ventures were to the usual tourist spots: Hanauma Bay is any idyllic cove
with breathtaking coral reefs. At the same time I enjoyed the beauty and
magnificence of Hanauma Bay, I also began to develop a sense that
something was wrong. I learned that while the cove provided protection
from the violence of ocean surges, there existed other forms of violence these
reefs could not protect themselves from, including the bombing of sections to
make way for communication cables connecting O'ahu with the world
beyond. Additionally, I became aware that the massive amount of tourists
bussed to this pristine snorkeling destination were entirely ignorant to the
fact that their footsteps were leaving permanent scars on the vulnerable
ecosystem as their flippers trampled the delicate habitats.

As I reflect back on my experiences, I wonder what made me any
different. What I understand now is that even in my ignorance, I had a sense
of respect for the environment and understood the principle of stewardship
that the Hawaiian people, like other indigenous populations, have toward the
land. Furthermore, as I came to know the land, I experienced a sort of passive education—even though I was not actively researching the dynamics of Hawai‘i environmentally, culturally, historically, etc., I was opening myself up to a relationship with the land. I, too, felt and understood such a relationship as essential to my existence as a human being. Through this passive education, an awareness emerged that caused me great discomfort; consequently, I became protective and defensive. After my first few visits to Hanauma Bay, I could no longer return. I became so infuriated by the complete lack of respect and utter disregard displayed by the hordes of tourists. The last time I visited, I left enraged after screaming at a group of Japanese tourists walking in flippers across the reef, for they had no conception of the damage they were causing in their quest to have an enjoyable experience. I climbed the long stairs leaving Hanauma Bay in tears, my heart flooded with a sense of loss and death.

As I immersed myself in the land, I also became acquainted with the people. Before moving to Hawai‘i, I had heard that the Native Hawaiians were racist toward white people. I do not remember the first time I heard the word haole. I do not ever remember being called haole directly; however, I do
remember it as a rather matter-of-fact classification. I understood that the term identified and designated those who were not Hawaiian, not Native, and specifically white non-Natives. I was, essentially, haole, and I did not have a problem with the term. I was a guest, even if an uninvited one, to these islands, and I understood my position. How ironic that upon my arrival, the MWR (Moral Welfare and Recreation) for the military gave me a little paper card that designated me maka 'āina, the Hawaiian word for people of the land. Now that’s audacity! Still, I was oblivious. The only thing I knew was that it gave me privilege. It gave me special discounts and access to tourist attractions and the like. Regardless, the people I encountered were, for the most part, warm and friendly, inviting and gracious. The Hawaiian friends I made welcomed me into their o'hana and shared their culture with me in a way for which I am eternally grateful.

Now, nine years since I first stepped foot in Honolulu and five years after having left the islands, I harbor a range of emotions from warmth and love to anger and resentment to determination and duty. As I reconcile all of these contradictory feelings into something manageable, I understand that

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1 Throughout the rest of this discussion I do not continue to italicize the word haole because it is a common part of discourse in Hawai‘i'.
although I am not Hawaiian, and because I am a part of the system that
exploits Hawai‘i and Hawaiians, I must do what I can to create awareness. I
must make others feel the conflicting emotions I feel and hopefully instill a
sense of responsibility in others to use their craft to create change that benefits
the Hawaiian people and the future of their culture and land.

Perhaps the irony of the preceding passages eludes you. If so, I do not
think you are to blame; however, as citizens of one of the strongest, most
oppressive imperialistic nations on the planet, we have a duty to educate
ourselves. We, those of us who are concerned about universal human rights,
about our environment, about diversity and cultural survival, have the
obligation to understand and work to change the systems of oppression that
exist and thrive at the hands of the culture to which we belong. A feminist
methodology in this context focuses on universal human rights beyond
gender stratification by concerting efforts that challenge gender-dominant
and racially-dominant power structures. These two issues, while admittedly
different, share a common core in that they present a challenge to notions of
authority. This is where feminism extends beyond the boundaries of gender
issues and becomes a more inclusive ideology that focuses, not only on women's rights, but on universal human rights.

Considering my haole status and issues of authority, what role do I play? When I returned to the U.S. mainland and began my graduate work in Literature and Writing Studies, I came to realize there exists a great void of Hawaiian literature within the academy. My time in the islands infected me with a sense of wonder, respect, and appreciation for people, land, and culture, and through that I saw a need to address the void. This project began as an essay for a graduate course in feminist rhetoric where I argued for the inclusion of a Hawaiian fiction author, Kiana Davenport, in a class-produced anthology of feminist rhetors. While developing my essay, I attempted to contact Ms. Davenport. I sent her my essay proposal and an explanation of the academic work I was attempting. It was my sincere hope to engage in an intellectual discussion of the work with the author. In my naiveté, I did not anticipate the vehement rejection by Davenport of my assumption to classify her as a feminist or a rhetor. I was at first embarrassed, then humbled and inspired to explore this rejection. It was through this exploration that I identified a theory of multicultural feminism and developed the discussion
that follows. During the course of this project, however, one nagging problem kept emerging: what authority do I have to argue anything for the Hawaiian people? Further, what authority do I have to make any claims about or classify what work Hawaiian women are doing within the sovereignty movement? Part of the answer has crystallized in response to the claim presented by Haunani-Kay Trask that awareness is the first step in decolonization. In her context, she refers to the awareness of the Hawaiian people regarding the elements, agents, and extent of their colonization as a decolonization of the mind; accordingly, as a non-Native, my intent is that this work creates awareness on the other side of the struggle. And while I do not expect that one written text will enlighten all those who benefit from U.S. imperialism to suddenly realize the cost of those benefits, I hope it will at least create space for awareness to unfold.

For the scope of this project, I will be examining the life and work of Haunani-Kay Trask and arguing that her work as a Hawaiian Sovereignty activist and an educator is rooted in feminist methodologies; furthermore, when viewed through a feminist framework, Trask's efforts demonstrate the characteristics of what I call a multicultural feminism. Davenport's rejection

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2 For an extensive discussion of decolonizing the mind, see Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o.
of my feminist label for her seems to represent a common notion among women of color: they do not see how a white feminist movement has anything to do with them. What I hope to reveal is an evolution of feminism beyond the narrow parameters of the first and second waves. The current strain of feminism is moving toward a more encompassing, inclusive ideology focused on global issues and anchored in an increasingly multicultural framework. Women of color engage the same struggles today that they did fifty, even one hundred years ago; however, what has changed is access and authority. Women of color have more access and authority within academic conversations and thus have forced the inclusion and/or expansion of numerous areas, feminism included. Multicultural feminism does not necessarily imply a category of the 'Other' separate from traditional 'white' feminism. Instead I am suggesting that feminist theories and practices focus on solidarity among women and coalition building within the feminist movement. This focus allows feminism to bridge multiple cultures and ethnicities so that we arrive at a place where there are not ethnic types of feminisms but a multicultural feminism. In this context, a multicultural feminism becomes all-inclusive, acknowledging differences among women,
and men, and moving beyond those differences to focus on common goals concerning universal human rights.

What I propose in the following discussion is that Trask's life and work demonstrate an essential evolution of feminism into a multicultural perspective as one aspect of Third Wave Feminism. Chapter One constructs a feminist framework for my discussion of this multicultural element. Chapter Two provides some historical context regarding the Hawaiian Islands while establishing the contemporary colonial context socially and politically. Finally, Chapter Three presents particular elements of Trask's work over the last two decades, in light of feminist ideologies, to elucidate a multicultural perspective.

Specifically I will be examining her doctoral thesis, *Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory*; a collection of political essays titled *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii*; as well as her current work as a professor within the Center of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. Emerging on the academic field concurrently with some of the more well known feminists of color, Trask has produced a significant body of work over the last decade and a half, and she continues to articulate a
vibrant voice in the cultural-political movement of her native people.

Walking a line between feminist and Hawaiian Native political activist, Trask embodies both of these belief structures, which seem like two intrinsically contrary systems. Many women of color within the academy argue that the traditional feminist ideals serve to create a disjuncture as they try to reconcile their battle for equal rights as women with their struggle for equal rights on a racial level. A look inside the Hawaiian traditions as well as Trask’s feminist approach to Hawaiian sovereignty reveals how the two systems coalesce and provide a model for global feminist ideal, materializing in a new multicultural feminist perspective.
CHAPTER ONE

The struggle is not to find one place where I can exist, but to find it within myself to exist in all of these places, uncompromisingly.

—Rebecca Hurdis

Why is feminism such a dirty word? How and why did it become such? A feminist is not the female equivalent of a misogynist, so why are feminists viewed, by men and women alike, as radical political man-hating activists? This negative connotation to the word feminist and the idea of feminism stems from its essential critique of and challenge to the patriarchal structure of our society. Feminism challenges the social power structure and calls for a redistribution of power where gender is no longer a defining factor. According to bell hooks' definition in her recent book, Feminism is for Everybody, "feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (1). It goes without saying that any challenge to the mainstream social system will be met with hostility, for those who hold the power are not
likely to relinquish it easily. Additionally, these social systems have been reinforced by men and women alike for centuries. A world where gender bias does not exist represents new and unfamiliar territory. As humans, we generally fear what we do not know and/or understand; therefore, our first inclination is to oppose the unknown as alien.

Despite the negative connotations, feminism in the United States has done remarkable work over the course of the last one hundred-sixty years and has enjoyed numerous victories. As we embark on the 21st century, most young women do not know what it is like to be restricted from many of the rights we enjoy today such as participation in our government, the right to vote, the right to own property, the right to an education, the right to work, and the right to speak freely. Ours is by no means an egalitarian society, for disparities still exist within the power structure between men and women, as well as among those of other difference. However, we risk losing the ground we have gained thus far if we do not continue to recognize the efforts of feminists from the past as well as looking toward the future where gender is no longer an issue concerning distribution of power and availability of resources.
Criticism abounds for the currents of feminism. A factor compounding these negative sentiments is the discord within the framework itself. Plagued with a history of division, confusion, and radicalism, the feminist movement, specifically in the U.S., is fractured. Feminism as a movement has lacked solidarity among its proponents. Divided by other issues such as race and class, those working toward a feminist ideal have not been able to coalesce under a uniform banner of feminism. The wave metaphor has become a widely accepted concept when referring to the progression of the feminist movement in the United States. Beginning with the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 where women marshaled together en mass for the first time to demand the same rights and privileges afforded to men by the Declaration of Independence, the period referred to as the First Wave designates women's insertion in the public sphere. The most familiar signification of feminism's first wave is the suffrage movement; however, advocating for women's rights emerged from other efforts including anti-slavery and alcohol abuse.

While the first wave witnessed the success of feminist work with the passage of the Nineteen Amendment to the United States Constitution in
1920, this milestone also brought about a lull in feminist endeavors. It was not until the 1960s that the second wave began to roll in response to post-World War II white middle-class culture. Not coincidentally, the second wave complemented the U.S. civil rights movement as much as the first wave complemented the anti-slavery movement. From the period of the 1960s to the 1980s, second-wave feminists reacted to the social stereotypes of women and their prescribed roles and housewives and mothers. They began enacting the rights given to them on paper into their everyday lives. Betty Friedan’s work, *The Feminine Mystique*, put a voice to the general unease and silent friction white middle-class women were experiencing in their relegation to the home sphere. This time period witnessed the creation of Women’s Studies departments in universities and an increase of women seeking careers outside the home. Also emerging during feminism’s second wave were voices of African American women as they challenged white feminists based on their representations of multiple binaries of race, gender, orientation, and economics. African American women’s critique of second-wave feminism from within denotes the shift toward the third wave, which brought about the diverse identity of feminism-s.
Within theoretical discussions of feminism, the term 'third wave' carries much confusion and ambiguity. This contemporary incarnation of the feminist wave metaphor has many proponents and multiple dimensions. My purpose here is not to define, confine, or explore the totality of third wave feminism, but rather to discuss one essential characteristic in its development: multicultural feminism. The term 'multicultural feminism' represents the progression of feminism from that of mainly white middle-class issues of equal rights between men and women within the existing social structure, specifically regarding work, education, and health care, to an inclusive concern attending to universal human rights where women and men of all colors and races, regardless of economic status, focus their efforts on a global ideal of equality.

While women of color are certainly not new to feminist endeavors, I argue that the necessary evolution of feminism has grown to encompass a broader scope of interests. The reason for this is necessity, and what I refer to as the multiple hat theory. Women of color cannot separate themselves into two mutually exclusive groups—one gender and the other nationality or race. Historically, women of color who have aligned themselves with feminist
efforts have been ostracized from any ethnic endeavors. Similarly, traditional feminism simply has not been accessible to women of color because it necessarily alienates them from their collective ethnic groups. That being said, they have had to, in the past, choose one fight or the other.

Traditionally, feminist concerns have been defined by white middle-class women. This is not to suggest that white women do not encounter issues of race, but traditional feminism has historically operated within the established power structure that supports and promotes white privilege; therefore, white women have not been forced to acknowledge that privilege. Multicultural feminist work begins by confronting and mending the racism within the feminist framework, while simultaneously challenging the power structure based on twin systems of domination: whiteness and maleness.

Multicultural feminism, as one characteristic of the third wave, realigns feminist concerns to include issues pertinent to all women across boundaries of color and class within a cultural framework.

Perhaps the only clear defining characteristic of third wave feminism is that there is no clear defining characteristic. The historical period signified by the term 'second wave' is mostly defined as a white middle-class movement
concerned with issues of white middle-class women; however, the second wave witnessed women of color and varying socio-economic backgrounds who were drawn to feminism on some levels but encountered the reality of discrepancies within the ideal. These women recognized that they were not being wholly represented in the feminist struggle and sought to have their voices heard. They are the predecessors to the multiplicity characteristic of what is known as the Third Wave. Of course, this most recent incarnation of feminism includes more than just a new multi-cultural slant, but that conversation is too great of a scope to be addressed here. What I am concerned with is the multi-cultural direction feminism began to address in the 1980s. This direction is signified by the women of color who were drawn to feminist discussions but who challenged a movement already under fire to include women outside of the mainstream white middle class population.

The shift in focus is not in its infancy by any means; theorists and feminists such as Gloria Anzaldúa and bell hooks have been shining a metaphorical light on the limitations of second-wave feminisms since the 1980s. These women, and others like them, do not fit into the niche carved out by 2nd wavers. Out of necessity, women of color had to approach issues
of feminism and women's rights from a different angle and perspective because they wear multiple hats. Not only are they concerned with equal rights for women, but they are connected culturally to struggles of racial equality. These women began a critical challenge to the feminist ideal; however, this ideal is not and has never been fixed, but it is a fluid concept encompassing an ever-changing body of social politics.

In 1981 Gloria Anzaldúa co-edited and contributed in the landmark book, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. Over the last twenty-five years, this collection of essays, addressing multiple issues of identity, has become a cornerstone of multicultural feminism. For women of all ages who felt excluded and/or ostracized by the second wave feminism of the 1970s and 1980s, this work gave a voice to the struggles they faced as women of color and gave credibility to the location where issues of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation come together as inextricably linked in an individual's identity. *Bridge* became a manuscript for women who did not fit nicely into 2nd wave's ideals of feminist work.

The most significant criticism *Bridge* brought on the current mainstream feminism addressed the lack of solidarity among women. This
text established the notion that feminism needed to address its internal racism before it could coalesce. *Bridge* called for a shift from a feminism that focused almost exclusively on relationships between the sexes to a feminism that focused on the relationships between women. Here they established the need for solidarity: women must begin feminist work at this location before addressing relationships with men in their families and communities. As editors, Anzaldúa and Moraga were looking for a unified movement for women of color—the beginnings of a multicultural feminism.

With a long and distinguished career as an educator, feminist, and activist, Anzaldúa challenged notions of identity on many levels. Next to her involvement with *This Bridge Called My Back*, as well as its 2002 sequel, *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation*, one of Anzaldúa’s most renowned works is *Boarderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. In this text, Anzaldúa successfully shatters conventional notions of identity in a post-modern fashion that juxtaposes different genres of writing as well as multiple languages to create a new space where identity emerges. Her concept of “borderlands” refers literally to the physical border that separates the two countries she is torn between, as well as the multiple nationalities, cultures,
and languages that constitute her identity. As a woman, the spaces where she negotiated her identity, the intersection of gender, race, class, and sexuality, served as part of the foundation for the burgeoning multicultural feminism.

Another well known feminist of color who emerged on the scene in the 1980s is bell hooks. She is a thriving example of the multiple hat theory. hooks is a self-proclaimed feminist, artist, writer, educator, activist, social/cultural critic, and voice for African American women (bell hooks, *Feminism*). Her work explores what it means to be an African American woman in American culture based on a white patriarchal social system. A double minority and a fierce intellectual, hooks challenges conventional identities at every turn and focuses her inquiry on the locations where an individual’s multiplicities intersect.

hooks' first theoretical work, *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, published in 1981, openly and vehemently criticized the racism within the feminist movement. Since then, she has produced a vast body of work including poetry, children’s books, books and articles on feminist and social theory as well as pedagogy. Today hooks still actively engages constructs of identity, specifically through a feminist and anti-racist lens. She
began a critical discussion of feminism's limitations in the 1980s, which contributed to the foundation of multicultural feminism she continues to engage. In her 2000 book on feminist theory, *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks builds upon the claims of racist feminism by discussing practical application of feminist politics and establishing a connection between theory and praxis:

While visionary feminist thinkers have understood our need for a broad-based feminist movement, one that addresses the needs of girls and boys, women and men, across class, we have not produced a body of visionary feminist theory written in an accessible language or shared through oral tradition. Today in academic circles much of the most celebrated feminist theory is written in a sophisticated jargon that only the well-educated can read. Most people in our society do not have a basic understanding of feminism; they cannot acquire that understanding from a wealth of diverse material... because this material does not exist. We must create it if we are to rebuild a feminist movement that is truly for everyone (112).

hooks presents various actions to bridge the gap in feminism between theory and practice. hooks' feminism—multicultural feminism—is not the
conventional brand that has garnered so much backlash and negativity in the media. Instead, she claims that in order to have a broad-based feminism, we need feminist texts that create greater accessibility. Greater accessibility releases feminist discussions from the boundaries of the academy allowing space to address more inclusive issues of social justice that confront sexism as well as racism and classism. What began as a critical challenge to the essential ideals of second-wave feminism in the 1980s laid the foundation for a working practical model of multicultural feminism in the third wave.

The intersections created by women such as Anzaldúa and hooks represent a form of embodied politics where a distinct effort is made to develop and connect theory to the practicality of everyday life. While the second wave of feminism is credited with many strides regarding laws enacted to change socially inscribed gender disparities, the third wave of feminism seeks ways to take theories of equality from both the legal realm and the academy and create greater accessibility. This transition is necessary if feminist politics are to reach a broader racial and economic class of women.

Some academics purport that a return to the notion of embodied politics is insufficient and juvenile, claiming that the contemporary feminism,
or the third wave, is ignorant of its historical predecessors and women risk losing the legal rights won if they do not recognize they are still vulnerable within the patriarchal structure. This claim is valid to some extent, for the majority of conflict that existed in the second-wave feminism of the 1960s and 1970s stems from its narrow parameters. Mainly a white middle-class endeavor, the focus of the second wave, whether intentional or not, failed to address issues of women outside a specific ethnic and economic class. The current strain of feminism, however, is moving toward a more encompassing, inclusive ideology focused on global issues and anchored in an increasingly multi-cultural framework.

The politics of third wave feminism is examined in "The Personal is Still Political" where the authors identify three forms of embodied politics addressed in third wave feminist writings. First, 3rd wavers seek to redefine identity by engaging the differences, ambiguities, and multiplicities among women. Second, continuing the work of solidarity among women, there is a focus on coalition building:

Third wave feminists' insistence on acknowledging and wrestling with complexities and contradictions within and between women motivates
them to build coalitions that allow women to identify simultaneously with multiple identities that have sometimes been regarded as separate and even divisive. In addition, building coalitions helps third wavers resist tendencies to ignore or devalue people who belong to groups other than their own (240).

The intent here is to recognize, even embrace differences, and move past them while still honoring that which makes each of us unique. As women come together as women, as sisters, regardless of other defining factors such as race and class that have functioned previously to divide, they empower each other and feminism exponentially. It is precisely this location where feminism crosses politically limiting boundaries of exclusivity into what Fixmer and Wood identify within third wave writings as an inclusive solidarity.

The third component of embodied politics is identified by Fixmer and Wood as "enacting personal resistance." It is their claim that, "For third wave feminists, the political is inevitably tied to everyday life. They aim to weave structural changes wrought by the second wave into material, concrete life and all of its 'tiny, everyday' moments" (243). This idea promotes a feminism
of embodied politics as women of different racial and economic groups confront inequality and injustice where it occurs. Our feminist predecessors are credited with creating a legal foundation of gender equality; however, contemporary feminists are challenging the local sites where the laws have not yet become the norm. Thus those participating in feminist work begin to enact the changes idealized by the laws so that “a feminist is not just someone who envisions a different world but someone who creates a life that will change it” (Jones 312).

bell hooks echoes this sentiment in *Feminism is for Everybody* where she claims that feminism, if it is to be successful, needs to produce a body of visionary feminist theory written in an accessible language or shared through oral communication (112). hooks identifies actions that challenge sexist norms in our everyday lives and encourages the promotion of feminist thinking as a mass-based endeavor. hooks’ discussion here does not negate the importance of theory or feminist work within the academy, but her point is that we cannot have a feminist movement that works for the equality of everyone if feminist thinking is only engaged in a fixed setting.
The critique of the third wave's focus on embodied politics claims that it has become exclusively concerned with personal forms of resistance (Fixmer 245), and that third wave feminism does not continue to address the laws and institutions challenged by second wavers that inscribe sexism within our social structure. Instead, third wave, or contemporary feminism, focuses its efforts on resistance at local sites, challenging the way people act. Today feminism is more about the reality of institutionalized sexism that persists and permeates social interaction despite the laws created to eradicate it. No law will, in itself, change essential patterns of thought and behavior. This is the core of third wave feminism, and the bridge building occurring in the third wave among conflicts of race, class, and gender is the foundation for multicultural feminism.

Our culture in the United States has been colonized by a patriarchal system of domination where our individual worth is based on our bank accounts, addresses, skin color, and genitalia. If feminism is a movement to end domination, then it cannot focus solely on one form of domination. If we want to eradicate patriarchal domination as the existing social model, then we must extend our efforts to other systems of domination, racial and economic,
that are supported by the patriarchal social structure. In her book, *Feminism is for Everybody*, bell hooks make a clear connection among feminism, racism, and classism and claims that the goal of feminist politics must be “a vision of social change” (42). It is through a combined effort to end all structures of domination, of profound social change, that feminism will find solidarity, for it will take the work of men and women, of all colors, economic status, and sexual orientation, to challenge and change these deeply entrenched systems. Feminism fully actualized, where sexism is eliminated, becomes a movement for social justice and equality.

To explore the concept of multicultural feminism further, I will be looking at Haunani-Kay Trask, who I believe fits into the model of multicultural feminism. Trask culminated her higher education experience with her dissertation, *Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory*, where she explores radical feminist theory. In this work she critiques society’s entrenched patriarchal power structure as one that dominates and subjugates women to roles where value is placed solely on their sexual and reproductive connections to nature. Here Trask identifies her framework of the feminine Eros:
My position is that there is a common ground of radical feminism which begins as a serious critique of patriarchy. Simultaneous with critical analyses of society, the corpus of feminist work points to a multidimensional, alternative vision. Whether examining the family, love in its many forms, or the burdens of mothering, all feminists write from a deep sense for a qualitatively better mode of being and living.

(Eros x)

For Trask, the assertion of the feminist Eros is a method of rejecting structures of patriarchal dominance and simultaneously healing the wounds created as women’s roles have been relegated to those based solely on their function as sexual objects.

In her discussion of the feminist Eros, Trask claims heritage to and discusses the work of second-wave feminists; throughout this text, she aligns herself with the ideals of established feminisms. From the beginning, Trask calls on well-known second waver Adrienne Rich. Trask incorporates Rich’s concept of the ‘sexual understructure’ as the institutional base of patriarchy as “the first cornerstone of [Trask’s] larger theory of the feminist Eros” (Eros x). Trask posits the feminine Eros ideal as a direct challenge to patriarchal
power that has evolved into the contemporary manifestation of a male-dominant social structure. As reclamation of feminine power, Trask identifies the work of “representative feminists” who speak about the feminist Eros in terms of the twin journeys she names “return to the mother” and “return to the body” (Eros xi). Trask calls on an established body of feminist theory to support and advance her claim that only through healing the division of feminine identity can women repair that fissure, challenge the structures of Western culture, and “recast the patriarchal meaning of power” into a communal exchange and sharing of authority (Eros xi).

Extending beyond a discussion of the feminine Eros and power structure relationships, Trask exposes the limiting nature of second-wave feminisms as she critiques the underlying racism within the feminist movement. Written during the mid-1980s, Trask’s feminist explorations began, as did Anzaldúa’s and hooks’, to identify an inherent problem within the feminist structure. In the afterword of Eros and Power, Trask explains the limitations she identifies and speculates what an evolution of feminism might look like. Her speculation foreshadows my theory of a multicultural

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3 Trask develops her concept of the feminine Eros using the work of feminists such as Adrienne Rich, Simone de Beauvoir, Angela Davis, Toni Morrison, Cherrie Moraga, and Mary Daly.
feminism. Trask identifies racism as an underlying current in feminism: “The American Women’s Movement is now at a critical point in its evolution. The questions of race and racism cannot be pushed to the back of the theoretical or political bus any longer” (Eros 179). Trask’s speculation here mirrors sentiments and criticisms advanced by hooks discussed previously and speaks to the emerging space feminism manifests in the third wave as part of a multicultural perspective.

Even though Trask identified the limitations of feminism and the need for a multicultural perspective, her theoretical work did not continue to address those limitations. Upon returning to her native home land of Hawai’i, Trask found her feminist framework unable to support the social and political struggles facing her Native Hawaiian people, men and women alike. In her 1996 article, “Feminism and Hawaiian Sovereignty,” Trask states, “as I decolonized my mind and my commitments, the political and cultural environment at home splintered my acquired feminism from my Hawaiian existence” (909). While still a self-proclaimed feminist, she set aside her concern with feminist theory to work fervently for the political sovereignty of Native Hawaiians. Ironically, this is exactly the type of
feminist work she identified as a necessary direction for feminism. I believe Trask’s work since returning to Hawai‘i demonstrates the very evolution she necessitated. Trask is a vibrant figure at the forefront of the Native Hawaiian struggle for political sovereignty. For the last three decades she has worked to create awareness regarding Hawaiian sovereignty and to return control of her native land to the Hawaiian people. However, her work is not limited to political interests. Trask ties together notions of politics with tradition, language, economics, environmentalism, as well as feminism to create a holistic approach to universal equality. When viewed through a multicultural feminist lens, Trask’s work is congruent with that of Gloria Anzaldúa and bell hooks. These women combine feminism and social activism; for them there can be no distinction.
CHAPTER TWO

By learning, understanding, and perpetuating the moʻolelo of our kūpuna (elders, ancestors), Kanaka Maoli are empowered with traditional 'ike (knowledge). This 'ike inspires us to continue to kuʻē, to resist, and to stand in opposition against colonization and against foreign domination, suppression, and appropriation of who we are and what our culture is and means to us.

—Kuʻualoha Hoʻomanawanui

Most people in the Continental United States think of Hawaiʻi as a chain of beautiful islands somewhere off the West Coast of the U.S.—somewhere we can vacation but stay essentially in our own country. This paradise offers the tropical and exotic combined with the comfort and familiarity of our own culture. Hawaiʻi is marketed as a destination with beautiful beaches, idyllic climate, and warm entertaining Natives. The trick of advertising is a powerful one and has succeeded in perpetuating the myth that the Hawaiian people are happy to be American and happy to have their culture commodified when in fact the slow process of colonization has rendered the Hawaiian economy to one based almost solely on tourism. The greed and ambition of Western business men who saw the islands as an
untapped treasure trove decimated the once flourishing and sustaining political economic system. This new ambition for personal gain and ownership bled into the Hawaiian mentality. Where once the people nurtured a familial relationship with each other and the land, they began, out of necessity and temptation by the new Western ways, to assume a stance of ownership over the land.

Make no mistake about it—Hawai‘i is a colony. This island chain may have been illegally annexed to the United States in 1898 after a violent overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani, but remains to this day a society of Native peoples who live and struggle under the dominant influence of the West. When this powerful force infiltrated the Hawaiian Islands, a devastating process of colonization was set in motion, which affected not only the land itself, but the culture as well, including the language, traditions, gender identification, and local power structures. Since the Calvinist missionaries first descended upon Hawai‘i in the 1700’s, the attitude of white colonizers toward Hawai‘i was one of patriarchal domination. They viewed the land as wild and untamed, full of heathens who lacked the benefits of civilization. They saw it as their divine duty to bring civilization and order to these lush
islands. Fueling that drive was the total disregard for native traditions and for a people who had existed in their own right, caring for themselves and the land for many generations. As the missionaries and business entrepreneurs infiltrated the native population they instilled their own sense of patriarchal superiority over the native social and political constructs. As business interests in sugar production increased and land ownership was coveted by the haole business men, the traditional Hawaiian stewardship and connection to the land as a way of life was corrupted.

In her book *From A Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i*, Haunani-Kay Trask, a self-professed sovereignty activist and prominent figure in contemporary Hawaiian politics, offers a biting description of the process and consequences of the forced colonization of the Hawaiian island from the beginning of Western contact in 1788. In Trask’s opinion, the current political climate in Hawai’i has not changed from these early years of contact: “Such disregard for our culture in our own land recalls missionary imperialism in Hawai’i in the 19th century. Then, Hawaiians were bombarded by white people who fervently believed that Hawaiian culture was an impediment to the salvation of the soul” (274). Trask goes further to
cite that, "For Native people, forced assimilation and acculturation are
nothing less than racism and, in extreme cases, genocide" (264). Clearly, the
sentiment of many Native Hawaiians is one of anger for the theft of their
lands and culture. What seems to complicate the situation further is the fact
that Hawaiian lineage has been diluted with other ethnicities, and the people
lured with the greed and corruption of Western cultural influence

When moving beyond the tourist propaganda and looking critically at
the socio-political and economic dynamics of Hawai‘i, several problems
emerge that need to be addressed. Much of the written history that exists
today regarding Hawai‘i has been written by non-Hawaiian historians,
missionaries, anthropologists, and other such ‘experts.’ The limited numbers
of historical documents that do exist written by Hawaiians themselves, telling
their own stories, do so in their native language. The significant problem
here becomes an issue of authority as we look at who has the power to define
and classify.

Trask confronts this disparity in her text, *From a Native Daughter*, as she
criticizes historians and anthropologists for constructing a Hawaiian history
that directly benefits the colonial enterprise. Since traditional Hawaiian culture was linguistically an oral one, most of recorded Hawaiian history is a Western version of a non-Western nation produced from a Western perspective for Western interests. Because Western scientists and scholars operate from positions of presumed authority, little or no knowledge of the Hawaiian language or culture is needed to construct historical narratives. This is the supporting criticism by Noenoe Silva in her 2004 book, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Resistance to American Colonialism*. Post-colonial theorist Gayatri Ghakravorty Spivak also addresses issues of authority in her article, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" where she identifies the subaltern as members of the non-ruling class in a colonial setting. Her discussion explores how, "in attempting to speak for the subaltern, members of the intellectual elite can only present an interpretation of the subaltern voice filtered through an intellectual/elitist viewpoint" (Gayatri Spivak). While Trask confronts and illuminates this issue in her text, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*, it was not until a decade later that Silva, acting as Spivak's subaltern voice, presented a reconstructed version of Hawaiian

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4 Trask discusses the subversive role of Western scholars in *From a Native Daughter* specifically in the section titled, "What do you mean 'We,' White Man?"
history based on her research of Native Hawaiian texts, thus participating in reclamation of indigenous authority.

The claims of both Trask and Silva, as well as Spivak’s discussion, cause me to look carefully at the sources I access and utilize in support of my colonial representation of the Hawaiian Nation. While familiar with the Hawaiian language, I am most definitely not fluent enough to access Native texts myself. So it is with great respect that I rely on Native scholars who have investigated, read, explored and written about Native texts. I realize my limited authority and choose to give credibility to Native constructs of Hawaiian history as opposed to Western constructs. Thus, the pool of supporting texts is limited. While Native scholars have begun to insert themselves into the very fabric of Western academic institutions, their voice is still but a whisper. I choose to listen to them to know their stories.

As Silva illuminates in *Aloha Betrayed*, there exists evidence of kānaka\(^5\) resistance as an attempt to preserve the inner domain of sovereignty; however, this material was and continues to be conveniently disregarded by Euro-American history. Silva’s purpose is to “...refute the myth of passivity

\(^5\) Kānaka is a Hawaiian term meaning Hawaiian person.
through documentation and study of the many forms of resistance by the Kanaka Maoli to political, economic, linguistic, and cultural oppression...” (1). As Assistant Professor of Political Science and Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai‘i, her work serves to redefine the established conceptions of Hawaiian history. Additionally, she presents a compelling point that “it is still possible to obtain a doctorate in history specializing in Hawai‘i and not be required to learn the Hawaiian language or use Hawaiian-language sources” (3). The rediscovery of Native texts enables Kanaka Maoli to challenge the myth of the happy native cheerfully renouncing traditional systems of government, economy, and culture for superior Western structures. Coupled with the rediscovery of Hawaiian resistance texts is the relatively recent surge of contemporary Kanaka resistance. No longer exclusive to oral tradition, contemporary Hawaiians are using the power of written language as a site of colonial resistance, and cultural and political affirmation. Scholars and political activists such as Silva and Trask are creating new sites of discursive engagement to challenge the conventional practices of colonization. Additionally, resurgence in Hawaiian literature and other cultural modalities such as hula are reinstituting a sense of Native power and recognition.
Before examining Trask’s body of political work, it is necessary to set an historical foundation and context for this discussion by placing the author within the colonial climate of the region. Understanding and examining the historical struggle of the Native Hawaiians, as well as their contemporary struggle to reclaim their heritage, land, and culture, is significant in making a connection between a new feminist paradigm and the multi-cultural ideal because it is only by investigating the history that we understand the current conflicts politically and culturally. The colonial climate of the Hawaiian Islands is essential for this particular discussion of multicultural feminism because, for Trask, the reality of her physical and cultural location cannot be excluded from her feminist politics. It is not viable for her to remain within a feminist framework that does not allow her to address the colonial conflicts of Native Hawaiian rights in solidarity with her people because these two structures are viewed as mutually exclusive—traditional feminism alienates her from her cultural/political struggle and her political work segregates her from strictly feminist issues. Instead, a new multicultural feminist model creates space where Trask’s locality in the colonial climate of Hawai‘i and her identity as a Hawaiian Native merge with her identity as a feminist.
In her 2004 book, *Aloha Betrayed*, Noenoe Silva addresses the myth of the ‘peaceful native’ and asserts the idea that the Native Hawaiians never willingly denounced their traditional culture for Western structures but rather, during the nineteenth century, attempted negotiation between a delicate balance of diplomacy and resistance concurrently. Silva refers to this idea as the myth of non-resistance. Her insightful work asserts the notion that the history of Hawai‘i is incomplete and inaccurate. Silva claims that the events leading up to and including Hawai‘i’s annexation to the United States in 1898 have been misrepresented in Western historiography. Her support for this claim is valid and illuminating as she presents an entire body of evidence in the form of Native texts. Written primarily in Hawaiian, there exists an abundance of anti-colonial sentiment as well as specific anti-annexation literature produced during the 19th century as Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) attempted to assert their fervent desire for sovereignty while at the same time negotiating power relationships with Western nations. Silva illuminates the concept that the popular recorded history of Hawai‘i is a Western history of a non-Western nation. When our historical perspective shifts from a Western view to a Hawaiian view, a much different picture emerges.
The Polynesian Archipelago has its own history of cross colonization. The native peoples of the Pacific islands were not isolated natives ignorant to other cultures. Early recorded Polynesian history is rich with accounts of travelers, both male and female, who sailed the ocean in outrigger canoes exploring neighboring and distant island nations. By the time Captain Cook first landed in Hawai‘i in 1778, the sight of foreigners, even white foreigners, was not alien to the Native population (Silva 18). When missionaries and Western entrepreneurs ventured to the Hawaiian Islands beginning in the early 1800s, their conception of the native population was one of inferiority. It is evident from the way these new arrivals treated the native populous that they assumed the islands were rife with heathens, lacking any form of cultural sophistication. Contrary to this line of thinking, which was used to justify and propel the infiltration and complete disregard for Native Hawaiian culture, the Kanaka Maoli had existed and thrived with flourishing ancient systems of economy, religion, and culture—all inextricably linked. The basic principle for existence in the Hawaiian tradition is pono, which describes a universal idea of balance between all things.
Prior to the missionary influx that eventually lead to the permanent irrevocable alteration of the Hawaiian culture politically and economically, the inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands, Kanaka Maoli, enjoyed a long, prosperous history of culture, government, and economics, all of which were anchored in their notions of cosmology. This is not to say that Hawaiian history is devoid of any struggle, violence, or change; however, there were non-Western systems in place that guided the people in their lives and actions. At the heart of these systems was the basic principle for existence in the Hawaiian tradition: pono. Hawaiian cosmology connects the people to the land. As Silva describes:

The Kanaka Maoli have a genealogical, familial relationship to the land. The islands were said to have been conceived and born like human beings, of the same parents, Papahānaumoke “Papa who gives birth to islands” and Wākea, the sky father, and Hoʻohōkūkalani, “she who creates the stars in the heavens.” (11)

Since the beginning of Hawaiian civilization, Kanaka Maoli have understood the universe and their place in it through an intricate system where the lines between history and mythology are blurred.
The pre-colonial, socio-political economic structures demonstrated this concept of familial connectivity to the land. The systems were stratified but interdependent in a way, as Silva describes, that was not like the feudal systems of Europe because it was not a relationship of subjugation (39). *Ali`i* describes the class of rulers, determined by genealogy, who had a direct line to the *Akua*, or gods. It was the responsibility of the *Ali`i Nui* to protect the *maka`a`inana*, or commoners, keep the `Āina fertile, and appease the *Akua*. In turn, the *maka`a`inana* fed and clothed the *Ali`i*. Each piece was essential to maintaining *pono* (Kame`eleihiwa 26). Within this system, each member had a vital function in maintaining balance and harmony. The people did not own the land, but cared for and nurtured it. The rulers did not suppress the people, but protected and provided spiritual and physical safety for them. The *maka`a`inana* in turn provided for the *Ali`i*. If these relationships ever became unbalanced, change would occur to restore *pono* between the gods, the rulers, the people, and the land. Such was a spiritual, economic, political, land-tenure system that facilitated relationships and bonds of respect, affection, and obligation.
Prior to the arrival of missionaries, the Hawaiian language was solely an oral language. Like many other indigenous cultures, the Hawaiians used story, mo'olelo, and song, mele, to communicate and maintain mo'okū'auhau (genealogies), history, traditions, and tapu (religious prohibitions). Combining these forms of communication with dance, hula was an expression of the spiritual foundation for the Hawaiian culture and was performed at important ceremonies. Hula, as a cultural expression, signified, solidified, and ordered Hawaiian notions of existence. Western influence began to restructure these traditional systems. Based on religious, racial, and linguistic superiority, European and American missionaries imposed systems of dominance that subsumed then eradicated the traditional Hawaiian structures.

The course of colonization was a slow and insidious one that did not happen with any single specific incident. There are, however, three main areas where the process can be examined: cultural (including language, education, and spiritual practice), political, and economic. Although I identify three locations for colonial action, these do not exist in isolation, nor are they all-inclusive. They are main categories I discuss to establish a basic
understanding of the physical and mental colonization of the Hawaiian people by Western institutions. Additionally, this understanding crafts the historical context for my discussion of Haunani-Kay Trask and her participation in multicultural feminism by presenting the larger systems of oppression Trask faces not only as a woman but as a member of a group of indigenous people and their history of subjugation.

Foreigners who came to the Hawaiian Islands during the 19th century generally had two main objectives: either they were missionaries motivated to spread the knowledge of Christianity or they were business entrepreneurs anxious to tap and control the resources of the islands. Often times these people were one and the same. Missionary families became entrenched in Hawai'i, and their roles expanded beyond churches and schools to positions in government as well as business. According to a 1946 article written for the American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations titled, "Hawai'i Seeks Statehood":

The arrival of the American missionaries opened a new epoch not only spiritually but economically and politically as well. The missionaries and their descendants acquired vast property holdings, entered trade,
and assumed a political influence corresponding with commanding economic position. (211)

The infiltration and influence of the missionaries both physically and culturally was overwhelming. Backed by the military forces of the United States, whose interests in the islands were globally strategic, the missionaries and their succeeding generations ensconced themselves into the very fabric of Hawaiian society, altering its structure permanently.

Not only did the missionaries establish the presumed superiority of their religion, but the English language as well. Fueled with the zealous desire to "civilize" the natives, Calvinist Missionaries created the first Hawaiian alphabet in 1819 and began teaching the native people of the islands reading and writing. Citing the emergence of written tradition in Hawaiian culture, author Kuʻualoha Hoʻomanawanui, in the article "Hā, Mana, Lea (Breath, Spirit, Voice) Kanaka Maoli Empowerment through Literature,” states:

From the beginning Kanaka Maoli enthusiastically embraced the technology of writing as a new method of recording oral traditions such as moʻolelo, oli, mele, moʻokūʻauhau (genealogies), and other kinds
of information they wanted to preserve and share. Rather than replace oral tradition, the technology of writing expanded the capability of recording and sharing information within the lāhui Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Nation). (86)

At this juncture, the Hawaiian language was commonly used in oral and written communication, and it was not until 1896, after the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy, that the Hawaiian language was outlawed, and English was established as the only official language. One hundred years ensued in which the Hawaiian people were cut off from their mother tongue.

The alienation of the Hawaiian people from their language had many consequences that supported colonial assimilation. Public school systems became stratified. English language schools, which usually required tuition, were of course better funded and groomed students to enter positions of power in Hawaiian society, business, and government. Hawaiian language schools, in contrast, were much poorer and focused on producing Kanaka laborers to support the growing sugar economy (Silva 46). The economically and linguistically divided educational system supported a racial stratum
placing Hawaiians as inferior to Europeans, which was justified by the Eurocentric notion of superiority.

The stratified educational system functioned to alienate Kanaka Maoli from the traditional social, economic, and government systems and facilitated a shift in the balance of power. While Ali`i still held symbolic positions of power, they were in fact powerless to halt the momentum of American interests: “The increasingly hegemonic European and American styles of governance and patriarchal social codes eroded the ancient Kanaka modes of governance that accorded ali`i nui places on the council based on their genealogy and talent, regardless of whether they were male or female” (Silva 44). Powerful, influential haoles were appointed to positions of power within the Hawaiian Kingdom. Additionally, foreigners began purchasing lots of land as the Euro-American system of land tenure was established. Haoles became the plantations owners, judges, land agents, and church authorities while kānaka became the laborers, defendants, applicants, and suppliants.

Hawaiian leaders could not deny the power of the great world nations of Europe and America, nor could they entirely deflect the “advances” of civilization. European and American missionaries and business men came to
Hawai’i with what they assumed a divine right, if not duty, to “civilize the
heathens,” and to bring them from the darkness of their pagan ways into the
light of Christianity and capitalism. This inclusive colonization stigmatized
traditional Hawaiian culture and established, in the minds of the colonizers, a
basic superiority. The decrease in population of Kanaka Maoli supported the
shift of power from Native to foreign. Poverty, disease, and low birth rates
reduced the Native Hawaiian population to a fraction of what it had been
prior to European influx and contributed to the subordination of the Native
populous to that of haole. As cited in Chapman’s report, a 1946 congressional
report identifies the population count in Hawai’i by the mid 20th century as
34.4% Caucasian, 12.2% part-Hawaiian, 2.2% Hawaiian, with the rest
constituting various ethnicities of Asian heritage (210). It is not surprising
that with a population comprised mostly of foreign haole, who by the late 19th
century had controlling interests in church, state, and economy, there is little
record of resistance to the annexation of the island nation to the United States.

The decline of the native population, coupled with the increase in
haole control, created an opportune environment for a foreign overthrow of
the Hawaiian government: “On January 17, 1893, a Committee of Safety that
represented American and European sugar planters, descendants of missionaries, and financiers deposed the Hawaiian Monarchy and proclaimed the establishment of a Provisional Government (Joint Resolution). On November 23, 1993, one hundred years later, the United States Congress issued a joint resolution, The Apology Resolution, Public Law 103-150, which was signed into law by President Clinton. In this document, the U. S. government and people officially acknowledged the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy and the resulting annexation of Hawai‘i to the United States. Contained in this resolution is an official apology to the Native Hawaiian people for the subversive disregard for their traditional systems and a promise to provide and promote reconciliation between the United States and the Native Hawaiian people (Joint Resolution). Many Native Hawaiians today actively seek political sovereignty and call for a return of control of the Hawaiian government and land to the Native Hawaiian people.

January 16, 1995 the Nation of Hawai‘i signed into law the Hawaiian Constitution. Although they acknowledge the presence and limited function of the Hawai‘i State government, this sovereignty activist group asserts the
indigenous right of the Hawaiian people to form and maintain their own system of government. Sovereignty in this context is the same as for Native American Indians. In their claim for sovereignty, Native Hawaiians are searching for the same nation-within-a-nation status the United States government confers on Indian tribes. The push toward sovereignty is one of many steps Kanaka Maoli are taking to reclaim that right and enter a global relationship as an independent nation. The Preamble to the Constitution draws a specific, detailed, and affirmative argument for Hawaiian sovereignty while promoting Native Hawaiian concepts and values:

**Preamble**

**Aloha Ke Akua**

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants reaffirm our heritage, sacrifices, wisdom and 'Onipa'a (steadfastness) of our late Mo'i Wahine, Lydia Kamaka'eha Lili'uokalani Paki and all our Ali'i, Kahuna (specialists), and Maka'ainana (people) from each of the Mokupuni o Hawai'i Nei, mindful of the Divine heritage and National creed which ke Akua has endowed upon us, and the legacy of Our Ancestors, who exercised sovereignty in a highly developed system of
government based upon Aloha 'Aina, and who lived in and occupied
the Archipelago of Hawai'i since time immemorial;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants appeal to the
Supreme Justice of the world, ke Akua, and Our Ancestors, for the
integrity of our intentions, as we unite to protect our sacred lives and
honor;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants have been subjected
to the international crimes of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity,
as defined in the Nuremberg laws;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants have the right to be
free and independent, unfettered from any foreign power;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants do hereby declare
Our Independence among the Nations of the World;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants reaffirm Our right to
self-determination as a people, and by virtue of that right, We freely
determine to restore Our political, economic, social, and cultural rights;
We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants maintain our spiritual relationship with nature and all our surroundings, in universal harmony, for the rights of humanity, in peace, love, and understanding;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants maintain Divine justice and liberty to be guided by ke Akua and Our Kupuna, and those who are here with us today to light the way;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants maintain a government of the people, by the people and for the people, to protect and preserve Our cultural heritage in perpetuity for the future of our posterity;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants maintain 'Olelo Makuahine as our official language;

We the Kanaka Maoli Nationals and Descendants reaffirm and maintain the 'Ohana System of our society as a whole whereby Kupuna advise and consent, Makua act and lead, and 'Opio help and learn;
Thereby, We the People of the Nation of Hawai‘i, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution.

While the main focus of sovereignty groups such as the Hawaiian Nation is to recover control over systems of government and Hawaiian land, there is also significant momentum to revive the cultural aspects of Hawai‘i that fell victim to over two hundred years of colonial influence and occupation. Beginning in the 1960s, Hawai‘i experienced a cultural renaissance. As Kanaka Maoli began to rediscover the heritage of their language, now intertwined with colonial Western traditions, a syncretism of the English and Hawaiian languages developed, referred to as Hawai‘i Creole English (HCE), or Pidgin. As Ho‘omanawanui describes, “Kanaka Maoli writers have successfully manipulated this colonial language as a tool of empowerment and cultural expression...” (89). While reviving their Native tongue, contemporary Hawaiians have carved a space in which they can connect to their past and express feelings about the present as well as concerns for the future. In addition to written discourse, “talk story” is a contemporary term for the evolution of the Hawaiian oral tradition. In her book *Lady Friends*, Karen L. Ito describes this element of Hawaiian culture:
'talk story' is a relaxed, rambling, sometimes intense commentary or conversation. This form of communication most likely derives from the vast and rich oral tradition of Hawaiian culture. Traditionally skills in reciting myths and telling stories (mo'olelo), making speeches (ha'i 'ōlelo), telling riddles and parables (nane), and reciting the long genealogies of the ali'i (Hawaiian royalty) were treasured. (12)

Even while manipulating the language and tools of the colonizers, contemporary Hawaiians still engage in and utilize the rich oral traditions of their past.

However, the revival and reinvigoration of traditional Hawaiian forms of expression cannot simply be classified as a cultural revival, for these traditional practices signify and support a much more significant aspect of decolonization: cultural nationalism. Trask explains that, "the cultural revitalization that Hawaiians are now experiencing and transmitting to their children is as much a repudiation of colonization by so-called Western civilization in its American form as it is reclamation of our own past and our own ways of life" (Native Daughter 142). Native Hawaiians are rediscovering their Hawaiian identity on multiple levels and utilizing traditional cultural
practices to reclaim political authority in the process of decolonization.

Haunani-Kay Trask is a living breathing vehicle on the road to
decolonization, for she utilizes her authority as a political leader and as an
academic to change the landscape of Hawaiian culture and politics and steer
it back to a focal point of Native authority.

In light of a multicultural feminist framework it is imperative to
understand the current colonial context confronting Hawaiians, for it is
unrealistic that Native Hawaiian women should only challenge gender
oppression without confronting the larger enterprise that promotes
subjugation of an entire race of people. Instead, the focus needs to be
directed toward the patriarchal Western colonial enterprise. Trask presents
her argument in Eros and Power that "feminist insight contains a large analysis
of Western culture as well as a creative response to it" (x). It is precisely this
expanded analysis that functions as a multicultural perspective. When Native
Hawaiians work to reassert their authority as a self-governing nation, issues
of gender oppression are addressed concurrently.
CHAPTER 3

More than a feminist, I am a nationalist, trained by my family and destined by my genealogy to speak and work on my people's behalf, including our women. I am a leader, and my obligation is to lead, both our women and our men. This is my duty to our people—all of them; the ancestors, the living, the yet to be born. I am comfortable with that.

—Haunani-Kay Trask

Feminism exists and has existed outside of its defined “waves.” The first and second waves have been criticized for the exclusion of women of non-white ethnicity. However, if we look at women active within their ethnic and cultural struggle for rights, women politically active for the betterment of their culture, we see a lineage of multicultural feminism. Emerging on the academic field concurrently with some of the more well known feminists of color, Haunani-Kay Trask has produced a significant body of work over the last decade and a half, and she continues to articulate a vibrant voice in the cultural-political movement of her native people. Walking a line between feminist and Hawaiian Native political activist, Trask embodies both of these belief structures, which seem like two intrinsically contrary systems. Many
women of color within the academy argue that the traditional feminist ideals serve to create a disjuncture as they try to reconcile their battle for equal rights as women with their struggle for equal rights on a racial level. A look inside the Hawaiian traditions, as well as Trask's feminist approach to Hawaiian sovereignty, reveals how the two systems coalesce and provide a model for global feminist ideal, materializing in a new multicultural feminist perspective.

Haunani-Kay Trask currently holds an appointment as a professor through the Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa campus, whose mission is "to achieve and maintain excellence in the pursuit of knowledge concerning the Native people of Hawai'i, their origin, history, culture, language, literature, religion, arts and sciences; their interactions with their oceanic environment and other peoples; and to reveal, disseminate and apply this knowledge for the betterment of all peoples" (UHManoa). Trask served for almost a decade as Director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies, and currently maintains an active role in the functioning of the Center. Her teaching and research interests include the following: De-Colonization Movements in Hawai'i and the Pacific; Literature
and Politics of Pacific Island Women; Hawaiian History and Politics; Third World and Indigenous History and Politics; and Feminist Theory (haunani-kaytrask.com). Building upon her academic foundation in feminism, Trask’s current work as an educator and political activist capitalizes on the essential ideals of feminism and has metamorphosed into a focus that surpasses the singular function of a movement to end sexism and exploitation to one that seeks to end the systematic and continued oppression of the Hawaiian people, men and women alike.

This chapter discusses and connects the life and work of Haunani-Kay Trask as a Native Hawaiian, a feminist, an educator, and a political activist. As such, Trask is the embodiment of the multiple-hat theory. Incorporating her cultural heritage and her work in feminist studies, she provides a fervent and active voice in the current struggle for Hawaiian sovereignty as she participates in cultivating a new political and cultural landscape for the Hawaiian people on a local and global scale. From her Ph.D. dissertation, *Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory*; to her collection of political essays, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i*; to her position as the first full-time Director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies and
professor at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, Haunani-Kay Trask is a prominent and active figure in her culture and community, whose life and work demonstrate the essential evolution of feminism into a multicultural perspective.

Trask's body of work since publishing her dissertation, specifically her text, *From A Native Daughter* and her continued academic and grassroots activities, represents the new direction of feminism: a multicultural approach, for she has extended her efforts beyond solely feminist concerns to the struggle of an entire nation of people for equality on a global scale. With a solid foundation and rich heritage in second wave feminisms, Trask's current work politically, socially, and creatively demonstrates the necessity and success of a multicultural feminist framework. As an educator and political activist, she is the embodiment of a multicultural feminism, which is a necessary progression from her heritage of second wave feminists, into work that broadens the scope of feminism. Trask's efforts serve the interests and betterment of the Native Hawaiian people and culture as a whole to which she is connected.
In her Ph.D. dissertation, *Eros and Power: The Promise of Feminist Theory*, Trask develops a feminist critique of the patriarchal structure of Western society. In this analysis, she describes the context of feminine subjugation where women "suffer a colonized mentality" as the 'other' within the patriarchal structure (*Eros* 25). Trask’s assessment of Western patriarchy correlates with a similar critique regarding the colonial system of sociopolitical subjugation. Her claim, analogous with hooks’, is that traditional feminisms seek equal distribution of power within the existing social structure. Trask and other Hawaiian sovereignty activists do not simply seek equal representation and power within the colonial Western system of economics and government, which includes local state government, but rather work to establish a structure of self-government, self-determination. Trask explains:

The agenda for Hawaiians more than a century after the overthrow of our government by the agency of the United States must include the largest framework of indigenous human rights. Civil rights must be subsumed under human rights... [and] must be understood and argued in terms of our human rights as indigenous people rather than

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6 For a discussion of hooks’ critique of feminism, see *Feminism is for Everybody*, hooks, bell.
merely as citizens of the United States or the state of Hawai‘i. (*Native Daughter* 38)

With this focus on human rights, extending beyond any gender stratifications, Trask demonstrates a multicultural feminist approach.

While first and most second wave feminists directed their energies toward inclusion within the existing power relationships, which were white European models of patriarchy, multicultural feminists such as Anzaldúa and hooks emphasize issues of equality that extend beyond an exclusive focus on gender stratification while simultaneously critiquing the Euro-American systems that support and reward male-dominated behavior and practices. Similarly, Trask’s concern attends to a cohesive cultural group of indigenous people asserting their rights to self-determination regarding land use, government, economics, education, and forms of cultural expression. This essentially cannot happen for Hawaiians within the existing sociopolitical framework of an American bureaucracy. If we apply Trask’s feminist ideals to issues of indigeneity⁷, specifically her own assertions regarding Hawaiian

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⁷ Although I use the term ‘indigeneity’ in my analysis of Trask, this is not her term. Indigeneity is an anthropological term used to describe the issue of native self-ascription as well as settler imposition within the colonial context. I use this term because it signifies that the settler culture has forever altered the native landscape, thus a return to the traditional is no longer possible. Instead, the concept
Nationalism, an implication surfaces where Hawaiian sovereignty does not mean addressing or changing the current power structure; rather, it is denouncing the authority of the existing structure and reclaiming control within a new Hawaiian system of sovereignty.

Although Native Hawaiians, like any other citizen of the State of Hawaii, are subject to the state and federal governments, these agencies function for the benefit of the colonizer, not the indigenous population. As such, Native Hawaiians remain outside the legal system of the colonizers and subjugated participants in an economic structure that is destructive to the land while simultaneously marginalizing the people who claim a genealogical connection to it. The Native Hawaiian sovereignty movement asserts Native authority and seeks self-determination as a nation-within-a-nation similar to the Native Americans. Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi, one of the Hawaiian sovereignty organizations, outlines their political goals:

Ka Lahui’s approach is to seek inclusion for the Hawaiian people in the existing U.S. federal policy which affords all Native Americans the right to be self-governing, and to obtain access to the federal courts for

of indigeneity addresses a return of authority to indigenous peoples to ascribe and assert a manifestation of their culture in a new context. For a discussion of the term indigeneity, see Thuen p.24 and Wolfe p. 26.
judicial review. Once this is achieved, the sovereign nation can explore with the state, federal and county governments, resolution of claims relating to the Native trusts and other entitlements. Ka Lahui believes that the nation should be created before Native entitlements are negotiated. It is the right of the sovereign entity to advance the claims of the people and to explore ways to resolve conflicts with the State and the U.S. (Hawaii-nation.org)

In an effort to expose the political dispossession of Native Hawaiians, Trask wrote a number of articles in the early 1990s, which were compiled and published together as her second book, From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i in 1993. This collection offers a critical analysis of the colonial imposition of the United States over the Hawaiian land and the indigenous people as it advances a compelling argument against U.S. possession and control of the Hawaiian Islands. Trask frames her analysis in a global context of U.S. imperialism and human rights concerning indigenous people, who have been subject to such imperialism. Her claim is that the U.S. has committed “undeniable violations” of the right of self-determination of Native peoples where U.S. imperialism is justified by the Declaration of
Independence and the Constitution, and these "basic" and "inalienable" civil rights supersede basic human rights of those who impede U.S. imperialism (27). Trask's biting critique of U.S. policy specifically focuses on two key issues regarding the U.S. occupation and colonial control of Hawai'i: commodification of the Hawaiian people and culture for the tourism industry, and the nuclearization of land and sea associated with U.S. military interest. Both of these areas depend on U.S. control of land base and politics.

Trask's discussion in From a Native Daughter demonstrates feminist ideologies and methodologies on several levels. First, Hawaiian women are at the forefront of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, often in direct opposition to many of their male counterparts who have internalized the values of the colonial system and become entrenched in the state government bureaucracy. Second, the Hawaiian sociopolitical attitude is fundamentally contrary to the Western patriarchal stance. As a people and culture, Hawaiian stewardship demonstrates a familial relationship to the land and each other versus the U.S. patriarchal system that encourages and rewards a male-dominant attitude of individuality, ownership, and control. Third, the argument against colonial dominance over the land and treatment of the
indigenous people is similar in form and structure to the feminist argument against patriarchal dominance over women. Trask illustrates how the Hawaiian people and land are prostituted for the benefit of U.S. power. Fourth, Trask acknowledges that the sovereignty movement will not happen in isolation, thus part of her work establishes a network of indigenous peoples struggling against similar colonial oppression that begins with Native Hawaiians, cultivates Pacific Island solidarity, and allies with other groups subject to colonial oppression around the globe.

Ka Lāhui Hawai’i is a Native initiative for self-government founded in 1987 and led by elected Kia’aina, or governor, Mililani Trask. Since its inception, Ka Lāhui has experienced massive growth in membership and political momentum. In 1995, the organization published a Master Plan for self-government that connects international law to the cultural perspectives of Native Hawaiians and asserts its authority as a governing entity. Ka Lāhui functions as an organizational collective for Hawaiian sovereignty, which it defines as “the ability of a people who share a common culture, religion, language, value system, and land base to exercise control over their lands and lives independent of other nations” (Native Daughter 71). In this capacity, the
organization focuses on legislative action toward terminating the wardship of Hawai‘i by the United States and claiming jurisdiction over national assets, lands, and natural resources (*Native Daughter* 77).

Mililani Trask, Haunani-Kay Trask’s sister, is an educated litigator who, like her sister, works ardently for Native Hawaiian sovereignty. These women are two examples of women’s prominence at the forefront of the sovereignty movement. Additionally, Trask offers two other examples of Hawaiian women leaders within the sovereignty movement and discusses their roles in the context of *mana*. This Hawaiian term is loosely associated with the English word, charisma; however, the cultural and linguistic connotations of *mana* are not signified by this English equivalent. *Mana* is an expression of personal power, but entails more than merely an individual’s potential for leadership. As Trask explains, “the actualization of achievement of *mana* in terms of political leadership requires more than genealogy, it requires specific identification by the leader with the people” (*Native Daughter* 91). Additionally, there is a symbiotic link between the ability to demonstrate *mana* and the cultivation of *pono*, the traditional Hawaiian value of balance among people, land, and the cosmos. According to Trask, “Only a leader
who understands this familial, genealogical link between Hawaiians and their land can hope to reestablish pono, the balance that has been lacking in the Hawaiian universe since the coming of the haole. The assertion of the value of pono, then, awaits a leader with mana” (Native Daughter 91). As a decolonizing agent, mana functions to directly oppose “the American system of electoral power while reclaiming a form of political leadership based on Hawaiian cultural beliefs” (Native Daughter 92).

As Trask demonstrates in her discussion, many Hawaiian women have been cultivating and demonstrating their mana within the Hawaiian sovereignty movement:

And on the front lines, in the glare of public disapproval, are our women, articulate, fierce, and culturally grounded. A great coming together of women’s mana has given birth to a new form of power based on a traditional Hawaiian belief: women asserting their leadership for the sake of the nation. At this very moment, nationalist women leaders are organizing and leading our people, even if that entails opposition to our Hawaiian men’s leadership in the electoral system and in the movement. (Native Daughter 94)
In this capacity, Hawaiian women not only challenge the established patriarchal systems of power, but function to legitimize traditional Hawaiian values and sociopolitical structures. This is precisely the type of feminist work a multicultural perspective exhibits. This is not to say Hawaiian men are incapable of cultivating *mana* or *pono*; however, Trask reasons that the preponderance of women in leadership roles within the sovereignty movement, and thus the lack of Hawaiian men, can be directly linked to the lure of American patriarchal enterprise that rewards male-dominant behavior with positions of power. Trask identifies colonialism as the culpable agent: “men are rewarded, including Native men, for collaboration. Women’s role, if they are to be collaborators, is not to wield political power but to serve as an adjunct to men who do” (*Native Daughter* 94). The presence of Hawaiian men in leadership roles within the American electoral system, a system that continues to legitimate colonial control over Native Hawaiians, illustrates how the Western patriarchal power structure created gender stratification and functioned to alienate Hawaiian women and men. This effect lingers and persists as it manifests in the contemporary political climate. Before the influx of Western culture, values, economics, and politics, traditional Hawaiian structures included women equally on all levels. Colonization
restructured women’s roles, relegating them to domestic functions while extracting their political power. An essential element of decolonization is the reassertion of women in positions of power. In the context of mana, it is Hawaiian women, at this historical juncture, “who have demonstrated most forcefully what pono leadership might be” (Native Daughter 95). For Native Hawaiian women the work to restore traditional power structures is essentially feminist work because it directly challenges the patriarchal colonial establishment.

The Hawaiian concepts pono and mālama ʻāina, “to care for the land,” are intimately related and express the intrinsic cosmological beliefs of the Hawaiian people. Pre-contact Hawaiian systems functioned, based on these concepts, to support and nurture the people and land in harmony. Native Hawaiians participated in a system that supported a reciprocal, balanced familial relationship connecting them genealogically with the land. Trask explains: “In our genealogy, Papahānaumoku, ‘earth mother,’ mated with Wākea, ‘sky father,’ from whence came our islands, or moku. Out of our beloved islands came the taro, our immediate progenitor, and from the taro, our chiefs and people” (Native Daughter 59). With haole contact came a new
system of land tenure that disrupted the cosmological relationship between Hawaiian people and the land, as well as a new religious mythology that disrupted traditional Hawaiian relationships and notions of family. These changes dismantled traditional concepts of malama 'āina, and o'hana, or family, and established the norm of the nuclear family and the concept of land ownership while creating a fissure in the cultivation of pono. Further, this new influence unequivocally changed the socio-political structure of Hawai‘i and supported the entrenchment of a distinctly Euro-American perspective of male-dominance and racial superiority. Similarly, the shift in perspective underscores the current argument for sovereignty as Trask identifies, “The inevitable conflict between land that is collectively held and land that is individually owned will never cease because it is a conflict between cultures whose values are directly opposed” (Native Daughter 107).

These new Western perspectives were in direct conflict with harmonious interconnected traditional systems. Contrary to the familial bond Hawaiians share with their land, U.S. interests serve U.S. power, both economically and militarily. Sacred land is abused in support of military prowess and developed to sustain the massive influx of tourists.
Additionally, the Hawaiian people are trained from an early age by state schools to enter the tourist industry as laborers and cultural artifacts. Where once the Hawaiian people nurtured a familial relationship with the land and each other, they are now fodder in the U.S. capitalistic empire. This influence and change is not unique to the Hawaiians, as Europeans and Americans have a long history of cultural imposition and annihilation against traditional cultures and indigenous peoples. Consequently, the reassertion of traditional Hawaiian values of *pono* and *mālama ʻāina* is a key component in decolonization, for they directly challenge the posture of the colonizer toward the colonized as one of dominance, control, and ownership and legitimate Native Hawaiian rights. Here, Native Hawaiians reject Euro-American systems of indigenous subjugation based on ancestral authority: “We are steward of the earth, our mother, and we offer an ancient, umbilical wisdom about how to protect and ensure her life” (*Native Daughter* 59).

As systems of Euro-American dominance have taken control within the Hawaiian socio-economic and socio-political realms, fundamental changes have occurred that are directly linked to the subjugation and alienation of the indigenous people. No longer in control of their land base,
political structure, or economic systems, Native Hawaiians have become commodities in the tourist industry and either pawns or pests in the continued expansion of the U.S. military presence in Hawai‘i. In From a Native Daughter, Trask cites these two machines as “twin engines” of colonization that are responsible for the increased “rapacious consumption of our physical and cultural heritage...” (60). Demonstrating a feminist perspective, Trask very skillfully places the current economic and cultural situation of Hawai‘i in the role of oppressed female in a patriarchal relationship using a metaphor of prostitution where the Hawaiian culture is the prostitute and the state is the pimp who produces, regulates, and benefits from the exploitation of the prostitute. Even though Hawai‘i has its own state government, this organization is part of the colonial enterprise, whose interests serve to support the systems of colonial oppression, and therefore participate in the continued subjugation of the Hawaiian people.

Trask works to expose and debunk the paradisal myth of Hawai‘i, which is all most of ‘us’ know about the islands. Tourist propaganda, produced by the state as well as the business conglomerates dependent upon the industry, has packaged the Hawaiian culture for consumption. The direct
agent of consumption is the Hawaiian people: “The people live in a hostage economy where tourist industry employment means active participation in their own degradation” (Native Daughter 50). Here Trask uses a sexual metaphor to explain the relationship between Native Hawaiians, their culture, and the tourism industry. Supported by propaganda, Hawai‘i becomes the beautiful and exotic respite to Western ills where happy natives welcome you with love and give undyingly to meet your every fantasy. The more money you have, the better the fantasy you can purchase. In this context Trask defines cultural prostitution, specifically where Hawaiian women are concerned:

In the case of Hawaiian women, the definition of us as alluring, highly eroticized Natives is anchored by a tourist economy that depends on the grossest commercialization of our culture. Because of mass-based corporate tourism, our women have become purveyors of our dances, our language, our islands, in other words, all that is beautiful about us. This is cultural prostitution, often with our own people’s willing, if unexamined, participation. (Native Daughter 106).
While this myth is based on intrinsic elements of Hawaiian culture, the industry that supports and is supported by the paradisal myth concurrently exploits traditional cultural values and exacts its dominance over the land while assuming the role of predator. Sacred Hawaiian sites are disrupted and developed to build resort complexes; water supplies are depleted to support the massive influx of tourists; and the beaches and ocean, which once supported a traditional socio-economy, are now prime real estate for recreation and development.

In addition to appropriation and development of Hawaiian land by the tourist corporations, a large portion of land is held by the U.S. military. Perhaps even more grievous and most definitely more violent, the nuclearization of Hawai‘i, as well as the entire Pacific Rim, has resulted in extreme decimation of the islands, forever altering the cultural and historical landscape of Hawai‘i. Additionally, the process of nuclearization has served to further dismantle traditional Hawaiian values. Trask’s response to the commodification of Hawaiian land illustrates the familial separation Hawaiians experience under colonialism as a relationship of the value of

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8 Trask offers a complete discussion of nuclearization and its role in the colonial context of Hawai‘i. See From a Native Daughter, p.49.
indigenous peoples, and their land, to the colonial powers. She states, “Thus, our land is no longer our mother, source of physical and spiritual sustenance. She is now a resource for consumption and profit” (Native Daughter 103).

The implications become evident if you look beyond the propaganda and hype used to mask the stark and contrasting reality of the situation: “…the awful exploitive truth [is] that the industry is the major cause of environmental degradation, low wages, land dispossession, and the highest cost of living in the United States” (Native Daughter 144). Furthermore, Trask elucidates the socio-economic implications of the mass-based tourist industry as she claims it has:

...resulted in grotesque commercialization of Hawaiian culture, creation of a racially-stratified, poorly paid servant class of industry workers, transformation of whole sections of the major islands into high-rise cities, contamination and depletion of water sources, intense crowding..., increases in crimes against property and violent crime against tourists, and increasing dependency on multinational investments... (50)
What Trask illustrates in her discussion of the Hawaiian tourism industry is an exploitive relationship where the state government and multi-national corporations benefit economically from a system that commodifies Hawaiian culture, uses Hawaiian people as agents of their culture for commodification, and exploits the land in the process, all for their own profit. Trask’s prostitute metaphor simultaneously captures the nature of the colonizer/colonized relationship while applying a particularly feminist perspective.

While the struggle for Native Hawaiian sovereignty is specific and localized, Trask develops her claims on the foundation of feminist ideologies that are inclusive on a global level as well. This inclusion at once gives context to Native Hawaiian claims while at the same time creating a global community and support network for indigenous peoples struggling against similar colonial oppression and cultural genocide. Early on Trask identifies the political context among the Pacific Island nations as a common struggle and asserts the notion of Pacific Island solidarity. She states, “Pacific Island solidarity, then, has been formed in the teeth of First World aggression or aggression by regional powers... that are supported by First World
institutions...” (Native Daughter 45). While other Pacific nations and colonial controlled land bases may not share a similar system of oppression and exploitation, they are united in a common struggle, thus creating strength in numbers.

Trask’s discussion does not function merely to illuminate the struggle of contemporary Hawaiians or the larger issue of indigeneity. In her work, she presents specific strategies for addressing the issues facing the Hawaiian people and other Pacific Island nations where “The myth of an unspoiled paradise somewhere in the Pacific is belied, of course, by the realities of nuclear poisoning, impoverishment, racism, and exploitation” (Native Daughter 51). In the context of Pacific Island solidarity, Trask presents suggestions concerning self-determination, nuclear-free pacific, protection of natural and cultural resources, and foreign policies and regional security, all of which she identifies as crucial to the survival of the Pacific Islands.

As an extension of Pacific Island solidarity, Trask situates her discussion in a global context of indigenous human rights, “an international frame of reference that involves universal human rights must be the context for discussion of sovereignty” (Native Daughter 39) and aligns the fight for
Hawaiian sovereignty with the Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the basis that:

... indigenous peoples have been deprived of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, resulting, inter alia, in their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests... *(Native Daughter 198)*

This placement extends the authority of her claims because it connects a long history of injustice and oppression to the specific current position of Native Hawaiians. This process is a reciprocal one; however, as Trask’s work, while explicitly for the Hawaiian people, encompasses a larger community of indigenous people around the globe. This extension is in itself a feminist practice as it cultivates community and inclusion.

Furthermore, Trask discusses a fundamental shift in perspective necessary on a global level as an opposition to the emerging New World

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9 A copy of the Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is included in the appendix of *From a Native Daughter*.
10 The section in *From a Native Daughter* titled “Neocolonialism and Indigenous Structures” was a speech Trask delivered at the 1990 world conference of Native Women in Norway. Trask states, “This speech was intended to underscore our shared conditions and commonalities (101).
Order. In this discussion, Trask presents a feminist methodology where she claims that “to create an alternative to the New World Order, those who live in the 1st world must change their culture, not only their leaders” (Native Daughter 62). This shift denotes a change in priorities from exploitation, consumption, and imperialism to systems of coexistence that recognize, support, and nurture alternative practices of subsistence. Trask acknowledges that even as a collective group, Native peoples are probably not equipped to stave off the mechanisms that propel the forces of the New World Order; however, she does draw a specific illustration concerning what conditions are necessary for indigeneity and survival of Native cultures:

Native peoples’ resilience depends on certain physical conditions: our homelands must be protected from destructive developments, such as deforestation, industrial projects, and mass-based tourism; immigration and in-migration into Native areas must be regulated or restricted by indigenous peoples for our benefit; and indigenous human rights, like those enunciated in the current Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples now being

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11 Trask does not discuss New World Order theories in any detail; however, the term denotes a conspiracy theory of global control by a cryptocratic entity. For an in-depth discussion, see Barnet and Cavanagh Global Dreams.
considered, must be guaranteed. These rights include rights to self-determination on an aboriginal land base; rights to our languages, to our religions, to our economies, to integrity as distinct peoples, to the security of our families, especially our children and perhaps most urgently, the right to be protected from physical and cultural genocide. Above all, modern nation-states, especially the super industrial powers of Japan, the United States, and European countries, must honor and protect these rights because they are the nations most responsible for chronic violations. (*Native Daughter* 61)

In an effort to resist the forces of neo-colonialism, Trask’s work includes the collaboration among oppressed indigenous peoples beyond her homeland. In this sense, she works to extend Pacific Island solidarity and cultivates a global support network.

However bleak the picture may be presently for Native Hawaiians, the resistance movement is still growing. The political climate of Hawai‘i exudes much conflict as Natives raise their voices loud in protest and continue to reassert traditional values and Native authority. Trask identifies awareness as the first step in decolonization, but that awareness is hard fought as the
systems of subjugation are deeply entrenched in contemporary Hawaiian culture. Trask speaks with a vibrant and passionate voice, using her awareness and education to support and encourage the enlightenment of her o'hana:

This is a measure of the depth of our own mental oppression: we cannot understand our own cultural degradation because we are living it. As colonized people, we are colonized to the extent that we are unaware of our oppression. When awareness begins, then so, too, does decolonization. Judging by the growing resistance to new hotels, to geothermal energy and manganese nodule mining, which would supplement the tourist industry, and to increases in the sheer number of tourists, I would say that decolonization has begun, but we have many more stages to negotiate on our path to sovereignty. (Native Daughter 145)

Trask’s role as an educator at the University of Hawai’i has been an endeavor in raising awareness. While challenging the dominating patriarchal forces of the Western institution, Trask has fought every step of the way to
reclaim Native authority and establish that authority within the academy. Her struggle has been constant and against both sexual as well as racial oppression. For Trask, there is no difference between her work as an educator and her work as a sovereignty activist, both of which are informed by her feminist heritage. Even though Trask identified a disjuncture between her early feminist endeavors and her sovereignty work, the path she has carved in the last thirty years represents feminist work from a multicultural perspective. Through her role at the University of Hawai‘i, she has cultivated a landscape for Native authority that has continued to grow. For Trask, and other Native Hawaiians, the University has become a sight of resistance where a majority of those engaging in conflict are Hawaiian women. Trask expresses the sentiment that, “our women are fierce warriors, who are here to get work done” (interview). The growth of the Hawaiian Studies department within the university is a manifestation of multicultural feminism in that Hawaiian Studies is dominated by Hawaiian women, who have at the forefront of their efforts Native Hawaiian rights. According to Trask, feminism is women leadership (interview). Reflecting on the lineage she and her cohorts have created, she sees a new generation of fierce and defiant

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12 From a Native Daughter Part IV constructs a detailed narrative of Trask’s struggles against the racism and sexism she experienced for over a decade as a faculty member at the University of Hawai‘i.
young Hawaiian women who “have a history we created for them and gave them” (interview). This history is an authoritative foundation upon which they are continuing to build. Additionally, Trask recognizes the implicit authority of her position within the university and has directed that authority toward the benefit of Native Hawaiians men and women alike, at every turn.

The fundamental objection from women of color regarding feminist theory is that white feminist values cannot be transplanted on women of other cultures because they encounter different struggles. Trask identifies her feminism now as “Hawaiian Feminism” meaning that “for Hawaiian women, [feminism] is about what we think is important as Hawaiians and as women to push into the public realm” (interview). As women of color engage in feminist work and feminist discussions, they are redefining feminist issues. Hawaiian women’s issues are grounded in the larger issue of colonialism. Trask explains: “Hawaiian women’s disastrous health profile is a result of colonialism and the subsequent loss of control over our islands and our lives. Thus does a ‘woman’s issue’ become a sovereignty, not a feminist, problem for us” (“Feminism” 91). Accordingly, Trask’s work, and that of other
Broadening this concept, we arrive at a location in line with hooks’ identification that the goal of feminist politics must be a “vision of social change” (*Feminism* 42). This vision of social change is the manifestation of a multicultural model for feminism, one that moves beyond women’s issues in isolation, or in any one specific cultural, economic, or national classification. Instead, feminist work becomes defined by women who struggle for the betterment of their people in a specific context. A re-envisioning of embodied feminist politics is occurring within third wave feminism as women of color assert their authority and their concerns; now we must challenge the theory to change as well and create cohesion within the feminist movement. As Mari Matsuda succinctly describes in her analysis of feminist coalition theory, “...we cannot, at this point in history, engage fruitfully in jurisprudence without engaging in coalition, without coming out of separate places to meet one another across all the positions of privilege and subordination that we hold in relation to one another” (74). Coalition is a recurring concern addressed by many third-wave feminist writers as they seek solace in
solidarity. No matter what an individual woman’s cause, it is as significant as that of her sister next door and that of her sister three thousand miles across the Pacific Ocean. Only by realizing that our differences do not separate us but are merely an intrinsic reality of the human condition, will we be able to set aside those differences and come together with a unified focus on universal human equality. It is only from this location where we will manifest the changes we seek.
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