

Margaret Aipolani

I was born in Kekaha. I became interested in the hula at age eight. I received olapa training as well as auwana. Kahiko is a new word for what I was taught to be olapa. I was trained by my mother, Kawehiwa Kahoolike, who was taught by her father. Tutu Kahoolike was a hula instructor in Kalalau. Kalalau was where the hula sprang from. Kalalau was the original village where the Hawaiians started from. That's where the split-up began. Some Hawaiians went out to Haena, my family came out of the village and ended up on this side of the island. Tutuwahine Keoli lived in this village and was the ancestor of Henry Pa. That is why I recognize Henry Pa's style because it is the same as Tutu Keoli. Henry was a direct relation to tutuwahine Keoli and that is where Henry got all his ancient dancing knowledge, from the people of Kalalau. The hula is from the people of the village of Kalalau. These people were the source of Hawaiian culture.

My mother basically taught my sister and I. There were others in the class but her concentration was on the two of us to see that we got it. When I was young I was not really interested in what she was passing down to me. Had I known then what I know now, I would have listened to everything she said.

The first part of the lesson would concentrate on the pa'i and the oli ~~naohinao~~ then mother would have another woman come in and she would rise and begin to dance. We would watch and listen. pa'i and

She would tell us stories afterwards explaining the mana'o of the chant. All of what she would teach us is what had been passed down to her from her father. There was no changes in the mana'o of the chants, and the motions of the ancient hulas that were passed down from my grandfather to my mother to myself.

I began to teach in 1938 only because ~~my~~ the high schools kids wanted me to. My mother taught us that just having the knowledge was a joy. Eventually I began to realize that I had been handed down a great amount of knowledge but for a long time I only appreciated it because it had been passed down by my family. I feel I can be considered a traditional kumu because I know where all this came from. I never uniki'd because my mother didn't want us to go through the rituals that are in a real uniki but she felt we had sufficient knowledge to be graduated.

The pa'i is there to tell the feet what to do. I can tell by the pa'i what type of motion to do. The beat of the pa'i must coincide with the feet. The only pa'i that I've seen that was what my mother taught me was Henry Pa.

I will always remember the sound of my mother's voice when she chanted.

I'm set with olapa, I can't revise it, I can't modernize it, I have to stay the way I am. The one thing that my mother ~~na~~ did for us is teach us hula without the kapu because she ~~know~~ our generation could not handle it so she didn't want us getting hurt. She realized that the hula kapu was of her time and she wanted to put it away. The hula has changed immensely. Just this year I went to the merry monarch. It's a beautiful show and it's fantastic what's going on but I've never seen ~~in~~ traditional hula like that before. It's more theatrical than ever. The foot movements and hand movements I wonder where they came from. Hula kahiko is a tremendously strict form. The movements of your feet and body are within strict boundaries. Everything on your body has to be just so. To me olapa is the chants and dance motions handed down from generation to generation. I cannot feel different about it. I would not like to see the kahiko of the future. A student shouldn't improvise but stay within our own realm. I'm really hoping I can find someone to pass on this knowledge before it gets me.