WHAT IS MANA?

CH. 1: This literature review discusses traditional views and manifestations of mana. Some key quotes and concepts:

» Dynamic: “Mana was part of a vibrant system that intertwined with many other important foundations of Hawaiian culture and identity, and was evident to Native Hawaiians through akua, and in their ali‘i, themselves, and their environment.” (23)

» Genealogy: “genealogies were considered to be one of the primary sources of inherited mana among kānaka. In many ways, mo‘okū‘auhau are mana.” (24)

» Acts/learning: “It was through the acquisition of skills and knowledge that a person could “acquire” mana.” (41)

» Nūpepa: “As sites of mana, the nūpepa transformed the concepts, functions and roles of mana within Hawaiian society, and gave Native Hawaiians access to mana, allowing them to now interact with mana in a different way.” (66)

CH. 2: This section analyzes the term “mana” as used in Honolulu newspapers 1996 – 2011. Key quote:

» “Mana”: “This current analysis of articles relates a contemporary, generic understanding of mana, not necessarily a cultural understanding of mana; there were times that contemporary usage does not reflect what Hawaiians feel mana to be.” (128)

CH. 4: Focus groups featuring various cultural practitioners and community leaders described contemporary ideas and experiences of mana. Some key concepts:

» Context: “By conducting focus groups, understanding was furthered of what mana means in contemporary Native Hawaiian culture, particularly how people frame their views on the properties, stewardship, and acquisition of mana.” (185)

» Emphasis on acts of leadership: that a leader with mana is “someone that I see that has a good vision for the future, who has somewhere in their own lives served their people, and has been real enablers where they’ve grown and nurtured their people” (Pacific Islander and Polynesian, Speaker 30, p. 20). (205)

» Connection: Mana also works through both the self and the group: “[Mana] allows you to go through change to transform—to transform individually and then somehow brings all these different individual pieces together and then melds it together” (Mākua, Speaker 15, p. 5). (202)

HOW DO WE ARTICULATE THE ESSENCE OF MANA IN A CONTEMPORARY ERA?

CH. 3: This section uses social science research to explore mana “ways in which mana or similar constructs have been assessed through research.” (136)

» Integrative: “Here, research integrates the body (objective), mind (subjective), and spirit (cultural).” (137)

CH. 4:

» Descriptions of lived mana: “There comes a time when something happens that ignites the spirit and the hearts of the po‘e. You know, that comes from our ʻāina, that comes from the land. And it’s a voice that we all pick up collectively and we hear, and we work in the capacity that we’re meant to work to address what is happening.” (Pōkī‘i, Speaker 77, p. 30) (217)
How do we access and cultivate the mana of our people?

**Chapter 3:**

» **Solutions:** Culturally based solutions for Native Hawaiians draw upon the strengths of the culture, with core elements of spirituality, values and practices, and the inclusion of Native Hawaiians in the process of design, implementation and evaluation. (174)

» **Purpose:** The ideal assessment measure would be used as an intervention to ho‘omanā, or develop and strengthen mana over time. (180)

**Chapter 4:**

» **Association between practice and self:** So then, what happens then and this particular knowledge, I don’t want it to go downward. I want to make sure that we pass it on to people that will kind of excel it or that will maintain it; maintain the excellence of it. And so we create this kind of rubric of what that kind of haumāna should be in hālau. In the education system, I’m just teaching my students how to reflect. Please reflect. Look at your language ability, make a reflection. Where are you in this class? If you need help, make the reflection to go and get help so that you can get better. It’s all to push towards excellence.” (Kāne, Speaker 2, p. 41) (225)

» Programs/behaviors/communities etc. that want to consider mana should keep the following in mind: Mana could be construed as a disposition, a set of behaviors, beliefs, knowledge, experiences, or a combination of any of the aforementioned. (250)

» The framework contains two main components:
- Assessment points: self, peer, teacher, expert
- Ways of growth: knowledge, practice/behavior, spiritual, genealogy

» Dynamic interaction between the assessment points and ways of growth over time increases depth of knowledge and advances skills simultaneously

» As time goes on and skills enhance, so too does one’s kuleana

» Taken in its entirety, this represents ways that identify how to access and increase mana through various forms of identification and assessment.

**Chapter 5:**

This final chapter is an aspirational look forward. It discusses how contemporary educators, program coordinators, and others may start intentionally thinking about mana as it relates to their work, and includes a framework for continued development, presented here:

Cultivating Mana Lāhui Kānaka

Mana Lāhui Kānaka isn’t meant to be a prescriptive book on all things relating to mana; it is meant to articulate a critical foundation of our Hawaiian culture. This book puts forth the notion that we can uplift our communities by raising our collective mana, and vice versa.

In subsequent months, we will go out into the broader community to discuss mana, both in person and online. We encourage kānaka ʻōiwi to participate in these conversations and bring forth their own ideas to manifest mana within themselves, their families, and their regions. Moreover, we look forward to community ideation of next-level ingenuity, where kanaka maoli create and assess our own measures of mana—and increase the mana of our people as the lāhui kānaka.