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"I Liked Her Coconut Bra": The Representation of Pacific Island Women from 1950s Films to Modern Lu'aus and Its Effect on American Tourists

"I Liked Her Coconut Bra":

The Representation of Pacific Island Women from 1950s Films to Modern Lu`aus and Its Effect on American Tourists

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Abstract

Pacific Island women had for centuries been stereotyped by Americans as highly sexual, erotic, and sensual. From early accounts of European explorers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Pacific Island women were described as desirous of sex with European males. Imperialism later built upon that stereotype and argued all colonized women were highly sexual and willing. Fast forward one hundred years and Hollywood again took up the representation of the sultry Pacific Island female in the South Sea genre of films beginning in the 1920s. By the 1950s, the image was still the same, and this decade saw an increase in South Seas films. The popularity of these films, especially *Bird of Paradise* and *His Majesty O'Keefe*, in addition to the rise of attention towards Hawai`i from a multiple of reasons, caused the rise in tourist visitors to Hawai`i from the US to increase fivefold.

The images created in the tourist boom stayed around, influencing tourist perceptions of what to expect when they arrived in Hawai`i. The sexualized Pacific Island female in the mythical, primitive paradise, was the dominant image that drew tourists and was perpetuated by tourist propaganda. Today, the image still exists, predominantly advertised for by lu`aus. In Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au, tourists were shown highly sexualized dances by females in flashy and sexy costumes. But tourists also engaged in sexualized behaviors. They had expectations of seeing such erotic behaviors from tourist images and those expectations led tourists to partake in activities at the lu`au that exploited their own sexual desires.

Introduction

What were you expecting with this lu`au?

- Todd, "Um, to see some beautiful women dancing!"

What did you like the best?

- Todd, "I loved the Tahitian woman's outfit a lot"

Why?

- Todd, "uh, [he laughed] I liked her coconut bra"[1]

The above interview took place after Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au had concluded and just before the tourist attendees were herded back to the buses to make the thirty minute trek back to Honolulu. Todd, a white salesman from Georgia, aged around 35 years, enjoyed his time at the lu`au and believed that it successfully lived up to his expectations. But Todd's expectations consisted of sexualized images of Pacific Island women. As I went to more shows where Polynesian dancing was exhibited, I began to notice a trend about what American tourists were anticipating. They all expected the same things: beautiful Pacific Island women, bare bodies in grass skirts, and sexual dancing that involved a lot of hips. I came to wonder where these anticipations came from. Why did different tourists from across America all expect the same things from Hawai`i? I argue that tourist expectations of sexualized Pacific Island women in Hawai`i were powerfully influenced by images in 1950s films that focused on the Pacific Islands. A rise in tourism to Hawai`i during the 1950s, partially sparked by the films, led to the creation of a sustained tourist image of the sensual Pacific Island woman that could still be seen today.

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[1] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

This paper is outlined into five sections which provide an in depth analysis of the different components of my thesis. The first section is the historical and theoretical background which traces the origins of the image of the highly sexualized Pacific Island beauty. European explorers who visited the Pacific Islands in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wrote that free love permeated the island cultures. In the Polynesian Islands, explorers were greeted with canoes full of naked women who clamored on deck, felt the sailors in their private areas, and made it clear to the Europeans that they desired sex. Similar accounts of these experiences with Pacific Island women from Bougainville, Cook and their crews were published in Europe and America. As a result, Pacific Island women came to be viewed as a cluster of faceless women who enjoyed sex. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these views grew to encompass all colonized women, or Other women. Contemporary scholars came to call it the "imperialist gaze" which made sex objects out of most women who were different from the Euro-American colonizers. As the imperialist gaze pervaded American society, it became a great influence on films.

During the 1950s, there was an increase in films released that concerned the Pacific Islands. The second section details the representation of Pacific Island women in these South Sea genre films. South Sea genre films glorified Pacific Island women, sex, skin, and tropical scenery. Two films that audiences loved, *Bird of Paradise* (1951) and *His Majesty O'Keefe* (1953), epitomized the South Sea genre's characteristics. Both films featured a sexualized Pacific Island female seen through the eyes of an adventurous Euro-American male. The popularity of these films, along with other factors, sent tourism to Hawai`i to record highs.

The third section of the paper describes the growth of tourism to Hawai`i during the 1950s and the influence the 1950s films had on Hawaiian tourism. Throughout the 1950s, Hawai`i was in the American public's eye. Debates in Congress over Hawai`i's statehood kept the public's attention until Hawai`i became a state in 1959. California's population growth contributed to Hawai'i's success since Hawai`i was promoted as a cheap vacation and it was only a short flight away. The Cold War and threat of nuclear attack made the air ripe for escape, and post-war affluence allowed more people to vacation. Tourists turned more and more to Hawai`i for an island vacation.

Since tourism skyrocketed during the 1950s, the image used by 1950s films became familiar to tourists and solidified by the tourist industry. Since the tourist industry promoted the overly sexual Pacific Island beauty image, American tourists expected to see that image when in Hawai`i. Tourism in Hawai`i was geared towards exploiting that image to fulfill tourist expectations. The fourth section details the transformation of the Hawaiian tourist image beginning in the 1920s. This section includes an analysis of scholars Elizabeth Buck and Jane Desmond and their arguments on the image that draws tourists to Hawai`i. The sexualized Pacific Island woman can still be seen today in statues, on postcards, in stores, on tourist souvenirs, and in the second most popular tourist activity, lu`aus.

The last section of my paper recounts my experiences at Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au. Germaine's Lu`au contributed to the sexualization of Pacific Island women where half- naked island beauties performed specially choreographed dances that highlighted eroticism for the enjoyment of hundreds of Euro-American patrons. Tourists I interviewed went to lu`aus expecting to see sexualized performances of Pacific Island

women. In fact, lu`au attendees were more likely to rate their vacation as excellent or far superior than tourists who did not attend a lu`au.[2]

Lu`au attendees expected sexual behaviors so much that they were willing to partake in lewd behaviors just to realize their expectations. Euro-American tourists displayed erotic behaviors by kissing multiple strangers and dancing seductively for the entertainment of other Euro-Americans. Tourists were so enthralled in the idea of the sexual atmosphere they believed they were in, that tourists themselves became the sexual objects they were seeking.

Sexualized representations of Pacific Island women filtered through the 1950s films and into reality. The image which was based in history was recreated by Hollywood films. The 1950s was the peak decade that many forces came together to make the sexualized image have such an impact. As a result of the films and the media attention on Hawai`i, tourists flocked to Hawai`i and took with them a certain image of what they would expect. The 1950s films and subsequent tourist promotion shaped the way tourists saw Pacific Islanders today in Hawai`i. Tourists came to identify the sexual representation of Pacific Island women with Hawai`i, and lu`aus reinforced that connection. While tourists wanted to watch erotic displays of Pacific Island women, they also engaged in actions that made them into the very same stereotypical representations they desired to see.

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[2] Jane Desmond, Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 28.

Historical & Theoretical Background

Polynesian Women! Images of beautiful, tanned, sexy women dancing seductively come to mind. This image of Polynesian women was made popular by Hollywood films in the 1950s and drove many tourists to Hawai`i today. But where did this image originate? Hundreds of years ago, European explorers documented their adventures in the Pacific Islands. Their writings had a profound influence on Euro-American perceptions of Pacific Island cultures. Polynesian women were consistently stereotyped as highly sexual, beautiful, passive, and mute. The image begun with European explorers would grow to influence nineteenth century colonizers and twentieth century filmmakers.

The early accounts from the European explorers Tasmin, Cook, Bougainville and their crew members were filled with descriptions of Pacific Island women as seductive, erotic creatures. During the 1640s, Dutch explorer Abel Tasmin landed on the western Polynesian island of Tonga. Tasmin and his barber watched as Tongan women who boarded their ship, "felt the sailors shamelessly in the trouser front" and they believed the women "desire fleshly intercourse."[3] In the eighteenth century, James Cook and Louis-Antoine de Bougainville led the pack of British and French explorers who discovered and rediscovered many Pacific Islands.[4] When Bougainville and Cook entered friendly Polynesian harbors, they encountered outrigger canoes filled with naked, smiling women. Cook wrote in his journal of the Hawaiians "no women I ever met with were more ready

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[3] Donald Denoon, The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128.
[4] A. Grenfell Price, The Western Invasions of the Pacific and Its Continents (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 121.

to bestow their favours, indeed it appeared to me that they came with no other view."[5] Bougainville's accounts of his travels in Polynesia presented Pacific Island women as expressing unlimited sexuality and always a willingness to have sexual relations with his crew. He believed that the Tahitian woman "suffers no constraint…everything invites her to follow…the instinct of her sensuality."[6] Bougainville's crew member, Philibert Commerson, wrote of the Tahitians, "They know no other god than love….Everyday is consecrated to him…The act of procreation is an act of religion."[7] To these European explorers, the Pacific Island women were obviously highly sexual due to their actions towards the European men.

Explorers' accounts were dominated with descriptions of the uninhibited actions of the Pacific Island women. This led explorers to assume that these women were driven by sex. Margaret Jolly argued in "From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i: Eroticism and Exoticism in Representations of the Pacific" in *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure*, that Pacific Islander sexuality was transformed via encounters with biased Europeans. "Polynesian eroticism was not a figment of the European imagination. But in the ancestral cultures of the islands of Hawai`i and Tahiti…sexuality was not so much 'free' as celebrated and sacralized."[8] Ancient Pacific Islander culture was open regarding sex. Women who were sent to have sexual relations with sailors were of low caste in their society and often manipulated the sailors to achieve trade goods. Chiefs also used these

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[5] James Cook, The Journals of Captain James Cook and his Voyages of Discovery, vol 3, The Voyage of the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, 1776-1780, Parts One and Two, J.C Beaglehole ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, for the Hakluyt Society, 1967), 486.
[6] Comte Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, A Voyage Round the World, trans. Johann Reinhold Forster (London: Royal Academy, 1772), 250-251.
[7] Robert Nicole, The Word, The Pen, and The Pistol: Literature and Power in Tahiti (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001), 39.
[8] Margaret Jolly, "From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i: Eroticism and Exoticism in Representations of the Pacific," in Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific ed. Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 100.

low-ranking women as a political strategy since they knew Europeans had superior weapons technology and were desirous of women after months at sea.[9] Nevertheless, European accounts of the erotic Pacific Island women were published throughout Europe and America so that average Americans came to view Pacific Island women, whom they never met, as a group of highly libidinous women.

By the nineteenth century, nearly all the Pacific Islands were colonized or annexed by the United States, Britain, France, Spain, and Germany. Pacific Island chiefs learned European's weakness for women and regularly used Pacific Island women as a commodity; whoring rates were established among traders and sailors.[10] Even though chiefs manipulated European sailors' assumptions about the sexual freedom of Pacific Island women for their political advantage, the characteristic of sexually eager Pacific Island women established by European explorers was enforced during the next centuries.

Europeans' and Americans' numerous encounters with sexually free Pacific Island women became defined in relation to the goals of imperialism. The stereotypes of Pacific Islanders became intertwined with the domination by imperial powers. Scholars of imperialism came to call the clichéd representations of colonized people as the "imperialist gaze." Photographer Thomas Andrew took photographs of Samoan women in the mid 1890s, at the height of imperialism. His photographs revealed the power of the supposed imperial gaze as he posed the women in sexualized positions in his studio, removed from their everyday life activities.[11] To viewers, the women could be seen as

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[9] Nicole, The Word, The Pen, and The Pistol, 168; Haunani-Kay Trask, From a Native Daughter: Colonialsim and Sovereignty in Hawai`i, (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1993), 189.
[10] Denoon, The Cambridge History of Pacific Islanders, 147.
[11] Nicholas Thomas, Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 35.

merely sexual slaves; their poses disconnected any cues of humanity and made them simply objects to be looked upon by Euro-Americans.

According to scholars Edward Said, Nicholas Thomas, and Ania Loomba, both imperialism and the imperialist gaze rested on a notion that the colonizer was superior and colonized peoples were different and inferior. The imperialist gaze was based on the fundamental idea of transfixing colonized peoples into a defined category as Others. To imperial powers, there were two kinds of people, Us and Them. The Them had to be placed in strict categories in order to differentiate the colonizers with the colonized. Edward Said argued in *Orientalism* that this dichotomy "was central to the creation of European culture as well as to the maintenance and extension of European hegemony over other lands."[12] By placing colonized peoples into the category of Them or Other, Euro-Americans came to define themselves by what they saw in the colonies. If the colonized people were irrational, then Euro-Americans were rational; if the colonized were lazy and sensual, then Euro-Americans were hard working and in control of sexual appetites.[13] Some of the collective qualities used by the imperialist gaze on colonized peoples were laziness, aggressiveness, violence, greediness, sexual promiscuity, primitiveness, and irrationality. These types of categories permanently placed colonized peoples, in the minds of Euro-Americans, in perpetual Otherness. Euro-American self-conception was based on these oppositions, whether or not they were true.

Colonized cultures were stereotyped based on Euro-American's assumed anthropological knowledge of each Other culture. Nicholas Thomas wrote in *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* that Euro-American

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[12]Ania Loomba, Colonialism/Postcolonialism (London: Routledge, 1998), 44.
[13] Ibid., 47.

colonizers assumed that Other cultures were static, unchanged for thousands of years, thereby validating the stereotypical attributes. Since cultures did not change, statements about Other people's intelligence, manners, personality, and characteristics could be made with relative authority.[14] Because of the liberties taken by Euro-Americans, Thomas maintained, colonized peoples were being represented negatively and without the ability to clarify. The imperialist gaze, according to scholars, was a tool for colonizers to define themselves vis-à-vis non-Euro-American cultures, to stereotype these cultures, and create an assumed history by silencing the colonized cultures.

In addition, the imperialist gaze had significantly affected the specific representation of colonized women. Historical representations of non-Euro-American women dated back to medieval times and influenced the way explorers, and consequently colonizers, viewed colonized women. Ania Loomba traced the history of European views toward foreign women in *Colonialsim/Postcolonialism*. Since the Renaissance, peoples from far off places were connected with abnormal sexuality. She recounted how the Pacific Islands, among other countries, had become "a porno-tropics for the European imagination, a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears."[15] Colonized women were repeatedly represented as sexually excessive and uncontrolled as opposed to European women who were supposed to be pure and asexual. Furthermore, Loomba insisted that since the sexual code of European Christians was so rigid, the different and less repressive sexual cultures of non-Europeans became the stage for Euro-Americans to act out their sexual desires and

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[14] Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, 23.
[15] Loomba, Colonialism/Postcolonialism, 154.

fantasies.[16] However, Euro-Americans sexual fantasies were based on the assumption that colonized women were promiscuous, libidinous, and desired White men.

The imperialist gaze allowed Euro-American colonizers the possibility of fulfilling their sexual desires while assuming the willingness of colonized women to freely give their bodies to the conquering White men. These sexual experiences exploited colonized peoples whose constructions of class, age, gender and race and power differed from Euro-Americans. Euro-Americans enforced their construction of race and sexuality instead, including the negative views towards dark skinned women and their sexuality. Darker Pacific Islanders from Fiji, New Hebrides, and New Caledonia were considered ugly and repulsed many European explorers. Cook found Melanesian women to be physically repugnant, hostile, primitive, as well intellectually inferior to the idyllic Tahitian women he encountered.[17] Francois Vive, surgeon on Bougainville's ship, commented that of the ni-Vanutau women he saw, most were "of the same nuances as the men...the others were horribly ugly."[18] Since the Tahitians, Hawaiians, and Samoans-- all Pacific Islanders from Polynesia-- were fair-skinned, they were given more amiable representations in explorers' accounts. Bougainville recalled Tahitian females "who, for agreeable features, are not inferior to most European women; and who in point of beauty of the body might, with much reason, vie with them all."[19] The racial hierarchy that was in place at the time of explorations and colonial conquests could be an explanation for these varied reactions. The darker skinned women were too closely linked with evolutionary ideology to be considered appropriate for sexual fantasies.

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[16] Loomba, Colonialism/Postcolonialism, 158.
[17] Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, 100.
[18] Nicole, The Word, The Pen, and The Pistol, 62.
[19] Ibid., 37.

Later on, imperial governments built upon the racial generalizations. The British continually used bestializing terms with regard to their Melanesian islands. Called an "Apish nation," the darker-skinned colonized were described as "swarthy" or "black," as opposed to the "fair" and "tawny" Polynesians.[20] Photographer Thomas Andrew took staged photographs of Fijians and Samoans in the mid-1890s. The racial views of Euro-Americans could be seen in his photographs as the darker-skinned Fijians were posed as savage men returning to their village from war. They were carrying clubs as weapons and dragging a human prisoner back with them, perhaps to be eaten? He photographed no Fijian women. The photographs Andrew took of Samoans on the other hand, were of male chiefs and seductive women in studios.[21] Aside from the fact that the portrayals of Samoan women removed them from any social life except as sex slaves, the general photographs of the Samoans were pleasant and appealing compared to the threatening Fijian portrayals which were meant to shock and repulse.

The conception of darker skinned women as more savage, primitive and just repulsive, stemmed from the ideas of racial hierarchy. But it could also be seen as reflecting the nature of the environment, as Thomas inferred in *Colonialism's Culture*. He suggested that the women of various Pacific Island societies were described in specific terms that related to European approval or disapproval of their societies.[22] Typically, Melanesian societies were more hostile to European explorers than Polynesian societies, who welcomed their guests as trading partners. The political and economic differences between the two Pacific Island groups went back thousands of years before European explorers arrived. This would explain the reasons for their varied responses to

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[20] Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, 101.
[21] Ibid., 35.
[22] Ibid., 102.

the Europeans.[23] Nevertheless, since the darker-skinned Melanesians were hostile to Europeans and hindered their attempts to settle, the Melanesian women were represented as ugly, repugnant and masculine. On the other hand, fair-skinned Polynesians who welcomed explorers and traders were depicted as beautiful and sexy.

Darker-skinned Pacific Islanders were described as less attractive, but were still used for sex by European sailors. All Pacific Island women were viewed as sexually uninhibited. Non-European races were regarded as desirous of sex and by having no feelings. In turn, Europeans felt they had no obligations to their Other sexual partners, including a committed relationship, since European males gave into their lust and not their love. So, any Pacific Island woman was considered a possible sexual conquest.

Throughout history, Pacific Island women were referred to by European explorers as erotic, sensual creatures from idyllic island locales where sex was welcomed and uninhibited. This representation spread across Europe and America and the stereotypes gained influence under imperialism. Scholars later began to call the phenomenon the imperialist gaze. The images placed Pacific Island women as silent, sexual objects there to be admired by Euro-American observers. The stereotypic imperialist gaze reduced women to two dimensional figures with no mind and no social life, just as erotic and seductive creatures. Hollywood would later pick up on the figurative two-dimensional qualities of Pacific Island women and made them literal on the big screen.

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[23] For more information on the political developments of Polynesia and Melanesia, see Donald Denoon's The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders.

The Representations of Pacific Island Women in 1950s Films

The representation of Pacific Island women as sexual, mysterious, beautiful, and willing to give their bodies to Euro-American men from explorers and colonizers became a lens that generations of Americans used to view Pacific Island women. This ready-made stereotypical image was quickly taken up by Hollywood and reduced Pacific Island women to a sexualized dimension. And since Hollywood specialized in the creation of fantasy, it was natural for Hollywood to make the Pacific Islands, with the myth of erotic, waiting women, the focus of so many films. Films of the 1950s built upon the representation of Pacific Island women that was established by European explorers and enhanced by imperialism.

Ninety films total were made in or about the Pacific Islands from 1950 culminating with statehood for Hawai`i, in 1959.[24] There were thirty-eight films made in or about Hawai`i between 1950 and 1959; these were the most influential. This decade was the all-time high for movies concerning Pacific Island themes where as only sixteen were in made the previous decade.[25] Loosely defined as a South Sea genre of films, the majority of the films were romances that included scantily-clad yet happy and innocent Pacific Island women, Pacific Island medicine men or religious leaders, Caucasian male love interests, and beautiful scenes of Edenic island beaches, lagoons, waterfalls, and

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[24] For a comprehensive list of South Seas films consult Larry Langman's Return to Paradise: A Guide to South Sea Island Films, (Lanham, MD., & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1998), Robert C Schmitt's Hawaii In The Movies 1898-1959, (Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society,1988) or Luis Reyes' Made in Paradise Hollywood's Films of Hawai`i and the South Seas (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1995).

[25] Robert C. Schmitt, Hawaii In The Movies 1898-1959, (HonoluluG: Hawaiian Historical Society,1988), 1.

usually a fearsome volcano.[26] As Ed Rampell preached in his introduction to Reyes' film guide "Toplessness- suggested or explicit- is another staunch standard of South Seas cinema....barebreastedness was one of the genre's points of interest well before the relaxing of motion picture censorship in the 1960s. In the name of anthropological realism, Pacific women have been glimpsed *au naturel* before their White sisters."[27] There was usually a romance between a Euro-American male and a Pacific Island female, but relationship only lasted a few days or months before the island community was doomed and the Pacific Island female had to sacrifice herself to save her people.

Houston Wood analyzed Hawaiians in film in his book, *Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawai`i*, but his analysis of could be extended to include all portrayals of Pacific Island women in films. Wood argued Hawaiian women were shown as simply bodies willing to grant sexual favors and there would be no stigmatizing from their culture. Furthermore, Hawaiians died in these films to eliminate the temptation they presented to Euro-American male characters, and their loss was seen as nothing more than losing a sexualized body.[28] Wood implied that since Pacific Islanders were a race with more "primitive sexual habits than their foreign counterparts...racially 'Othered' Hawaiians in these films were not supposed to be restrained by the same 'civilized' self as were Euro-Americans."[29] This was the very same rhetoric used by colonizers who constructed their conceptions of themselves based on what Pacific Islanders were not.

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[26] Schmitt, Hawaii In The Movies 1898-1959, 1.
[27] Ed Rampell, introduction, "South Seas Cinema- Is It a Film Genre?" from Made in Paradise: Hollywood's Films of Hawai'i and the South Seas, by Luis Reyes, (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1995) xxvii.
[28] Houston Wood, Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawai`i (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999), 107,112,113.
[29] Ibid., 114.

A complier of South Sea genre films, Luis Reyes, added another point of the genre in his film guide *Made in Paradise*, by stating the films "created a romantic native paradise to serve as the setting for adventures enjoyed by White Americans or Europeans (usually males)."[30] Margaret Jolly attested to this by stating the films were about Euro-Americans *in* the Pacific Islands, not *about* the Pacific Islands. Most of the South Sea films began with an arrival scene of the Euro-American male to the island; this established the invented place, or the "imaginary geography." "The act of travel and the arrival scenes…differentiate between 'here' and 'there,' us and other, establishing distance between the other…and the viewer who shares/interprets his or her gaze."[31] The films revolved around the central Euro-American male character, his adventures, and his perspective. The audience partook in the Euro-American male's adventures and saw the island culture through his eyes. As the Euro-American male characters ogled the Pacific Island women, so did the camera and thus the audience.

The non-European characters in the films had minor roles that supported the stereotypical behaviors dictated by the imperialist gaze. Typically, South Sea genre films had the main roles of Pacific Island characters played by Euro-American actors, while actual Pacific Islanders were given roles as members of the chorus, entertainers, or dancers. When they were cast, Pacific Islanders had demeaning roles that made them submissive to the Euro-American characters. Roles fulfilled by Pacific Island women in these two films had the same function for the Euro-American male lead as they did for European explorers and imperial writers, his sexual love fantasy.

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[30] Luis Reyes, Made in Paradise Hollywood's Films of Hawai`i and the South Seas, (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1995), xvii, xxiv.
[31] Lenore Manderson, "Parables of Imperialism and Fantasies of the Exotic: Western Representations of Thailand—Place and Sex," in Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific, ed. Lenore Manderson, and Margaret Jolly, 124.

Bird of Paradise (1951) and *His Majesty O'Keefe* (1953) have been summarized by authors who have compiled films of this genre, but no scholar has attempted to analyze them.[32] These films depicted the stereotypical erotic behaviors of Pacific Island women characters seen throughout Euro-American history. The actions and appearance of the characters followed the ideology of the imperialist gaze. Each film had a different female role, but all served to enhance the representation of Pacific Island women as beautiful, libidinous, sexually willing creatures who could not wait for the Euro-American man to arrive.

Bird of Paradise

Made in 1951, *Bird of Paradise* took place on an unnamed island in the Pacific during the 1850s. The film revolved around a French student, André, and his adventures on the island with his college friend Tenga, the son of the chief of the island. André planned on visiting the island as a vacation, but he fell in love with Kalua, Tenga's sister and daughter of the chief. Although the *kahuna* believed André would bring trouble, and Tenga believed André could never assimilate into his native islander lifestyle, André won over Kalua and married her. Three months after their marriage, a volcano erupted and Kalua was forced to sacrifice herself to the volcano in order to save her people from destruction. She dutifully jumped into the fiery pit and André sadly left with fond memories of the happy islanders and his beloved Kalua.

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[32] Isaiah Walker is in the process of completing his dissertation which analyzes the representations of Pacific Island males in Hollywood films entitled "The Hui 'O He'e Nalu: Contesting Imagined Boundaries of Pacific Masculinity in Hawaii."

The film opened with a declaration that "all native customs, rituals and dances shown in this film [were] based on those practiced by Polynesians during the last century" as well as that the film was shot completely in the Hawaiian Islands.[33] The title scenes established authenticity and the illusion of truth. By stating in the beginning of the film that all the customs were based on those actually practiced by Pacific Islanders, the viewer was led to believe that the sexual behaviors exhibited by the Pacific Island characters were accurate, which reinforced the stereotype. The authenticity of the film was also enforced by having Iolani Luahine choreograph all the dances. Luahine was a legendary hula dancer and hula teacher who performed in the 1950s. Throughout the film, aspects of Polynesian culture were shown that made the film resemble an ethnography rather than a fictional story. Film critics cited director Delmar Daves' anthropological attempts as overbearing since every unusual aspect of the culture was explained by Tenga. Even the love habits of the Pacific Island women were explained to the American audience, adding to the illusion of a supposed correct portrayal of the women. Throughout this film, Kalua and the other Pacific Island women represented the stereotypical behaviors that the imperialist gaze argued were innate in Pacific Island women: eroticism, sensuality, and willingness. These female characters were never shown in a scene without men; they were constantly accompanied by their love interests. This led the viewer to associate Pacific Island women with love and, consequently, sex.

Kalua, the main female role, continuously tried to please André with sexual favors. When André first arrived on the island, he was informed by Tenga that he could not speak to his sister Kalua because she was *tabu*, forbidden. No male could speak to

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[33] Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmer Daves. (Perf. Louis Jourdan, Deborah Paget, Jeff Chandler, Everett Sloane, and Maurice Schwartz. Twentieth-Century Fox), 1951.

her until her father, the chief, declared her ready for marriage. Breaking *tabus* was a serious offense, as this film stated, so when Kalua broke the *tabu* to speak to André, it was very important to her. She admitted to André that she *had* to speak his name, "It is forbidden, but I wanted to speak your name….I broke the *tabu* but I could not help it."[34] Although Kalua knew that it was prohibited to speak to a male, Kalua still risked speaking to André to tell him how she felt. She was sexually attracted to him and could not wait to be in his embrace. Kalua in this scene was very stiff and did not move; only her eyes sensually looked at André. Her lack of movement enforced the idea that Pacific Island women were slaves to sex and willingly gave their body to Euro-American males. Kalua surrendered her motor skills to be at the mercy of her European lover. This scene revealed that Pacific Island women were libidinous and they were willing to risk everything for their Euro-American lovers.

The imperialist gaze dictated that Pacific Island women wanted only Euro-American males for their lovers, since early explorers noted the willingness of Pacific Island women to have sex with their crews. Kalua enforced the presupposition that Pacific Island women only desired Euro-American men in the scene where she picked her lover. See Figure 1.[35] Kalua had the chance to be with any man on the island, yet she chose the European visitor. All the single native Islander men sat in a circle, with André being the only Euro-American, while Kalua danced. She teased many Islander men with her lei, making them think she might pick them. The film's shots

Figure 1

[34] Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmer Daves, 1951.
[35] Photo courtesy Luis Reyes' Made in Paradise, 64.

of the dance scene were wide angle, and always showed Kalua encircled by men. Men were always in the background of the shots so there was no shot with just Kalua. While Kalua was the center of attention, the only close-up shots were of André, the European, as he intently watched Kalua perform. This furthered the association of Pacific Island women as objects of Euro-American men's gaze since the camera only focused on André watching Kalua and the audience took his gaze. Kalua's dance, choreographed by Iolani Luahine, had her wiggle her hips in front of all the males, even turning her back to some and shove her rear-end in their face. Her hands constantly moved from her chest and pelvic region to the men which insinuated a sexual call to her private areas. Her eyes seductively watched the men, especially André, to see if they were watching her sexual dance.

Finally she chose André and the first thing she said to him was, "Are you pleased?"[36] Here again, the Pacific Island woman was willing to give everything up for to the Euro-American male and his desires. Even though Kalua had the choice of any male on the island, and all the males on the island wanted to be with her, she had to ask if André was pleased with her decision to choose him. She further stated that they would be together from then on, and they moved into the common house, where all the unmarried couples slept together. The common house was in the center of the community and was where a couple who wanted to get married lived to see if they were compatible. This building had a significant part in the film, as both Tenga and André lived in the common house with their partners. The common house presented Pacific Island culture as revolving around sex and sleeping together communally.

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[36] Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmer Daves, 1951.

When André and Kalua finally got married, they were considered *tabu*. Kalua and André were secluded in their honeymoon hut for two weeks. During this time, no one could speak to the newlyweds, while food would be brought to them. André enthusiastically exclaimed that he loved the Islander's customs because he was forced to spend two weeks alone with Kalua, where no one would disturb them, while they made love. Outside the honeymoon hut, the film showed numerous Islander women draping flowers around their hut as they sang. Pacific Island cultures therefore could be interpreted, via the film's previous claims to authenticity, to worship and celebrate sex. Similar to Philibert Commerson's writings that Tahitians "knew no other god than love,"[37] the mythical, yet Hawaiian culture of Kalua and Tenga seemed to be focused on sex.

After Kalua and André were married, three months of bliss passed. However, Kalua could not get pregnant and Kalua's father earlier stated that if she did not bear children, the marriage would be voided. To solve the baby problem, Kalua brought in her friend to become André's second wife so André could have children. Kalua contended that they would both try to make him "very happy." André did not want a second wife, and he tried to argue his point by asking Kalua's friend if she would really want to be his number two wife? The friend looked up at André and smiled, "I'll be *your* number two wife."[38] The friend turned down the suggestion of being a native Islander's number one wife to be André's number two wife. The fact that the woman would rather become a number two wife for a White man, reiterated the notion that Pacific Island women desired Euro-American men. Throughout the scene, the two women were sitting down while

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[37] Nicole, The Word, The Pen, and The Pistol, 39.
[38] Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmer Daves, 1951.

André paced back and forth above them. The women had to look up to André, emphasizing their submissiveness and roles as sex slaves.

After Kalua jumped into the erupting volcano to save her village, André sadly left the island with an empty heart and his memories. When André remembered "the openness of their hearts," there was a close-up of Kalua's friend who wanted to be André's number two wife.[39] So, the fact that Pacific Island women wanted to devote themselves to being sexual slaves of European males was part of their nature-- all Pacific Island women would be sexual slaves to White men if they could.

The final clincher of the film's support of the sexualized stereotypes was commentary by a Euro-American beachcomber. The beachcomber had lived on Tenga's island and lived a life that revolved around pleasure. However, he was kicked off and became *tabu* and forced to live on the black sand island to the west of the main island. He described his view of Pacific Island women as "soft-eyed native wenches who grow old as fast as the sun goes down…who come crawling back like a dog, even after you've beaten it near to death."[40] When André asked about the whereabouts of the mother of his seven half-islander children, the beachcomber replied, "she'll come crawling back, she always does."[41] Pacific Island women, for this Euro-American man, were stubborn slaves to desire, who kept returning for more and more sex. Since he was the only other Euro-American man in the film, and the film claimed authenticity, his commentary was influential for American audiences.

1950s reviews of *Bird of Paradise* confirmed the anthropological and sexual aspects of the film. All reviews commented on director Delmar Daves' attempt to make

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[39] Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmer Daves, 1951.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.

the film as authentic as possible. Notes were made on the recreations of Polynesian superstitions and bizarre native rituals, on the native dances and music, and on Tenga's explanations of it all for André and the audience. In a *New York Times* article "Polynesian Idyl," the reviewer believed *Bird of Paradise* would be a "conscientious effort to tell the story of the Polynesians from their point of view and as authentically as possible. Only long-haired natives [were] being used...."[42] The acknowledgement of supposed accurate information in the film in the reviews cemented the perceptions of Polynesian women to the movie goers as fact. Since all reviews described the anthropological scenes, then the acting must have imitated behaviors of real Polynesians: they must be highly sexual.

The reviews noticed the sexual aspects of the film as well. Bosley Crowther, film reviewer for the *New York Times*, denounced the film stating "There is certainly nothing original- or particularly blissful, we would say- about the romantic *tumble* here taken by a visiting white man for a beauteous native maid."[43] The word "tumble" implied a lack of respect for the love affair between André and Kalua. Crowther did not believe that the Polynesian Kalua was good for anything more than a sexual encounter and certainly not true love. Crowther later remarked that the film was full of "conventional intimations of blissful sex."[44] The *Hollywood Reporter* informed readers that "the element of sex is constantly...presented."[45] This again prepared audiences of what was to happen in the film that revolved around a European male and a Pacific Island female.

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[42] Grady Johnson, "Polynesian Idyl" New York Times 20 (Aug. 1950), 83.
[43] Bosley Crowther, "Bird of Paradise." Rev. of Bird of Paradise, dir. Delmar Daves. New York Times (15 Mar. 1951), 37. [My italics]
[44] Bosley Crowther, "Scanning the Ads" Rev. of Bird of Paradise. Dir. Delmar Daves New York Times (18 Mar. 1951), X1.
[45] "'Paradise' Lavishly Done; 'Women' Is Exploitable." Rev. of Bird of Paradise, dir. Delmar Daves. The Hollywood Reporter (12 Mar. 1951), 3.

Kalua's seductive looks were also noticed by the reviewers, putting her eroticized character before the reader's attention. Debra Paget played Kalua in the film. She was an American actress who gained her fame prior to *Bird of Paradise* in *Broken Arrow*, playing an Indian squaw.[46] The *New Yorker* described that Paget "looks quite delectable in her sarong."[47] *Variety's Film Reviews* suggested "Miss Paget also wears a sarong in a manner that garners strict male attention."[48] The common references to Paget's revealing costumes for Kalua, reinforced the image of the scantily clad and sexually willing Pacific Island woman. These allusions, combined with the large attempt at historical and cultural accuracy, led audiences to believe that the type of behavior exhibited in the film was true to the culture.

Bird of Paradise presented the stereotypical behaviors of Pacific Island women through the character of Kalua. She was sexual, seductive, and very desirous of the European male, André. Throughout the film, Kalua tried to please André sexually by breaking the *tabu*, choosing him, and even offering him a second wife. The film's supposed authenticity verified for audiences that these types of behaviors were commonplace in Pacific Island cultures. The next film also tried to claim authenticity for its portrayals of Pacific Island culture, and subsequently, sexual representations of Pacific Island women.

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[46] "Bird of Paradise" IMDb.com (25 May 2004 < http://www.imbd.com>).
[47] John McCarten, "Moanin' Aloha." Rev. of Bird of Paradise. dir. Delmar Daves. New Yorker (24 Mar. 1951), 93.
[48] "Bird of Paradise." Rev. of Bird of Paradise. dir. Delmar Daves. Variety's Film Reviews (14 Mar. 1951), 6.

His Majesty O'Keefe

His Majesty O'Keefe, released in 1953, retold the adventures of Captain David O'Keefe on the island of Yap in the 1870s. It was loosely based on the novel *His Majesty O'Keefe,* which was based on the adventures of the real Captain O'Keefe. O'Keefe was obsessed with making a fortune in copra. After being forced off his ship by a mutinous crew, he landed on Yap, an island full of coconuts but lacking ambitious workers. The only thing that the Yap islanders showed any emotion for was *fei,* their sacred stone. O'Keefe vowed to find a way to make the Yap work for his own profit. After he got a ship and crew, O'Keefe landed on Palau and found his future wife, Dalabo, a half-English/ half-Pacific Islander young woman. He also discovered that Palau held the quarry of *fei*. He made an arrangement with some Yap to help them gather *fei* if they would gather copra for him. O'Keefe succeeded briefly, and married Dalabo in Hong Kong. When he returned to Yap, he found a slave trader took some Yaps as prisoners. O'Keefe freed the Yap natives and kicked out the slave trader. In gratitude, the Yap made O'Keefe their king. But O'Keefe's greed became to powerful. He angered a Yap chief because of his demands for copra, his wife became estranged, and a rival trading company was posed to take over the island. After some words of wisdom from a Yap medicine man, O'Keefe blew up the store of *fei*, united the Yap, and kicked the rivals off the island. After this display, his wife fell in love with him again and the credits rolled as they passionately kissed.

The opening title sequence informed the audience that it was filmed in the South Pacific, "where the basic economy and wealth revolved around the dried meat of the

coconut known as 'Copra'. And on the island of Yap the natives worshiped an exotic sacred stone they called 'Fei'."[49] The next screens thanked the wonderful people of the Fijian Islands for allowing Hollywood to film there and use the local population as actors. This again tried to validate the authenticity of the film. Very much like *Bird of Paradise*, the audience was led to believe that this story was more accurate because it was actually filmed in the Fijian islands with Fijian cast members. And since copra was harvested and they did in fact worship a stone called *fei*, the culture presented could be correct.

His Majesty O'Keefe revolved around the American O'Keefe and his adventures while the Pacific Island Yap natives played supporting roles. The fact that the score consisted of all classical music, as opposed to Pacific Island music, added to the American angle. The film was told through O'Keefe's eyes, with many scenes shot with his perspective. Therefore, this film was a great representation of the sexual behaviors of the Pacific Island woman as seen from an American point of view. There were two Pacific Island women who vied for O'Keefe's affections, his half-Islander wife Dalabo, and a Yap woman Kakofel. Dalabo represented the prim and prude White woman, while Kakofel represented the sexual fantasy of Pacific Island women. The fact that the actress who played Dalabo (Joan Rice) was English, while the actress who played Kakofel (Tessa Pendergast) was Jamaican, also helped to solidify the opposing views towards each character's sexuality.

Dalabo was depicted as very eloquent and educated since she was seen reading the classic romance *Lancelot and Guinevere*. Her sexual appetite resembled the idealized version of American women during the 1950s: sexual attraction and flirtation, but no

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[49] His Majesty O'Keefe. Dir. Byron Haskin. (Perf. Burt Lancaster, Joan Rice, Andre Morell, Abraham Sofaer, and Benson Fong. Warner Brothers), 1953.

fulfillment of sexual desires. Dalabo flirted constantly with O'Keefe, yet never gave in to him. She asked him to teach her how to dance as an excuse to get very close to him. She wrapped her arm around his neck, gazed into his eyes, and their lips almost touched. As soon as O'Keefe started to flirt back, Dalabo stopped and looked down, embarrassed. She wanted to get a book from his ship, yet this required going where they would be alone, to get it. In his cabin, she pushed up against O'Keefe and smiled as her lips were dangerously close to his. However, when O'Keefe finally did kiss her, she became stiff as a board. Dalabo pulled away and looked at the floor; she was ashamed and disgraced. O'Keefe, then felt obligated to apologize. Her behaviors of attraction but no sexual fulfillment corresponded to Alan Nadel's argument that during the 1950s, American women were supposed to "attract and stimulate male sexual drives but not gratify them."[50] Dalabo did everything to attract O'Keefe's attention, and yet she did not approve of his sexual advances and only agreed to marry him because it was her father's wish. She did not know if she loved him yet.

Dalabo's fashion was the most obvious connection to her White heritage. Her bangs mimicked the highly distinguishable style of Mamie Eisenhower. See Figure 2.[51] Mamie Eisenhower, wife of President Eisenhower, had short curled bangs which many American women emulated. Dalabo too followed the trend and had short, thick bangs that contrasted with her long free-flowing hair. She was the only woman on Palau to sport such a fashion trend, which made her stick out among the Pacific Island women. Dalabo

Figure 2

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[50] Alan Nadel, Containment Culture (London: Duke University Press, 1995), 117.
[51] Photo courtesy His Majesty O'Keefe video cover, Warner Bros. Pictures Inc, 1991.

also wore American women's clothes when in Hong Kong with O'Keefe: dresses, hats, high-heeled shoes, and negligees. When O'Keefe gave Dalabo these new clothes, he told her to "make yourself pretty."[52] This definition of beauty was for Euro-American standards, her native dress obviously did not make her pretty as she was identified with the White culture. Only when she wore the American clothes did the hotel patrons admire her beauty. Dalabo's behaviors and style were Americanized and she was respected since she was not the sex object.

In comparison, Kakofel, the native Yap woman, displayed very sexual behaviors. Instead of Dalabo's innocent flirtations and embarrassed recognition of feelings, the Yap woman was very direct with her desire for O'Keefe, as was O'Keefe with Kakofel. They both eyed each other numerous times. Whereas with Dalabo, O'Keefe was more concerned over her sensitivity and moral feelings, Kakofel could be sexually taken advantage of. The audience was first introduced to Kakofel with a close-up of her as Alfred, the German trader on Yap, explained to O'Keefe, "you have nothing that any of these people want."[53] Immediately following, O'Keefe saw the beautiful Yap woman, Kakofel. This suggested that although O'Keefe could not give the Yap anything they would want, the Yap had something that he wanted: a beautiful Pacific Island woman. O'Keefe eyed the girl as she flirtingly looked back at him. The camera followed O'Keefe as he walked past Kakofel, watching her the whole time. Kakofel smiled as she turned her head to watch O'Keefe leave. This point-of-view shot forced the audience to view the Yap woman in the same way that O'Keefe did, as a temptation. The camera became

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[52] His Majesty O'Keefe. Dir. Byron Haskin, 1953.
[53] Ibid.

O'Keefe's eyes as he watched Kakofel, thus the men and women in the audience were forced to ogle Kakofel.[54]

Throughout all of Kakofel's scenes, she was silent, only speaking words with her eyes. Her lack of speech allowed American O'Keefe to impose his ideas of her actions--making her actions sexualized. Kakofel was not given any opportunity to explain herself. Periodically throughout the film, O'Keefe longingly stared at the beautiful, yet mysterious Kakofel. See Figure 3.[55] While in Alfred's house, O'Keefe pulled open the window to reveal Kakofel walking by. She stopped to look at O'Keefe and smiled at him. O'Keefe stared back at Kakofel, ignoring the speech that Alfred was making at the time. When O'Keefe brought Dalabo to Yap, Kakofel still flirted with O'Keefe, even though she knew he was going to be married to Dalabo. She eyed him seductively and as she walked past him, O'Keefe followed her gaze and commented to Alfred, "I've got to learn this language."[56] O'Keefe's comment had sexual overtones which insinuated O'Keefe really wanted to get to know the inhabitants sexually, not just the language. Lastly, O'Keefe showed his desire to be with Kakofel after he was made king. At his coronation ceremony, Kakofel wearing red, led the other Yap women, wearing green, in a Dance of the Maidens. As soon as O'Keefe noticed Kakofel dancing, he sent his wife Dalabo away with Alfred, so he could watch her alone. Throughout Kakofel's dance, their eyes did not move from each other's gaze. As he left, he looked at

Figure 3

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[54] Wood, Displacing Natives, 107.
[55] Photo courtesy Luis Reyes' Made in Paradise, 208.
[56] His Majesty O'Keefe. Dir. Byron Haskin, 1953.

Kakofel, smiled again, and tossed his captain's hat to her. Kakofel smiled and put it on, cocked it to one side, and continued dancing.

In the 1950 novel *His Majesty O'Keefe* by Lawrence Klingman and Gerald Green, O'Keefe and Kakofel had a much more intimate relationship. Kakofel was described as "her entire being was given over to unabashed and unbridled sex, which she practiced with exquisite artistry. Promiscuity was the moral code of Yap's adolescents."[57] Kakofel was attracted to O'Keefe's red hair and commanding presence. She ended up having sexual intercourse with O'Keefe almost every night of the first six months he was on Yap. When O'Keefe returned to live on Yap with Dalabo as his wife, he still had an affair with Kakofel because Dalabo was not sexually satisfying him. "O'Keefe found in the unbridled sexuality of the savage girl a release for desire inhibited in his marital bed."[58] Even though Kakofel was also married and had a son, they met every afternoon for intercourse. She even exploited O'Keefe's desire for her by making him wait and giving her gifts. In the novel, Kakofel was much more seductive and more willing to give into pleasure than the film portrayed her. The insinuation of Kakofel and O'Keefe's relationship in the film, rather than direct portrayal, stemmed from the American taboo against interracial relationships. For filmmakers and the American public, it was dangerous for O'Keefe to have a relationship with a native girl. The racism in American society would not allow a light-skinned man and a dark-skinned woman to publicly have an interracial relationship. The attraction to the native woman was acceptable, since she was a sex object, but as soon as the relationship became serious, a terrible event had to

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[57] Lawrence Klingman, and Gerald Green, His Majesty O'Keefe, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 55.
[58] Ibid., 179.

befall the couple, as evidenced by the dominant trend in South Sea genre films.[59] O'Keefe therefore took the safe route of what was more acceptable to Americans in the 1950s, and had a relationship with the woman who was associated with White culture.

A striking contrast between Dalabo's and Kakofel's sexual attitudes could be seen when Kakofel returned O'Keefe's captain's hat to Dalabo. Dalabo was in her room, in her American negligee, waiting for O'Keefe. Kakofel appeared leaning on the door frame wearing O'Keefe's hat stylishly to the side. She smugly walked in and handed the hat over to Dalabo. Kakofel was about to leave when Dalabo angrily demanded "Wait!" She gave her back the necklace Kakofel had given Dalabo before she married O'Keefe, "This belongs to you." Dalabo then slapped Kakofel, much to Kakofel's surprise. "Now, get out!" she commanded.[60] Kakofel left quickly holding her face while Dalabo remained determined and mad. Although Dalabo might have felt threatened that Kakofel's sexual flirtations could steal O'Keefe away, Dalabo held the power among the two women in this scene. Dalabo did all the speaking in the scene, and, more importantly, all the dialogue was in English. The audience knew Dalabo could speak the Yap's native language, as she did earlier in the film, but she spoke to Kakofel in English putting her at a disadvantage. The confrontation scene drastically displayed the differences between the two women. The audience could tell they were supposed to be sympathetic toward Dalabo, the half-White woman, and view the Pacific Islander woman as an arrogant slut.

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[59] A main theme depicted in many films concerning the Pacific Islands was that death must befall one or both partners of an interracial relationship. In *Bird of Paradise* (1951), the native girl who fell in love with the European man was forced to jump in a volcano. In *South Pacific* (1958), Lt. Cable fell in love with the beautiful, but Tonkinese, Lait. Consequently, Cable died in battle. In *Diamond Head* (1962) the half-Hawaiian man who loved and planned to marry a rich white woman, died in a knife fight. In *Donovan's Reef* (1963) a white man had three children by a native woman, but she was dead by the time the movie took place. For more information, consult Ed Rampell's introduction to Luis Reyes' Made in Paradise.

[60] His Majesty O'Keefe. Dir. Byron Haskin, 1953.

Even the reviews of the time noticed the contrast between the sexuality of the two female characters. While most reviews commented on the beauty of both actresses, the differences in the diction influenced Americans. *Variety's Film Review* described Joan Rice [Dalabo] as "a sweet romantic foil" while Tessa Pendergast [Kakofel] "teases the eyes." The review went on to say that audiences would "like O'Keefe's…understandable slips out of matrimonial harness with Tessa Pendergast [Kakofel], another island beauty."[61] Because of Kakofel's "island" features and sexual nature, O'Keefe was pardoned for his flirtations with the Pacific Island woman, even though he was married. *The New York Times* review by Bosley Crowther stated that "Tessa Pendergast looks mighty fetching as a speechless but eloquent native girl," while Joan Rice was the "lady-like half-caste."[62] Kakofel was eloquent even though she never said one word. It was acceptable for Kakofel to be silent and still be eloquent because it was assumed that sex objects were supposed to be silent, while Dalabo, who has many lines, was lady-like. In another article by Crowther, he reported the film as "a lusty show" and remarked on the "liaison with a pretty half-caste girl, played by Joan Rice, and…more than a passing interest in Miss Yap of 1875."[63] He does not even credit Tessa Pendergast in this statement as he did Rice. Throughout the reviews and articles on *His Majesty O'Keefe*, Kakofel was depicted as being O'Keefe's sexy, erotic love fascination, while the prim and half-White Dalabo was the respectable lady-like wife of the heroic O'Keefe. The disparity between the two characters could not go unnoticed, even by those who had not yet seen the film.

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[61] "His Majesty O'Keefe." Rev. of His Majesty O'Keefe, dir. Harold Hecht. Variety's Film Reviews (30 Dec. 1953), 6.
[62] Crowther, Bosley. "The Screen in Review." Rev. of His Majesty O'Keefe, dir. Harold Hecht. New York Times (6 Feb. 1954), 17.
[63] Crowther, Bosley. "Gentlemen First." New York Times (14 Feb. 1954), X1.

His Majesty O'Keefe was the adventurous narrative of Capt. O'Keefe in the South Pacific Islands. His tale included two beautiful women with two distinct purposes. Dalabo, was the half-Pacific Islander/ half-English woman whom O'Keefe lawfully wedded. Kakofel, was the exotic and sensual flirt for O'Keefe's eyes and libido.[64] Dalabo represented the role of American woman in the 1950s with her style, chaste actions, and moral duties. Kakofel, on the other hand, represented the stereotypical sexual Pacific Island woman who caught the desire of the American hero. Kakofel juxtaposed Dalabo in the confrontation scene which left audiences sympathetic to Dalabo because the conceited Kakofel stole her husband's affections. Reviews could not miss the implications of Kakofel's role as evidenced by the descriptions. The Pacific Island woman character was deeply marked with this stereotype and *His Majesty O'Keefe* only pushed it along to future generations.

These two films, although seemingly different, were remarkably similar. Besides the obvious sexualized representations of Pacific Island women, *Bird of Paradise* and *His Majesty O'Keefe* displayed similarities in their claims to authenticity, time period, and their casting practices. Both films opened with title screens which announced to the audience that they were filmed on location in the Pacific. While *His Majesty O'Keefe* next described the ancient practices of the Yap, *Bird of Paradise* informed the audience that all the rituals and practices were based on those of ancient Polynesians. The purpose of these tile screens was to establish a sense of authority in portraying the accurate information, thus making claims to the validity of the films and the authentic replications of past Pacific Island culture.

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[64] "His Majesty O'Keefe" IMDb.com (25 May 2004 < http://www.imbd.com>).

Both films took place in the late nineteenth century: *Bird of Paradise* occurred during 1890s and *His Majesty O'Keefe* was placed in 1870s. The time placement kept the image of a past paradise, idyllic and agrarian. The tourist image used the idea of Pacific Islanders being in the mythical past to help promote tourism to the islands. By setting two popular films that depicted assumed authentic sexuality in the past – right when Hawai`i was trying to become a state – many Americans associated Hawai`i and the Pacific Islands as having primitive customs and no modern technology. Up until the 1970s, tourists still expected to see grass huts on Waikiki's beaches.[65]

The casting practices of both films were similar as the major character roles of Pacific Island females went to Euro-American actresses. Debra Paget, who played Kalua, was an American actress who appeared in mostly Westerns, swashbucklers, and Biblical dramas. Her blue-eyes caused a problem for *Bird of Paradise* director Delmar Daves, but he added into the script that her blue eyes were the result of an American grandfather.[66] Joan Rice, as Dalabo, was an English actress who starred in many UK films throughout the 50s. The minor roles of Pacific Islanders went to Jews, African-American actors, or rarely, Pacific Islanders. Jews passed for Pacific Islanders in *Bird of Paradise* as Tenga, Kalua's brother, was played by Jeff Chandler (Ira Grossel was his real name), and Yiddish Art Theater actor Maurice Schwartz played the *kahuna*.[67] The role of Kakofel went to a Jamaican actress who was a showgirl in London's West End. Bugulroo, head Yap chief in *His Majesty O'Keefe*, was played by Archie Savage, an African-American nightclub entertainer. He could also be seen as the ceremonial dance

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[65] Desmond, Staging Tourism, 109.
[66] "Bird of Paradise" IMDb.com (25 May 2004 < http://www.imbd.com>).
[67] "Bird of Paradise" IMDb.com 2004.

chief in *South Pacific*.[68] Even South Asian actors got roles as Fatumak was played by Abraham Sofaer who was Burmese. Any race could pass for Pacific Islanders in film if they were tan, even if they had blue eyes.

After all the Euro-American actors are billed, the Pacific Island actors came across the screen. In *Bird of Paradise*, Prince Leilani, an actor born in Hawai`i, played the Chief (he also played the *kahuna* in the original play version) and Mary Ann Ventura, a native Hawaiian who was a highly redeemed ancient Polynesian dancer, played Noanoa.[69] Jane Robisa, who played wife number two, was also Hawaiian. The real Hawaiians had minor roles while all the major roles went to non-Islanders. The casting practices were relevant to race relations in America. The love interests of Euro-American males could be Pacific Islander, but were played by Euro-American women so as to not cross the miscegenation line.

The Pacific Island women characters, either played by Euro-Americans or African- Americans or Hawaiians, were all presented on film as highly sexual, submissive, and desirous of Euro-American males. The women, like the Pacific Islands themselves, were generic, sensual objects waiting for the White person to enjoy the goods they had to offer. Even though the dreamy, erotic images of Pacific Island women on lush Edenic islands permeated South Seas films since the 1920s, the 1950s films made the most impact on tourists to Hawai`i and consequently their view of Pacific Island women.

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[68] "His Majesty O'Keefe" IMDb.com 2004. (25 May 2004 <http://www.imbd.com>).
[69] Reyes, Made in Paradise, 65.

1950s Films & Their Influence on Hawaiian Tourism

Bird of Paradise and *His Majesty O'Keefe* were made in the beginning of the 1950s, a pivotal period in the history of tourism to Hawai`i. Several factors were influential in creating an atmosphere for the popularity of these films and thus influencing tourism. In America during the 1950s, great abundance was everywhere. Most people were earning more money and could afford luxury items like televisions, suburban housing, or vacations. California, closer to Hawai`i than to New York, was rapidly increasing population; it rose by forty-eight percent. The federal government spent more $100 billion in California's defense industry, luring millions of well-educated, highly skilled workers with job opportunities.[70] Right next to California was Hawai`i, less than 2,600 miles away. Advertisements for Hawai`i during the 1950s promoted the islands as affordable and nearby, "Tropic Isles of Romance…so easy to reach…at a cost *amazingly low*."[71] Due to the affluent population, middle class tourists, not just the elites, were able to travel to paradise.

The communist take over in Cuba in 1959, ninety miles south of Key West Florida, influenced Americans to change their vacation plans to the West coast. The communist control of Cuba also highlighted the Cold War threat that had been simmering throughout the decade. Americans were surrounded by the threat of possible annihilation from an atomic bomb. School children in the 1950s were taught duck and cover drills as

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[70] James L. Roark, et al., eds., The American Promise: A History of the United States, compact edition, (Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 2000), 743.
[71] Magazine advertisement for Aloha Week, Oct 13-18, 1952; in Kent Ghirard's scrapbooks, Bishop Museum Archives (magazine source not noted).

Americans purchased bomb shelters. The threat of a nuclear attack was part of everyday life and many Americans wanted an escape.

In Hawai`i, changes were taking place that led to increased tourism. During the 1950s, debates over Hawai`i's admission as a state kept the islands in the American public's mind. Since 1952, both political parties had included statehood for Hawai`i in their campaign platforms. By 1954, seventy-eight percent of American mainlanders polled were in favor of Hawai`i's statehood.[72] In 1947, 1950, and 1953 statehood bills were passed in the House but defeated in the Senate.[73] From 1953 to 1958 Hawai`i was tied with Alaska over statehood privileges. Finally in 1959, both Houses passed the bill and Hawai`i was admitted into the United States on August 21.[74]

In this milieu, the thirty-eight Hollywood films made throughout this decade carried a lot of weight when it came to influencing American tourists. *Bird of Paradise* and *His Majesty O'Keefe* were popular among American audiences because they were released during the beginning of the Hawaiian craze and satisfied audiences' desire to escape vicariously, see exotic locales, witness Hawaiian life, as well as enjoy adventure, action and romance. The films also advertised the islands to the American public. Of the thirty-eight films that influenced tourism to Hawai`i, twenty-seven where filmed on Pacific Islands and twenty-three of those were filmed in Hawai`i.[75] Some popular films during the decade, in addition to *Bird of Paradise* (1951) and *His Majesty O'Keefe* (1953), were *From Here To Eternity* (1953), *The Revolt of Mamie Stover* (1956), and *South Pacific* (1958). These films, filmed mostly on Hawaiian Islands, featured beautiful

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[72] Gavan Daws, Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 384.
[73] Ibid., 389.
[74] Ibid., 391.
[75] Reyes, Made in Paradise, 37-312.

shots of Hawai`i's lush tropical scenery, rich culture, and promoted Hawai`i as a place of paradise and romance. *South Pacific* created worldwide attention for Hawai`i's island of Kauai as visiting journalists who reported on the film's production also wrote of the island's splendors for eager readers on the mainland.[76] These films created an American passion for the Pacific. As Norman Douglas argued in a paper he presented at a Moving Images of the Pacific Islands Conference, "It is no coincidence that the increase in filmmaking activity in Hawai`i runs parallel with Hawai`i's growing appeal for Americans as a tourist destination. Viewed in this light, almost every film made in the territory or, later, the state acted in some way as promotional material for the islands."[77]

As a result of this massive promotion, tourism in Hawai`i grew dramatically during 1950s. See Figure 4.[78] At the beginning of the decade, less than half a million tourists from the United States had visited Hawai`i. By the end of the decade, over two and a quarter million tourists visited America's paradise.[79] Since the 1890s, Hawai`i had been an American territory. During the 1920s, it was promoted as an Americanized paradise with the English language, US currency, US hotels, and US products.[80] By the 1950s, with the new wealth, new reasons for escape, and Hawai`i's attention in the media, more and more tourists were turning to Hawai`i as an exotic vacation destination. And as a result of the

Year	US Visitors	% Change from Previous Year
1950	*	*
1951	45, 227	*
1952	51, 383	13.6 %
1953	67, 726	31.80%
1954	77, 281	14.10%
1955	91, 712	18.70%
1956	102, 328	11.60%
1957	126, 816	23.90%
1958	128, 241	1.10%
1959	196, 731	53.40%
1960	235, 262	19.60%

Figure 4

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[76] Reyes, Made in Paradise, 22.
[77] Norman Douglas, "Electric Shadows in the South Seas: The Pacific Islands in Films - A Survey & Films on the Pacific Islands: A Comment on Their Use", In Moving Images of the Pacific Islands: A Guide to Films and Video. (Honolulu: UH Center for Pacific Islands Studies, 1994), 4.
[78] Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, "Visitors Staying Overnight or longer: 1927-2002", (10 May 2004 http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt/monthly/'4'!A1).
[79] Ibid.
[80] Desmond, Staging Tourism, 140.

films, American audiences became familiar with the stereotype of the erotic Pacific Island woman.

As tourists, Americans expected to see the same women and same behaviors that they saw on screen, exhibited in real life. Americans began to look at Hawai`i with a "tourist gaze." John Urry analyzed the implications of the tourist gaze in *The Tourist Gaze*. He argued tourists gazed upon certain places because of anticipation from daydreaming or fantasy of intense pleasures. The anticipation was formed by non-tourist activities, particularly films. He also stated that tourism was constructed through signs. When tourists saw beautiful, erotic Pacific Island women in Hawai`i on film, Hawai`i was held in the tourist gaze as having beautiful, erotic women.[81] The films created the lens for Americans to view Pacific Island women. And Hawai`i was where Americans found Pacific Island women. The Hawaiian tourist image was born.

[81] John Urry, The Tourist Gaze, second edition, (London: SAGE Publications,2002), 3.

The Hawaiian Tourist Image

The production of a certain image of Pacific Islanders for the consumption of tourists had been going on for centuries. European explorers, colonists, writers and filmmakers had for years created the myth of Hawai`i with sexual Pacific Island females willing to give themselves to the conquering Euro-American male. America's past involvement with Hawai`i affected the unique tourist image for Hawai`i. Americans overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, the US annexed Hawai`i in 1898 and Hawai`i became a US territory in 1900.[82] Due to America's colonialist influence, White Americans prospered as members of the elite class as owners of plantations and other businesses. Other races, such as Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Koreans migrated to Hawai`i in search work on the growing plantations. As a result, Hawai`i's population gained an assortment of ethnicities, with multi-raciality slowly edging out native Hawaiians. The specific tourist image of the sexualized Pacific Island female was a tool by colonists to mask the racial hierarchy. While the tourist industry celebrated the hodgepodge of races in Hawai`i as a place of racial harmony,[83] Hawaiians were forced into their previous images. Native Hawaiians, historically depicted as child-like, primitive and highly sexual, stayed in these representations due to colonialism's influence.

Since the early twentieth century, Americans were familiar with images of Hawaiians. Photographs, postcards and advertisements published in the US since the

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[82] Denoon, The Cambridge History of Pacific Islands, 236.

[83] Jeffrey Moniz and Paul Spickard, "Making Race in Hawai`i: Colonialism, Sovereignty, Multiracility, and the Midaltern" in Negotiating the Color Line: Doing Race in the Color-Blind Era and Implications for Racial Justice, ed. David Brunsma, (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, forthcoming).

1890s decontemporized Native Hawaiians by photographing Hawaiian women topless and in grass skirts when missionaries had long since converted Hawaiians. Hula girls on postcards were posed sensuously which created a sexualized, gendered image for all Pacific Islanders, which led Americans to believe that Hawaiians were still living in the past.

Tourism in Hawai`i fed off of these precedents from colonialism and created a revised image for Americans. The modern Hawaiian tourist image relied on images of a sexualized Pacific Island woman frozen in a mythical, paradisiacal past. In the 1930s, the new image began to be successful because of the Great Depression. Hawai`i was depicted as decomtemporized; as a land with a people still in the romantic past.[84] Travel to Hawai`i was marketed not only an escape for Americans, but Hawai`i was also used as an emblem of nostalgia for the pre-industrial past. After World War II, Hawai`i was promoted as safe escape from the demands of work and metropolitan life to an exotic, primitive, paradisiacal locale.[85] Decomtemporized dance shows and images of Polynesian women authenticated the mythical view of Hawai`i for the vast numbers of American tourists since then. Women in supposedly ancient clothing, grass shacks, and primitive rituals were all apart of the tourist propaganda. A 1955 US Armed Forces *Pocket Guide to Hawai`i* reiterated this image. It stated, "If you are thinking about Hawai`i in terms of lei-bedecked hula girls, native grass shacks…you won't be far off the beam."[86] By advertising Hawai`i with images from an earlier period, tourists were led to believe they were traveling to a past paradise filled with sexualized women.

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[84] Desmond, Staging Tourism, 129.
[85] Ibid., 79.
[86] United States. Office of Armed Forces Information and Education, A Pocket Guide to Hawaii, (Washington: GPO, 1955), 3.

The Hawaiian tourist industry's created image of a mythical paradise gained popularity. In *Paradise Remade: The Politics of Culture and History in Hawai`i*, Elizabeth Buck analyzed the tourist industry in Hawai`i relative to the presentation of Hawaiian culture. According to Buck, the tourist industry in Hawai`i was based on the mythical image of paradise. The goal of the industry was to get tourists to mentally place themselves into the imaginary paradise of Hawai`i.[87] The image used by the tourist industry was heavy with symbols in which the presentation and performance of Hawaiian culture played large parts. Buck used the example of a Hawaiian airlines advertisement to demonstrate her point. The advertisement, much like many seen today, placed the Polynesian female in an exotic and romantic setting, primitive compared to modern Waikiki.[88] The image of paradise created by the tourist industry extended not only to advertisements, but to live performances as well. Lu`aus did their best to create the atmosphere that tourists could place themselves to be in the promised paradise. Attending a lu`au, however was more important than just watching the dances, eating the food, or being at the beach. It was the whole experience of participating in an image of paradise. This was considered by Baudrillard as the "political economy of the sign" in post-capitalism where values were reversed so that consumption of signs defined ourselves. The act of attending a lu`au, for example, became symbolic as an act of enjoying paradise. "The act of cultural consumption…the exchange value of money (what it cost to be there) and the symbolic value of *hula* (the performance itself) [were] transmuted into sign value (the image of one's self that comes from being entertained by

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[87] Elizabeth Buck, Paradise Remade: The Politics of Culture and History in Hawai'i, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 179.
[88] Ibid., 179.

Hawaiians in Hawai`i-- 'enjoying the vacation of a lifetime in beautiful Waikiki')."[89] Any act of participation in cultural consumption by tourists, like attending a lu`au, was altered by the tourist to become an experience of a lifetime in watching Hawaiians in a Hawaiian paradise. The entire state of Hawai`i, public and private establishments, and advertisements participated in selling the image of Hawai`i as a mythical, exotic, primitive destination. Lu`aus still advertised their connection to the past and still featured ancient rituals as part of their attempt to draw tourists.

Jane Desmond, on the other hand, argued that tourism to Hawai`i was dependent on the exotic images of Pacific Island women in her book *Staging Tourism.* Tourism developed out of American's fascination and desire to see Others. By commodifying colonial cultures into areas of pleasure for Americans, people who were curious about Other cultures could witness them first hand.[90] Performances of the hula girl were central to the tourist industry in promoting Hawai`i to mainland Americans. Desmond stated simply that "Many, many people [were] willing to pay a lot of many to see bodies which [were] different from their own, to purchase the right to look."[91] Tourists came to Hawai`i with the sole purpose of being able to look, watch, even stare at exotic Polynesian women who for centuries had been eroticized. But even more satisfying for tourists was the fact that they were not alone. Hundreds of other Euro-Americans had come for the same purpose; linking the White middle-class tourists as a collective and differentiated group separated from those they were watching. This feeling of communal support was part of the pleasure that was being bought by the tourists.[92] Tourists enjoyed

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[89] Buck, Paradise Remade, 180.
[90] Desmond, Staging Tourism, 37.
[91] Ibid., xiii.
[92] Ibid., xxi.

watching Others from their safe position in the audience, next to other tourists, knowing that they were there for the same reasons and knowing that they were different from those they observed. By flocking to Hawai`i, tourists sought the exotic Other, the sensual Pacific Island woman who was promoted so much by the modern tourist industry.

Everywhere the tourists looked in Waikiki, the heart of Hawaiian tourism, they were showered with images of beautiful Pacific Island women. On every block there were stands full of brochures like "Oahu Gold," "VIP," "The Best of Oahu" giving tourists ideas on what to do, where to dine, and the best beaches on which to sunbathe. Almost all of the brochures had pictures of Pacific Island-looking women wearing leis, flowers in their hair, and little else. All smiled at the on-looker and seem to say, "pick me up, I'll show you a good time in Hawai`i." Shopping in the popular local International Marketplace, one was welcomed with a statue of a Pacific Island woman placing a flower in her hair. See Figure 5.[93] The plaque at her feet stated that "Lani" enjoyed dancing the hula for tourists. Her wooden lei barely covered her nipples while the rest of her breasts were exposed and her grass-skirt permanently swayed in the wind, exposing her right leg almost to her waist.

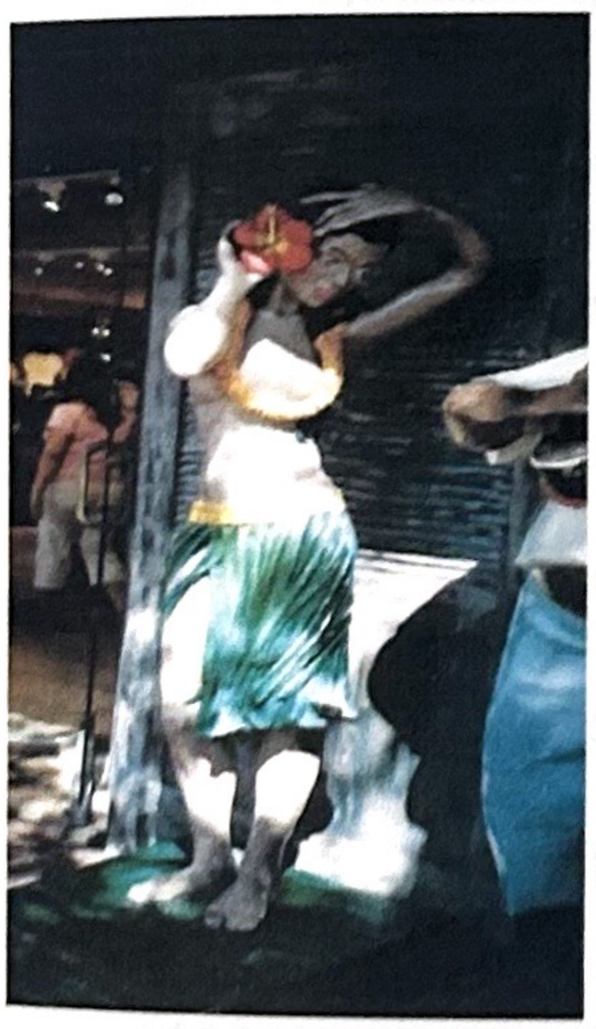

Figure 5

Slender and beautiful, countless tourists took pictures with the statue. Many men tried to look under the carved lei to see her nipples while they hoped the breeze would finally show what was hidden under the skirt. Among the endless ABC, EZ Discount and other stores that sell cheap souvenirs, it was certain that the tourist would find miniature statues, ashtrays, mugs, placemats, or postcards with the

[93] Photo: J. Adkins 8 Jan. 2004.

mysterious yet so sensual Pacific Island woman. These articles pictured seductively posed Pacific Island women in grass skirts, leis and long flowing hair. Only occasionally were their breasts are covered, thus invoking sexualized and primitive images. All these representations of Pacific Island women around Hawai`i and Waikiki reinforced the mythical Edenic past with erotic women for Hawai`i's tourists.

The modern tourist industry celebrated these stereotypical images. As a result, tourists came to Hawai`i with certain assumptions about what was waiting for them in America's paradise. Scholars argued that tourism in Hawai`i was dependent on both the image of the mythical Eden still in the primitive past and the desire to see beautiful exotic women. By placing Hawai`i in the past, the sexual behaviors of the Pacific Island women for tourists were more accepted, since they were historical behaviors and reminiscent of their past culture. Tourist notions about the sexuality of Pacific Island women were formed by European explorers, developed by Hollywood films, and were fulfilled by Hawai`i's tourist propaganda, especially lu`aus. Lu`aus combined the sexualized Pacific Island women with elements of mythical past. Since about half of American tourists attended a lu`au in 2002, lu`aus were very significant in influencing tourist perceptions of Pacific Island women.[94]

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[94]Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Tourism Research Branch, "Activity Participation by Visitors from the U.S. Total, U.S. West, U.S. East, and Japan: 2002", 2001 Visitor Satisfaction and Activity Report 10 May 2004 (http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt/db02/07/071103.xls).

Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au

At Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au, audiences were given exactly what they expected to see, beautiful Pacific Island women dancing seductively with coconut shell bras and flowing skirts. All of the five female dancers were of the same height (about 5'2"), same weight (less than 120 lbs.) and same look (dusky skin tone, long, slightly wavy hair).[95] The dances were mostly of Tahitian origin as fast-paced hip movements dominated the show. The costumes were varied from Hawai`i, Samoa, New Zealand and Tahiti. They included elaborate head pieces, shiny, colorful cellophane skirts, and even black light paint. Bare navels, arms, and legs moved across the stage in a frenzied pace. The dances featured the female performers, male performers, and even paired the female performers with American males from the audience. The lu`au catered to the tourist's anticipation of sexuality on the part of the Pacific Island women. However, the lu`au also exploited American's expectations by making them objects of sexuality. Germaine's Lu`au confirmed the stereotype of Pacific Island women, and also placed American tourists into the stereotype as well. While they were hopeful to see unbridled sexuality, tourists themselves exhibited unaccustomed sexuality.

Germaine's Lu`au advertised itself as the "Too Good To Miss" lu`au. Among the highlights of their lu`au were the distance from Waikiki, "35 minutes and 100 years away," being able to experience the *ohana* of an "authentic backyard-style Hawaiian lu`au," and watching the "musical tour" of the "magic of Polynesia in all its splendor… romance… and rich tradition!" Audiences could "see the time-honored tradition of the

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[95] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

Imu Ceremony," and "behold the regal procession of the Royal Court of Polynesia!" This "tropical fantasy" allowed tourists to "escape!" to a time when Hawai`i and Polynesia were at their finest and rich in tradition.[96] However, one hundred years ago, Hawai`i was ruled by American planters, Hawaiian women were wearing mu`u mu`us, and hula was rarely performed in public, much less Tahitian dancing! The image presented by the brochure was one of an invented past. Germaine's Lu`au claimed to be historical by being "100 years away" with traditional ceremonies. However, the past that was recreated for tourists at the lu`au was nothing but another piece of propaganda that fed into the tourist's expected image of Hawai`i. But no matter, the beautiful, tanned woman on the cover of their promotional brochure welcomed tourists with a smile and a lei.

Many people who went to Germaine's waited for the typical images that invoked any Pacific Island: girls, swaying hips, and grass skirts. When I asked the males and females at my table and on the bus what they were expecting, the common response from both sexes was "entertainment from beautiful girls."[97] Ideas were already embedded in the audience's heads about what type of dancing they were going to be shown as they suggested they would see, "fast hips" and "lots of skin."[98] When asked if they thought the lu`au would be any different from what they had seen in movies about the Pacific Islands, interviewees responded they thought it would be "more exciting" and "more authentic."[99] But their idea of "authentic" was based upon the films' mythical and sexualized presentation of Pacific Island women, which Germaine's portrayed.

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[96] Germaine's Lu`au Hawaii brochure, 2004.
[97] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.

Germaine's Lu`au was everything that American's tourists expected: beautiful women who danced seductively in revealing and flashy costumes.

Germaine's Dancers as Sexual Representations

After I arrived at Germaine's private beach front property, the other tourists and I were greeted with leis and herded over to wait in line to take pictures with two Pacific Island- looking female dancers from the show. One wore a costume from New Zealand with poi balls that hung from her waist, while the other wore a costume from Tahiti, complete with coconut bra and elaborate tassel belt. Forced to take a picture with these two women, my companion and I stood in the middle while the two women flanked our sides. The woman wearing the Tahitian costume, which was more revealing than the New Zealander costume which covered her torso, stood with her right hand at her hip and left arm behind my companion's waist. This flirtatious pose would be only our first introduction to the seductive portrayals of Pacific Island women at the lu`au.

When I interviewed these two women, I asked what kind of impression they wanted to give the audience. One replied that she wanted to give the audience "the best time of their life. I want them to enjoy seeing the people dancing."[100] I asked them what kind of representation they felt they were making of their culture. The other responded, "I feel like we are keeping the traditional culture alive, but then everyone has their own opinion on how they would take it. But for myself, I would say we kinda represent the

[100] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

islands, and what you see is what…we try to express their culture."[101] Pacific Island cultures did not stigmatize against open sexuality, however to represent such particular aspects of their culture for the purpose of entertaining Americans created a false image of Pacific Island cultures. Huanani-Kay Trask, Hawaiian sovereignty advocate, would consider this proof of the hegemony of Hawai`i. These girls were so colonized, they thought their representation of Pacific Island women was expressing their culture. Their representation was really only being commodified. They were so colonized, they did not even know they were colonized.[102] By commodifying the sexual aspects of Pacific Island culture, other virtues were overshadowed and Pacific Island women were characterized as seductive givers of free love. At lu`aus, where "authentic" Pacific Island cultures were recreated, patrons' ideas about what Pacific Island cultures were really like, were confirmed by the costumes and the dances.

The style of Tahitian dance was sexualized, but it was the context in which the dances were performed that allowed the audience to assume certain ideas about the eroticism of the women performing the dances. The first dances performed after the official start of the lu`au show (the conch shell), were of Tahitian origin. The stage went dark and black lights illuminated the Tahitian dancer's costumes. Three colorful, glowing girls entered the stage. Dressed in two foot tall head pieces and oversized collars, they danced to the pulsating rhythm of the drums. See Figure 6.[103] Their costumes accentuated

Figure 6

[101] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.
[102] Trask, From a Native Daughter, 195.
[103] Photo: J. Adkins, 7 Jan. 2004.

their slender waists and short stature. Although there were three male dancers, the females stayed together throughout the song, while the male dancers grouped around them. The placement of the female dancers in the middle of an encircling band of men created a striking image. Not only was the audience watching the female dancers, but so were the male dancers on stage. Everyone was forced to watch the women as they displayed their talents to all in attendance.

As the three dancers moved off stage, two more female dancers came on, this time wearing less. The previous women were wearing long red skirts that brushed the floor. The two new dancers wore short yellow cellophane skirts that sat above their knees. See Figure 7.[104] Instead of the bright colors, these women wore white and silver. No longer could the costumes be considered as authentic, since the new women shimmered in the light. Tahitians did not have cellophane skirts one hundred years ago; the costumes were now purely accentuating the female dancers' assets. The skirts had silver tassels and made the Tahitian dancers look like Las Vegas show girls as opposed to recreators of Pacific Island culture. These women danced alone on stage with no males. Their dance sequence focused on just women, wearing less clothing, and looking less like authentic Tahitian dancers because of their modern costumes.

Figure 7

In the last segment of Tahitian dancing, the climax of the show, a single female dancer came out wearing a costume of hot pink. Her dance was called "The Tahitian Love Song" and was danced by the woman alone, with her back mainly to the audience.

[104] Photo: J. Adkins, 7 Jan. 2004.

What was significant about her costume was not the color, nor the material, but that she was not wearing a top! With her back to the audience and her hair pulled to the front and no strap across her back, it appeared to the audience that she was not wearing any covering over her breasts. Her back was greasy and shiny, and her skirt was fabric cut into flower petal shapes accentuated by a belt of flowers. She occasionally looked over her shoulder at the audience, but the majority of the time she danced without facing the audience. When she finally turned around, it could be seen that she wore pink flower-like cups over her breasts so as to not be exposed. However, one had to look very hard to see these flowers. Not only did this cause everyone in the audience to stare at her breasts to see if anything was there, but it implied that the dancer wanted to keep up the image that she was topless with only her hair covering her breasts. During the song, she danced with each male dancer that was on stage individually. This image of the seductive, almost naked Pacific Island beauty was representative of the stereotype seen in films and the tourist image. She was alluring (wore next to nothing), mysterious (danced with her back to the audience), and willing (danced with all the men separately). She exuded sex appeal and eroticism. By not facing the audience, she became the object of not just eyes, but also minds, as many wondered if she was really wearing anything.

Lenore Manderson argued in "Parables of Imperialism and Fantasies of the Exotic" from *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure*, that this practice of not showing her face was "a vehicle for Western libidinal fantasy and the enactment of power."[105] Kakofel's silent role in *His Majesty O'Keefe* also fell under this practice. Manderson analyzed films that included Thai women such as *The King and I*. She argued

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[105] Manderson, "Parables of Imperialism and Fantasies of the Exotic," in Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure, 126.

representations of Thai women in Hollywood films portrayed the Thai people and consequently the women, as faceless masses there for the pleasure of Western men. This allowed Euro-American males to enact their adventures and sexual desires on the submissive women. The near-topless lu`au dancer exhibited behaviors that linked her with the same ideas; she was faceless and sexualized, there for the taking of American males.

Finally, if the sexual aspects of the dance were not enough, it was blatantly obvious when an American man from the audience came on stage to demonstrate his knowledge of Tahitian dancing. This man, a newlywed, came on stage and was told to follow the female dancer facing him. The female Tahitian dancer called to him with her hands in a somewhat sexual way as he tried to emulate her moves. She then turned him around and held his hands behind him and she had her hands behind her back. She proceeded to dance suggestively with her rear-end rubbing up against his rear-end. Amidst all the claps and cheers from the audience, the MC told his new wife not to get mad because it was all "purely cultural!"[106] After this display, the remaining female dancers came out to form a circle around him. The American man was almost hidden by the frenzied hips and feeling arms. The desire of many men to have beautiful Pacific Island women surround him pushing their pelvic regions up against his was fulfilled by Germaine's Lu`au. This part of the show had been done for years, as Jane Desmond noted in her book *Staging Tourism*. She watched this same spectacle in 1995 and even quoted the MC warning the man "not to bump his 'papaya' [penis] to the front while making fruit salad with the female dancer in front of him."[107] The American male

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[106] Germaine's Lu`au commentary, 7 Jan. 2004.
[107] Jane Desmond, Staging Tourism, 22.

surrounded by Pacific Island females concluded the show. After he exited the stage, they sang "Aloha Oe" and we filed out. The expectations of the tourists had been fulfilled as they watched one of their own, an American, become the middle of a Pacific Island female orgy. And the fact that this was the last segment of the lu`au, left American tourists to dwell on the allusions to sex they had just seen.

Sexual connotations had been apart of Germaine's Lu`au since its beginnings in the 1970s, because they had been a major factor in Hawai`i's tourism. Germaine's Lu`au encapsulated the erotic images of Pacific Island women that tourists associated with the Pacific Islands and came expecting to see. I asked a male tourist at my table what he liked best of the show, he replied, "I loved the Tahitian woman's outfit a lot." Why? "Uh, [he laughed while his wife looked at him disapprovingly] I liked her coconut bra." He had expected to see beautiful women dancing in revealing costumes, and that was what he got. Even the female tourists believed that the sexualized Pacific Island women were representational of tourism in Hawai`i. I asked a woman sitting at my table, "If you were to describe the show to a friend, how would you?" She replied, "I would say, that it's worth coming to, and it's a good, you know, experience of Hawai`i, I guess."[108] Male and female tourists had long associated sexualized Pacific Island women with Hawai`i. Hawai`i was America's domestic paradise complete with exotic women and libidinous fantasies that every American could have. A free hula show put on by the city of Honolulu on Kuhio Beach at sunset demonstrated how much tourists associated Hawai`i with eroticism.

The free hula show on Kuhio Beach featured two women and one man dancing traditional hula. The women were wearing long mu`u mu`u type dresses and the man

[108] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

was wearing a shirt and pants. The show featured only hula, both ancient, *kahiko*, and modern, *auana*. The songs were mostly slower and graceful and featured native Hawaiian instruments and chants. However, because of the traditional nature of the show, over two thirds of the audience left. When the show began, the audience seating area was full with about 150 people. By the end of the show, there were less than fifty people in the audience. The free hula show did not have any elements that were in the lu`au, including fast paced Tahitian dancing. As a result, the majority of the audience left since they were expecting something similar to what they saw at a lu`au.

I asked a family from Australia what their least favorite part of the show was and the mother replied, "I actually would have liked to seen the guy, this is not sexist, I would've like to see the guy not in a shirt and pants, doing the traditional dances." Why without the shirt? "It's just, just so you get…more authentic."[109] Her daughter added that at Germaine's Lu`au the male dancers wore grass skirts and no tops, so this show was different. This family was disappointed in the lack of authentic costumes like the ones they had seen at the lu`au. For them, authentic costumes meant costumes that showed off the Pacific Islander's body. Even audience members who stayed for the whole show wanted to see elements that they saw in the lu`au. Patrons of the free hula show were unimpressed with just hula. If the show did not have eroticized Pacific Islanders dancing, it was not worth watching because it was not a part of the sexualized image of Hawai`i that tourists expected.

The perpetuation of the mythical image by Hawaiian tourism has consequently had detrimental effects on Hawaiian culture and on the way Hawaiians viewed themselves. The image of the erotic Pacific Island beauty throughout tourist propaganda

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[109] Personal interview, 9 Jan. 2004.

caused Hawaiian activists to criticize tourism's promotion of it. World famous Hawaiian sovereignty advocate Haunani- Kay Trask detailed her opinion on tourism's representation of Hawaiian culture and its detrimental affects on Hawaiians today in her book, *From a Native Daughter*. In the chapter entitled "Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture" she argued that due to tourism's sexualized image of Hawaiian women, perpetuated in Americans' minds, tourism had commodified and prostituted Hawaiian culture. Trask argued that the dominant vision of Hawai`i was so powerful that "the word, the vision, the sound in the mind-- is the fragrance and feel of soft kindness."[110] She implied that to Americans, Hawai`i was the ultimate escape to paradise and that even the name Hawai`i immediately conjured up many Edenic images in the minds of Americans.

To argue that her culture was prostituted, Trask stated that "Hawai`i was 'she', the Western image of the Native 'female' in her magical allure."[111] Hawai`i was consequently represented as a female object/ island. "She" was then under the influence of corporations and million dollar businesses, who used "her" for profit. They exploited "her" culture, people, and environment. Hawaiians were therefore forced into putting on lu`aus for the entertainment of tourists from whom the corporations made money. Hawaiians, contrary to popular belief, "did not drink alcohol, eat 'island' buffets, or participate in 'thrilling' revues before the advent of white people in [Hawai`i]."[112] But as a result of this booming tourist industry, Hawaiians had to "wear clown-like makeup, don costumes from a mix of Polynesian cultures, and behave in a manner that [was] smutty

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[110] Trask, From a Native Daughter, 180.
[111] Ibid., 180.
[112] Ibid., 192.

and salacious" for the entertainment of White people.[113] According to Trask, the traditional Hawaiian culture had been desecrated and taken advantage of by corporations, and a new cheesy culture was perpetuated by the lu`aus and Polynesian dance shows. Unfortunately, most Hawaiians did not see the evils of tourism since tourism provided jobs. Trask explained Hawaiians were so colonized that they did not believe they were colonized, and that their culture presently represented by Polynesian dance shows was beneficial, not prostituted.[114] Trask ended her chapter with a plea not to come to Hawai`i and support the tourism that destroyed her Hawaiian culture.[115] For Trask, the future of her people and culture depended on a reversal of tourist images to positive portrayals of Hawaiian culture and Pacific Island women. Despite the Hawaiian cultural renaissance of the 1960s --1980s, and the strong anti-colonialist fervor of sovereignty advocates, Hawai`i as a tourist mecca was still represented as the home of exotic Pacific Island women on display for tourists.

But another part of tourism and the presentation of sexual Pacific Island women was the fact that many Americans came to watch these women; to ogle them. Tourism's promotion the sexualized image worked. Over four million Americans last year experienced Hawai`i and over fifty percent of those visitors went to a lu`au.[116] Tourists expected sexuality when they arrived at the lu`au, but they did not expect to become apart of the sexuality themselves.

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[113] Trask, From a Native Daughter, 191.
[114] Ibid., 195.
[115] Ibid., 196.
[116] Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Tourism Research Branch, "Activity Participation by Visitors from the US Total, US West, US East, and Japan: 2002" 10 May 2004.

American Tourists as Sexual Representations

Germaine's brochure invited Euro-American tourists to "kick of your shoes and go native!"[117] To "go native," the American was taught hula and Tahitian dance steps. But the undertone of this statement was to forget American sexual inhibitions and to "hang loose," as the patrons were repeatedly told. Since tourists expected a variety of sensual activities, they willingly engaged in sexual activities to fulfill their expectations. These anticipations were exploited throughout the lu`au, to the enjoyment of others in the audience and they began even before the tourists got to the lu`au site.

On the bus, passengers were instructed on how to make the "hang loose" sign with their fingers by the bus entertainer, the "escort." If made it a certain way, ladies would send a sexual signal to Hawaiian men and they would be following the American women around.[118] The theme of "hang-loose" was reiterated throughout the rest of the night as tourists were invited and encouraged--if not mocked for not participating--to engage in activities that defied American personal space boundaries. On the shuttle ride over to Germaine's, passengers were told to place their hands on the shoulders of the person sitting in front of them, and massage him or her. Normally, Americans did not like being touched by strangers; however the open love atmosphere softened rigid standards and most of the passengers massaged a stranger's back. When the bus arrived at the beach site, the patrons were given leis to place around their companion's neck as a welcoming gesture. However, it also included a kiss from male to female. All patrons were subject to it, and if no person of the opposite sex was in the group, one was

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[117] Germaine's Lu`au brochure, 2004.
[118] Germaine's Lu`au commentary, 7 Jan. 2004.

provided to finish the equation. So, even before attendees sit down at their table, they were subjected to affection by strangers.

After sitting down at assigned tables, the MCs come on stage. The first thing one did was to explain that everyone was part of an ohana. Hawaiian for family. And how did they welcome family? By kissing everyone of course! All the men of the tables had to go around and kiss each of the females seated at their table. Of course if the men did not do it, then they were not "real men."[119] In addition, patrons were taught the essential words in the Hawaiian language: hug and kiss. Later, during the middle of the show, the women were invited on stage to try to learn some hula, while the men were on the sides of the stage learning a Hawaiian chant. After both sexes tried their hand at Hawaiian culture, the males formed a giant line stretching from the side of the stage around the periphery of the tables. The females on stage then filed off and had to kiss each male before they were allowed to return to their seats. During the night, I was kissed by over fifty men, only one of which was my companion. If I had refused to kiss any one of these strange men, I would be looked at as a "party pooper," and "not fun" for not wanting to participate in the activity that everyone else was enjoying.[120] The heavy atmosphere of alcohol and sensuality had put all the patrons in a free-love mood. But physical contact was not the only activity engaged in by the patrons who were waiting for sexual endeavors.

Under the guise of feeling like one of the family again, the tourists were invited to try their hand at dancing on stage. While everyone was eating, three American men went up on stage and were dressed in coconut bras, grass skirts, and leis and were told to try to

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[119] Germaine's Lu'au commentary, 7 Jan. 2004.
[120] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

dance some hula. The audience then judged them on how well they entertained the audience while everyone was waiting to get their food. In the process of learning the dances, the American male tourists were put into the sexualized position of the female dancers as they were dressed in revealing costumes and instructed to dance without prior instruction. The outcome was a gross insult to any trained hula dancer, as the males in drag tried to sway their hips seductively. One even gave up dancing hula and danced in a contemporary style with highly sexual gestures and movements of his crotch.

Apparently, if one was in the costume of a Pacific Islander, one was free to dance seductively. In Jane Desmond's *Staging Tourism*, an American dancer in the 1920s had the same idea. Gilda Gray was known for her "South Sea Island Dance" which was a "shimmy" applied to her whole body. However, the censors at the time would not let her dance it, so she put on a "Hula-Hula" costume and as she boasted, "and didn't I get away with it? Even the old cranks think it is perfectly all right for a 'Hula-Hula' to shake."[121]

The women of the audience were later invited on stage to learn how to dance Tahitian. The women were given basic instructions and a quick tutorial for about one minute. Then, all the women on stage were told to turn around, so their backs and rear-ends would be to the audience. With drums, the women had to try to give their best imitation of Tahitian dancing, while the audience laughed at their awkward movements. By not facing the audience, the women were put into a sexualized position. They became objects of the American gaze, as Pacific Island women had been. Without faces, they became bodies moving for the pleasure of the audience and were without control over who was looking or able to make a say in they how represented. So the American tourists became objects of a gaze when they were expecting to be the gazers. In the

[121] Desmond, Staging Tourism, 74

process of wanting to be a gazer, they were all more than willing to kiss strangers and show their lack of dancing skills.

And the audience loved watching other tourists kiss strangers and embarrass themselves on stage. When I asked a group of younger women what were their favorite parts of the show, one replied, "I liked when everyone went up on stage, when everyone *else* went up [she laughed]." Why was that so interesting? "'Cause then it gives the audience a chance to be part of the show. They were trying really hard to do it. It was cute [she laughed again]."[122] The woman responded that it gave the audience a chance to be a part of the show. But what part? To assume the part of the sexualized Pacific Island female dancer? Or to partake in sexualized behaviors that they would not normally have done? Cynthia Enloe argued in *Bananas, Beaches & Bases*, if the male tourist visited a country where there were Other women, he felt he had arrived in a territory where "he [could] shed civilization's constraints, where he [was] freed from standards of behavior imposed by respectable women back home."[123] Since the tourist image allowed male tourists to expect sexual encounters, it was only natural that he could show sexual freedom himself. Tourists at Germaine's Lu`au did just that.

Throughout Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au, there was an element of concession to the stereotype of the highly sexualized Pacific Island woman, but there was also a reversal of the stereotype as it was placed on the American patrons. Germaine's Lu`au played to tourist's expectations of free-love and sex appeal in the Pacific Islands by presenting sexualized dances and costumes, but also put the American tourists as objects of entertainment and exploited their desire to see sexual activity and their

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[122] Personal interview, 7 Jan. 2004.

[123] Cynthia Enloe, Bananas, Beaches, & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 28.

willingness to demonstrate that eroticism. But tourists' ideas of Hawai`i as a sexualized paradise where this abnormal type of behavior was accepted validated their actions. It was assumed by the tourists that their behaviors were normal in Hawai`i because Hawaiian culture accepted sexual behaviors as commonplace as the films and tourist images dictated. Tourists felt the liberty to behave sexually and expected these same behaviors from Hawaiian and Pacific Island women. The images for tourism in Hawai`i were powerful enough to shape the Hawaiian and Pacific Island culture to cater to expectations of Americans. Not only had 1950s representations of Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders steadily influenced tourists, but so did the propaganda today. American tourists had been biased by sexual representations of Pacific Island women for so many years, and there had been no signs of significant change. Would tourists ever get rid of their expectations for seeing sexualized Pacific Island women in Hawai`i?

Conclusion

Sexualized representations of Pacific Island women in 1950s South Seas genre films affected American tourists today in Hawai`i. Stereotypical images of highly sexualized Pacific Island females were made popular during the Hollywood films of the 1950s. Two films of the 1950s that epitomized these stereotypical representations were *Bird of Paradise* (1951) and *His Majesty O'Keefe* (1953). Both films were set in the past and claimed authenticity since they were filmed in the Pacific Islands, which led audiences to believe that the type of behaviors exhibited in the film were true to the culture. In *Bird of Paradise*, Kalua, the main female role, was representational of the stereotypical Pacific Island sex object as she continuously tried to please her French lover André with sexual favors. *His Majesty O'Keefe* had idealized sexual representations of White women and Pacific Island women. Dalabo, the half-islander wife of O'Keefe represented the White American sexual vision of women during the 1950s since she stayed sexually virtuous. Kakofel represented the stereotypical highly sexual Pacific Island woman. She was silent the whole film, flirted constantly with O'Keefe, and served as O'Keefe's eye candy. This image of the sexualized Pacific Island female became a powerful influence in tourism.

During the 1950s, there was a Hawaiian craze and a boom in tourism to Hawai`i. Tourism to Hawai`i increased five fold, from 45,000 in 1951 to over 235,000 by the end of the decade.[124] Several factors during the 1950s were influential in creating the atmosphere for the popularity of these films and thus influencing tourism. Debates over

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[124] Hawai`i State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Tourism Research Branch, "Visitors Staying Overnight or longer: 1927-2002", 10 May 2004.

Hawai`i's statehood kept the state in public's mind throughout the decade until statehood was granted in 1959. California's growth in post war period with new jobs allowed Hawai`i to advertise as only a short flight away. Cold War anxiety and the threat of nuclear attack made many Americans want an escape and post war affluence made that escape a reality. As a result of this boom, the Hawaiian tourist industry latched onto the images of Hawai`i that were shown in Hollywood films-- images that the American public were familiar with. Hawai`i was advertised to Americans as a paradisiacal island with topless Pacific Island beauties waiting for tourists. The sexualized image of Pacific Island women was therefore solidified by the tourist industry.

The modern tourist image in Hawai`i was reflective of these stereotypical representations. Naked, seductive Pacific Island women could be seen on souvenirs, ashtrays, mugs, statues, postcards, and tourist brochures presently in Waikiki. The tourist industry of Hawai`i relied on this sexualized representation of Pacific Island women because tourists expected this image. As tourists expected the image, the industry created more stereotypical images. Each one fed off the other to result in a vast sexualized image found in all realms of tourist activities, including lu`aus.

At Germaine's "Too Good To Miss" Lu`au, audiences' expectations of sexualized Pacific Island women were realized. Their costumes, placement of female dancers with respect to male dancers, and inclusion of male tourists into their dances added to the stereotypical erotic representations. Germaine's Lu`au epitomized the sensual images of Pacific Island women that tourists associated with the Pacific Islands. Male and female tourists had long associated sexualized Pacific Island women with Hawai`i, and tourists expected sexuality when they arrived at the lu`au. Since tourists expected to witness a

variety of erotic activities, they willingly engaged in sexual activities to fulfill their expectations. These anticipations were exploited throughout the lu`au as tourists massaged strangers on the tour bus and kissed multiple members of the opposite sex. Tourists were invited and encouraged to engage in activities that defied American personal space boundaries. It was assumed by the tourists that their sexual behaviors were acceptable in Hawai`i because of the images they saw in films and tourist propaganda.

The vicious cycle of tourism responding tourist perceptions which were influenced by tourist propaganda from films had an even greater influence on native Hawaiians. According to Elizabeth Buck in *Paradise Remade*, "The perceptions that outsiders have of Hawaiians, and even to some extent the perceptions that Hawaiians have of themselves, have largely been constructed by the tourist industry. These images have been further disseminated by advertising and broadcast and film media throughout the world."[125] I focused on American tourists' expectations of Pacific Island women influenced by films and tourist propaganda. These expectations placed Hawaiians as spectacles, there for the pleasure of the American tourists. Even though this was what the American tourists thought, it was only half the story.

What I did not discuss was how Hawaiians themselves felt about the representations of Pacific Island culture in lu`aus or tourist propaganda or films. Hawaiians have become active agents in creating their own representations. While it may seem to tourists that Pacific Island women were sexualized, to the Hawaiian, they could be seen as keeping their culture alive. A further pursuit of this topic would include a counter narrative from the Hawaiian perspective that included the belief of tourism as

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[125] Buck, Paradise Remade, 177.

beneficial to their culture, that Hawaiians had their own voice in their representations, and that Hawaiians were not just being acted *upon*, but were vigorously participating in the creation of a new image for Pacific Island women.

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