

# Weaving Histories: Indigenous Representations & Reproductions

*CASA Partnership | Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity (MALO)*



*Image Credit: Geographic.media "Crafting Tapa Cloth"*

## Acknowledgements

This work would not be possible were it not for the tireless protection and stewardship of this land lead by the Tongva, Serrano, and Cahuilla tribes of what we now consider the San Bernardino/Eastern Los Angeles County area. In addition to thanking them for their perseverance and resilience against coloniality, I'd like to acknowledge Ontario California as part of the unceded territories of the Tongvan people.

In this paper, I will unpack the interwoven legacies of histories of displacement, diaspora, settlement, and resurgence in this area with explicit focus on the cultural knowledge of Tongan Americans. In addition to the land acknowledgement, I'd also like to acknowledge the sacrifices made that allow me to be here doing this work, specifically my mother who sacrificed her own academic pursuits to raise a family as a teenager.

I want to highlight and center the Soakai family for their commitment to serving the community and the love and focus they have poured into cultivating the type of spaces that they have. I'd also like to specifically thank Lolofi for supporting my work through CASA and welcoming me into such spaces.

Lastly, as an indigenous researcher, it does not elude me the significance of vernacular in naming a community. I wanted to thank MALO for trusting me with such meaningful work and the professors and staff at CASA Pitzer for empowering me with the right tools to create meaning through impactful writing.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Introduction	1
Literature Review	4
Methods	6
Results	8
Conclusion	18
References + Appendices	19-20

## Introductions

Spring semester of my freshman year at Pitzer, I enrolled in an Asian American studies course called *Community Health* at Pomona. Aside from the fact that I had to drag myself across campus at seven p.m. every Wednesday night for a seminar, I was teeming with excitement for everything I had heard about the course, particularly the professor who I had understood to be nothing short of a k̄anaka wonder woman. In addition to critical analysis of colonial structures that perpetuate illness in Pacific Islander communities, we also evaluated our sense of what it was that indigenous people knew and how these values are articulated through cultural resurgence and revitalization work.

It was through this class I became introduced with the Saturday Tongan Education Program (STEP) through K̄ehau's concept of Trans-indigenous solidarities (Vaughn 2018), and subsequently became familiar with the Tongan presence in the Inland Empire.

According to a 2016 KPCC article, around 1/2 of LA's Tongan population are living in poverty, many facing unemployment with a low average income of \$5100 (Stewart 2016). Additionally, their overall small community population in southern California means census-wide margins of error, which end up being manifested through a gross academic achievement gap and underfunded health and educational programs. That being said, Tongans have been in California for as long back as 1916 just before World War II. The motivation for immigration have varied from seeking agricultural growth to spiritual emancipation through missionary work. Their communities have come to represent the sheer will to create a better future for generations to come.

Through semi-structured qualitative interviews and talking circles, I aim to unpack the (lack of or mis)representation of Tongan identity in data, media, and global political discourse, as well as reflecting on some strategies for self-determination and production of authentic representations of Tongan cultural knowledge in Southern California. After Ka'ili, I intend to develop on their framework of socio-spatial ties and turn towards implementing Tongan ways of knowing to discuss those impacted by the Tongan diaspora in the Inland Empire (Ka'ili 2005). As a continuation of my work that began in 2018 with the *Community Health* course, it is through this dignified recognition I aim to build on the theory of trans-indigenous coalition forming, wherein our distinct and recognizably different traditions can be interwoven to create a cloth symbolic of revitalization. Like the tapu bark cloth, this solidarity is passed down through generations and must be maintained with a similar rigor and carefulness.

This brings me to the focus of this research, MALO, or Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity, is a nonprofit organization that serves Tongan Americans in the Inland Empire area through youth mentorship, job readiness, resource literacy, and cultural gathering events. They have programs that recur weekly, such as their partnerships with Pomona College and Chaffey High School to serve Tongan students with one-on-one tutoring and college counselling from peers in the local area, and weekly practices held in their space at the Methodist church in Ontario. They also have several educational and professional development workshops as well as a culminating annual showcase event full of song, dance, and information around what is happening in the local community. With the 2020 Census approaching in April, a main focus during my internship was outreach and education resources around the benefits and significance of participation in the Census, particularly as a 'Hard To Count' population.

However, before diving deeper into the specific details of MALO and the work they do to serve Tongan American families in the Inland Empire, I will situate my research within an expansive inheritance of struggling for representation in spaces like academic curricula and historical data records. Through a review of the literature relevant to this discourse of diasporic indigeneity and decolonial community organizing, I will connect the pedagogical approach of MALO to how academia discusses and categorizes Tongan American narratives and how I will be interacting with these assumptions in my writing. Then, in research methods, I will review my interviewing protocol and the origins of the practices I used to develop my conversations with participants while maintaining boundaries and discretion.

Finally, I will review both the concrete and conceptual talismans that emerged through this interviewing process and bridge this internship experience to the transnational struggle for indigenous sovereignty and resurgence of our ancestral ways of knowing.

## Literature Review

This research is situated within the larger movement for ethnic studies to be more thoroughly engaged as a curriculum, both within academia as well as in everyday discourse. Ethnic studies movements emerged out of the 1960s and 70s Civil Rights era, out of which disciplines arise such as Africana, AsAm, Chicanx/Latinx, and other areas of study (Depenbrock 2017). American Indian studies have existed as long as American Indians have, though it has been known by a myriad of other names.

That which we have ultimately come to grow familiar with as indigenous studies surfaced in the early 2000s-2010s alongside frameworks of critical pedagogy and decolonial studies (Nakata 2007 Simpson 2008). The label 'indigenous' in its academic applications is inclusive of all native or marginalized tribal people globally, including those on the Pacific Islands. The essays that unpack the idea of trans-indigenous solidarity or coalition forming are particularly informative of the motivating values behind a united indigenous front, including land stewardship and protection, as well as a responsibility to maintain the wellbeing of a collective or family.

However, as much as our cultures share in common, they are also each equally distinct and unique in essence. While trans-indigenous solidarities are the catalyst for revolutionary actions, it is equally valuable to maintain appropriate boundaries and are explicit about the ways in which we are similar and distinct. Even with the best intentions, discourse that homogenizes all native people as representing any particular phenotypic or behavioral patterns will always necessarily exclude *someone* from their iteration of the truth.

In this work, I aim to reproduce a politics of refusal as a means to subvert claims based on assumptions that erase populations from our institutional structures of memory (Tuck Yang 2014). Though it may make sense in some contexts to address Pacific Islanders as a whole, in this paper, I will be centralizing that which distinguishes Tongans from the greater PI community, and how that is understood and articulated by Tongan Americans. As Mike Evans unambiguously outlines in his *Persistence of the Gift : Tongan Tradition in Transnational Context*:

“The case of Tonga is a particularly illustrative one because the long-term economic linkages between the Kingdom and world markets (mainly in the form of copra or dried coconut kernel production) were not accompanied by direct colonization. Rather, internal social, political, and economic processes mediated, and continue to mediate, the manner in which Tongans face external markets, and market-oriented relationships and ideologies [...] The Tongan diaspora has been purposeful, the result of many individual decisions taken within a cultural frame rooted and reproduced in particularly Tongan sensibilities. Tonga, Tongans, and Tongan culture exist in a transnational context but for many Tongans their behaviours and beliefs have been instilled by the day-to-day sociality of village life.” (Evans 2001)

This is concretely different from other Pacific Islander identities, particularly the longstanding sovereignty of the Kingdom of Tonga. These historical and cultural differences inform how their communities prioritize differing values and cultural attitudes to diaspora and migration to the United States.

While trans-indigenous recognitions remain relevant and important to the long term objective of decolonization and indigenous resurgence, my research situates these recognitions as

a given that underpins our work, while we are able to more emphatically celebrate the traditions and histories that distinguish us from one another culturally.

I will be prioritizing ways of understanding and discussing Tongan Americans experiences in Inland Empire that use or reimagine traditional ways of knowing, either from cultural experience or language fluency, as a way of highlighting Tongan American narratives on issues of coloniality explicitly. Furthermore, there are many phenomena that Tongans experience that there simply exists no adequate translation for (Ka'ili 2005). Through both physical and symbolic representations of Tongans (Small 2011), I hope to reproduce the cultural motifs we are theorizing the resurgence of, to animate and imbue these power-centered discourses with life and gratitude for the intergenerational transmission they represent.

## Research Methods

Through semi-structured interviews and archival research, I will use my guiding questions to reactivate the native root within and unpack the historical and multigenerational pressure that hinders diasporic islanders from participation in civic engagement, such as voting and local government. Talking circle is a restorative intervention method that I learned from the Lummi tribe on the peninsula of Washington, but originates from the Takish-Tlingit nation in Alaska. This method of decision-making and conflict resolution is used for tribal consensus, and often includes more ceremonial elements such as a protocol for entering the circle, a centerpiece, and a prayer. I will be borrowing and adapting some of the techniques I learned in my training as a practitioner in circle to set a tone of reciprocity and create general guidelines before diving into questions in my focus group. An ethic of consensus and autonomy will be established at the beginning of all proceedings related to this research, in order to adequately situate this research within the decolonial practice it describes.

In the interviews, though guided by the questions, they will maintain a conversational tone wherein both parties are actively engaged in the themes, rather than the interviewer silently listening and recording the participant's thoughts from a passive role. My ethnographic research has roots both in the archival history of diasporic Tongan communities through Census as well as the qualitative storytelling shared through talking circles ('focus groups') and the cultivation of the website and linking social media accounts for MALO ('offering'). Through narrative storytelling, I will use these tools to paint a cohesive picture of who Tongans in the Inland Empire are: where they come from and what they know.

I hope to utilize the mixed mediums (digital archive, interactive art workshops, talking circles, collective memory) to highlight the multiplicity and intersections that exist within this

complex narrative, and connect these stories to the greater constellations of the trans-indigenous imagination. The hope that is cultivated by organizations like MALO reminds us that the heritage of resistance is innate to us. I believe in the potential of a radical resurgence of those whom always protected this land, and through militant and rigorous application of those decolonial roots, I believe in our ability to create a livable and safe world for our children within our lifetime (Amos 2016).

Overall, the methodological approach practiced throughout this research centered ethics of mutuality and reciprocity, unlike hegemonic Western colonial academia which is overwhelmingly extractive and voyeuristic. My approach refuses such coloniality through intentional vulnerability and transparency around the value of facilitating these discussions for me using our traditional talking methods for myself as a Tlingit descendant. By meeting the participants at their respective levels, while maintaining appropriate boundaries as a researcher and intern, I sought a deeper understanding of the themes we discussed. Beyond the surface interactions initially gleaned from asking these questions, my interviews aimed to understand the participant's wholeness:

“This profound human transaction called teaching and learning is not just about getting information or getting a job. Education is about healing and wholeness. It is about empowerment, liberation, transcendence, about renewing the vitality of life. It is about finding and claiming ourselves and our place in the world” (hooks 2003).

## Findings

<https://malotongaie.org/>

(FKA <https://malotongancommunityletsrise.shutterfly.com/>)

The offering prepared through the internship was the development of a platform of comprehensive digital communications tools through A2Hosting, a domain hosting platform that supports installations of widely used site builders like Wordpress onto their system. The main objectives in the development of the domain were:

- To highlight and streamline support to the great work that is already being done by MALO, rather than overcomplicating their platform needs.
- Unify all of their communications, into one brief and searchable link
  - Brevity is useful both for memory and recognition of their website, as well as printing purposes such as business cards or flyers where they may require a concise url.
  - Unification of platforms looks like embedding links to their active Facebook and Instagram feeds and syncing a Google calendar with their events onto the published site, mirroring the data currently available on the MALO shutterfly.
- Access to unlimited domain emails that can be directly connected to their existing email accounts to build a structure for communications.
  - Additionally, [info@malotongaie.com](mailto:info@malotongaie.com) will be a direct email to organizational needs and communications.

As outlined on the program description flyer I reviewed when we were selecting our respective organizations, one of the primary interests of Motivating Action Leadership Opportunity (MALO) this semester as a relatively new and growing organization was an adequate structure for social media outreach that was reasonably accessible, as well as thorough and professional-looking. Part of my preparation for this project included looking at the websites of similar Los Angeles area-based API, non-profit organizations and creating a basic outline of

the necessary pages on this website, as well as finding a comprehensive and simplified domain hosting platform. If I were to revise my offering given what I've learned over the semester, I would have minimized some of my ambitions to facilitate and completely learn email and domain hosting as a side mission to the other course work. I probably could have had more time to more fully elaborate on the skeleton pages of the site that are currently published.

However, the advantages of uniform domain emails in professional communication sort of symbolizes my motivation to engage in this kind of representative work anyways. One thing I constantly experienced as I showed MALO my research on their work as an organization was surprise from the community partners about "how professional I made them look", as if their skills and articulation weren't professional and direct to begin with. I think the process of presentation, or the fresh perspective of an outside ally/accomplice, reveals strengths that folks engaging in the work are too close to notice; this reflection itself is a restorative and empowering process. In total, the structures set in place with the 10 month subscription to A2Hosting's wordpress domain and unlimited emails at malotongaie.org were developed to support a longer term mission of re/activating the strengths already underpinning Tongan cultural knowledge and creating generative representations of living indigenous histories.

### **Tauhi vaha'a/vā**

*Vaha'a* is the figurative space between two people or groups and what that distance can symbolize, or socio spatial ties as Ka'ili describes it. The notion of *tauhi vaha'a* is the act of nurturing these socio spatial ties, how we maintain relationships across both literal and metaphorical distance. This concept is a core tenet of Tongan culture and influences structures in Tongan communities from Tongan architecture to family life. In Ka'ili's words:

“The late Queen Sālote Tupou III included tauhi vā as one of the four golden strands of Tongan virtues (Moala 1994, 23). These four virtues are respect, humility, loyalty, and tauhi vaha‘a (Moala 1994, 23). Moala speculated that tauhi vaha‘a may have originated from the tradition of maintaining (tauhi) good relations (vā) between ancient Tongans and their gods (1994, 23). Scholars have echoed Queen Sālote’s four Tongan virtues. For example, in research on marriage and family life, Samiuela Finau (1979) argued that Tongan custom is based on four traditional customs: respectful attitudes to others, dedication, sacrificial giving, and tauhi vā.” (Ka’ili 2005)

It is evident simply from attending any of MALO’s programming the clear orientation toward supporting families. However, it was also a reoccurring theme within both the individual interviews and the talking circle, the value of family is a priority beyond lofty community organizing or social justice ideals. It is a tangible commitment to nurturing ties to those you grew up with, a homegrown sense of accountability. As a participant stated in an interview, “The love that we have for each other as a family and even though half of us are sometimes not even [related] and we just find each other as ‘cousins’, because we grew up together and that's how it is. If you need anything most likely somebody in the Tongan community got you, you know?”

More than just creating a space for this caretaking to occur, MALO reproduces *tauhi vaha‘a* through their work on representing Tongan Americans in the Inland Empire with conviction and pride. The campaigns MALO leads to increase visibility and accessibility of community resources like federal funding through census or peer tutoring support are an articulation of nurturing our collective wellbeing, as opposed to our individual needs: "tauhi vā is nurturing the social space that relates people to one another. The physical and social well-being of a Tongan depends on the quality of the tauhi vā." (Ka'ili 2005)

This situates their community organizing as an effort, not just of political resistance, but of cultural memory speaks more accurately to their missions as an organization and the direction they hope to develop in.

*“If someone was to know who we are, I would say we're not Samoan. We're not Hawaiian. We're Tongan. We have our own island we're a monarchy. We're not run by the US, even though we live in America. I just know that my culture itself is strong, and we're respectful. But don't get it twisted. Things can pop off if you push it there.”*

### **Textiles of Resilience**

In the same way *tauhi vā* deepens our understanding of the significance of Tongan socio-spatial ties and contextualizes the work of MALO within a framework of ancestral knowledge, the symbolism of the tapu can enrich how we perceive transindigenous recognitions between Islanders and how these recognitions are inherited intergenerationally. From ceremony to exchange, these bark cloth mats can be found across the Pacific throughout the Polynesian islands, with varying sizes and patterns (Ka'ili 2005). Rather than painting with a broad stroke and conflating all Pacific Islanders under one categorization, by imagining the ways we overlap and intersect to form something larger, something ancient, imbues our research with more substantive meaning.

The way MALO maintains its strong sense of community is through their commitment to reactivating the ancestral root within. The value of tradition is felt across generational lines, as some youth stated in the talking circle, “I think it's important because from the early times, they did the dances to represent life and things like that, so it's a good thing to remember our history as Tongans and to keep our culture alive.”

Their ability to foster community around cultural resurgence is exactly the interest of indigenous studies scholars everywhere: how do we create structures for stewardship that can

transcend generations and bodies of water. By revisiting the ancestral root within and making a commitment to nurturing those practices, we can be a part of traditions that will outlast us.

## Conclusion

In the same way Tongan scholars and community leaders have reproduced their ancestral knowledge as a resolution to contemporary conflicts, it would be my recommendation based on this research that those working for or with indigenous studies prioritize this way of representation through reproduction, to both acknowledge the origin and desired destination of this act of resistance to coloniality. While transindigenous solidarities bolster our acceleration towards decolonial revolution, it is evident how hastily formed coalitions can reproduce the same gaze it seeks to eradicate. Through intentionality and commitment to representation, we can contribute to and build a discourse around Islander cultural and historical intersections without losing recognition of what distinguishes us geographically or otherwise.

This notion of reproduction is valuable as an indigenous student myself, as a means of being generative without being reiterative of our cultural knowledge systems. As much as our traditions remain consistent, the experiences we have and challenges we face are increasingly complex; re-production is a way for our traditional knowledge to continue to serve our daily lives, and through this re-invention, our traditions are also re-born and therefore re-vitalized.

Though I know it cannot begin to do justice to the work being done by everyone contributing to MALO, I hope this research was at least able to illuminate a piece of the important role they play in our continued survivance and perseverance as diasporic Islanders. I

am wildly beholden to the impact it has had on me to be a witness of this invaluable community they foster.

I am multiethnic and represent four diasporic cultures that were merged through generations of migration all over the Western US and Pacific Ocean, all of my life trans-indigeneity has been a guiding principle in understanding my self identity as an individual, as well as when looking at my family. The understanding I gained through this research around the challenges and boundaries of transindigenous solidarity, as well as the nuanced understanding of how we intersect through the symbolism of the tapu, both inform how I will navigate the reconciliation of these identities within myself and my family.

## Appendices

### Interview Guide + Consent Form

#### **Purpose**

You have been invited to participate in a focus group sponsored by Pitzer College under the direction of the CASA program. The purpose of this focus group is to use talking circles to unpack questions around MALO, Tongan American identity and civic engagement. The information learned in this focus group will be analyzed in the context of my Research Methods course and synthesized into a final research paper on how census impacts diasporic Islanders. You are also invited to the final presentation of this paper at CASA Pitzer on Friday 12/13 from 5-6pm.

#### **Procedure**

As part of this study, you will be placed in a group of 4-6 individuals. A moderator will ask you several questions while facilitating the discussion. As approved through Pitzer College's Institutional Review Board, this focus group will be audio-recorded the moderator will be taking notes. However, your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in the final report. You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group, and you may stop at any time during the course of the study. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to the focus group questions. Out of respect, please refrain from interrupting others. However, feel free to be honest even when your responses counter those of other group members.

#### **Benefits and Risks**

Your participation may benefit you and other diasporic islander groups by increasing general awareness and cultivating reflective discussions in our communities about representation and access as it relates to our historical relationship to the US Census. However, no risks are anticipated beyond those experienced during an average conversation.

#### **Confidentiality**

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to respect the privacy of other focus group members by not disclosing any content discussed during the study. Researchers within the Pitzer CASA program will analyze the data, but—as stated above—your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in any reports.

#### **Contact**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact:

Cheyenne Brashear  
cbrashea@students.pitzer.edu  
(206) 356-1530

Pitzer College Institutional Review Board  
1050 N Mills Ave Claremont, CA  
(909) 621-8000

I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above:

First, Last Name: _____
Preferred Pseudonym (if applicable)* _____
E-mail/Phone: _____
_____
Signature: _____
*This is the name that will be used in place of yours if I end up referring to anything you specifically share during this focus group in my analysis.

### Interview Questions

1. How do you as an individual impact MALO as a collective? What is MALO to you?
  - a. Role, title

- b. Familial connection
- 2. How/When did you become familiar with this community?
- 3. What do Tongan Americans know about the US Census? What do you wish Tongans knew about civic engagement (like voter participation, local government, etc.)?
- 4. What does it mean to be Tongan to you? What does the media, education system, politicians, etc. get wrong about the Tongan community?
  - a. +/-, what is tongan identity and what are the hegemonic misconceptions
- 5. Who is someone whom models leadership and motivates action? How do they do that and how does it impact you?

## Field Notes

<p>9/13/2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● They mentioned the possibility of learning the songs and even singing with them in the future. Stick dance with older kids?                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They have had the church space for under a year, but they have been meeting as an organization for close to (12?) years - maybe art project in space.. Couches</li> <li>○ There was a lot of used furniture stored in the space. There was one main big foldable table for the adults and one smaller table for the kids. Meeting also coincided with dinner this evening.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>9/21/2019</p>	<p>The first STEP of the semester feels later this year than in other years, we meet in Walker lounge. All of the volunteers are at one table and all of the youth are at another. The volunteers don't really break out to tutor the students until Mike from the AARC gets there and encourages folks to get started on studying for the first hour.</p> <p>The general format of STEP is one hour of tutoring, followed by one hour of a weekly educational or skill-building activity, and then a group brunch in Frary compensated by STEP. The activity is typically the motivation for students to complete their homework or focus on studying for an hour (tutors incentivizing work to students: "If we focus, If we finish XXX, we can make bracelets afterwards")</p> <p>We spent an hour making friendship bracelets for someone we love, many people made bracelets for their tutors or tutees, the community of love is noticeable!!</p> <p>I also particularly noted the ethnic makeup of the volunteers being predominantly East Asian, and some Hawaiian and Chamorro volunteers. None of us are Tongan ourselves, but that doesn't mean that STEP lacks Tongan leadership, as a few of the students who are tutored are also graduate students studying to become teachers and naturally carry the energy in the space.</p> <p>I wasn't able to stay for brunch this time around but it is usually (in my past experience) a great opportunity to get to know the students more deeply and also let them into our daily lives as students. I remember distinctly someone trying exotic fruits for the first</p>

	time in the dining hall, and being able to share that experience and excitement for the first time.
11/9/2019 10am - 3pm	<p>Today's event coincided with an IPMP retreat, so I drove back from Joshua Tree at 7:30am to make it back in time to help set up the registration table. I think this was a good place for me to pick because I can be shy and it forced me to talk to everyone at the event. Organizations represented: Pomona PIE, UCR PISA, Claremont School of Theology, The Young SAMOA, Mt SAC, Census Representatives, Pacific Islander Health Partners</p> <p>Opening with song and blessing - beautiful to hear them sing the same song I heard them practicing the first time I was ever in their space on Euclid. Particularly, the voices who were most reluctant then, being in full volume in front of a supportive audience.</p> <p>Then lunch! I love my people :) They catered Sanamluang but also had YumYum Donuts.</p> <p>About an hour break, I was given a shirt with a message in Tongan that [redacted] told me translated to I, too, want to be represented in the count and then had MALO's logo on the back.(This logo was predominantly what informed the arts workshop I planned with STEP in the arts therapy group mandala we will make on 11/16/2019.)</p> <p>After the lunch break each organization gave a kind of 10-15min presentation of the work their organization is doing to aid with education and participation in census, eventually everyone at the event signed a census pledge card.</p> <p>There were some partner share activities that asked folks to share with one another where they were from/what their stakes were in the community and how their work is inherently aligned with the goals of the census. I shared with [redacted], who was older kanaka who did community organizing work in San Diego area. It was cool to discuss transpacific/indigenous solidarity with an elder.</p> <p>5pm to 7pm Straight after the event there was a talk by scholar Ku'ulei Perreira-Keawekane regarding activating the indigenous root within. There were a lot of things that resonated with me about her lecture but I particularly noted her thoughts on empowerment: that power is not given or transferred but activated from within. I thought this was particularly salient with the power dynamics we struggle through in our classroom discourse, relating to hooks' theories of education as liberation. Everyone took home a lot of food. As usual [redacted] did a lot of coordinating with AARC and community partners like MALO and the UCR group. Very successful and tiring day!</p>
11/16/2019	<p>The first workshop allowed me to introduce some talking circle principles to the STEP group, and allowed for the students to collectively create a visual articulation of our small group discussions on leadership, sovereignty, and pride. Since the outcome of this workshop was one collective piece, I was able to tangibly save, scan, and enhance the drawings to be legible. I learned a lot from these discussions, in addition to developing closeness with some of the students I had consistently been working with throughout the semester, I took away hope for fostering a sense of community that is nostalgic of home even somewhere as foreign as a college campus rec room.</p>

11/23/2019	<p>The second workshop was held at the Pitzer College garden, where I was able to share my occupation as Garden Manager with the students and invite them to take home plants to nurture and grow on their own. There are a lot of symbolic directions I could take this, but beyond symbolism, the meaningfulness of even extending their view of parts of the campus that are accessible to them to include Pitzer as well stayed with me. As I mentioned in my class presentation, I touched on the significance of how visually or statistically underrepresented I feel, particularly in these academic spaces that feel foreign. In addition to seeking and fostering meaningful community spaces of my own, this workshop also manifested my desire to occupy the spaces in which brown bodies are historically excluded.</p>
------------	--

Photos



Image 1, photo of terracotta pots painted by students at STEP during Pitzer garden workshop



Image 2, photo of mandala made by the group at STEP at Pomona

## Works Cited

Amos, Kelsey. "Hawaiian Futurism: Written in the Sky and Up among the Stars." *Extrapolation* 57, no. 1-2 (2016): 197-220. doi:10.3828/extr.2016.11.

Depenbrock, Julie. "Ethnic Studies: A Movement Born Of A Ban." NPR, NPR, 13 Aug. 2017, [www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/08/13/541814668/ethnic-studies-a-movement-born-of-a-ban](http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/08/13/541814668/ethnic-studies-a-movement-born-of-a-ban).

Evans, Mike. *Persistence of the Gift : Tongan Tradition in Transnational Context*. Deslibris, Books Collection. Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001. 2001. Accessed December 19, 2019.

hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Ka'ili, Tevita O. "Tauhi va: Nurturing Tongan Sociospatial Ties in Maui and Beyond." *The Contemporary Pacific* 17, no. 1 (2005): 83-114. doi:10.1353/cp.2005.0017.

Lipsitz, George. "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape." *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 10-23. [www.jstor.org/stable/43323751](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43323751).

Nakata, Martin N. *Disciplining the Savages, Savaging the Disciplines*. Canberra, ACT: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2007. 2007. Accessed December 19, 2019. Vaughn, Kēhaulani. "Trans Indigenous Recognitions: The Politics of California Indian and Native Hawaiian Relations" 2018.

Small, Cathy A. *Voyages: from Tongan Villages to American Suburbs*. Cornell University Press, 2011.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *Lighting the Eighth Fire : The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Pub, 2008.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Otago University Press, 2012.

Stewart, Jocelyn Y. "Data Reveal Hard Truths for Islanders." *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 26 Sept. 2005, [www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-sep-26-me-pacific26-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-sep-26-me-pacific26-story.html).

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. "Unbecoming Claims: Pedagogies of Refusal in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 20, no. 6 (July 2014): 811–18. doi:10.1177/1077800414530265.