

Hawaii's Beautiful Lifestyle

Hawaii has one of the most unique cultures in the world. 1,500 years ago, Polynesians settled in Hawaii after countless days of voyaging across the ocean. They planted new crops and started civilizations. The native Hawaiian culture flourished throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Now, only a few people speak the Hawaiian language. Why is this true when we are living in the state of Hawaii? Why are we not practicing the culture that represents the people of this land? Practicing simple customs may not be as hard as it seems. There are keys to keeping this culture alive. In order to restore native Hawaiian culture, we need to know what the native Hawaiian culture is about, why it is important, and solutions on how to maintain Hawaiian culture.

Native Hawaiian culture gives lessons on how to be peaceful, kind, and responsible. It also shows how the spirit of aloha is shared through ohana. These lessons are taught using music, hula, and other cultural practices. Traditional Hawaiian music is played through chants, (percussion) instruments, and vocals. There were two types of this kind of music: *mele oli* and *mele hula*. *Mele oli* are executed with only solo chants or vocals. This style of traditional Hawaiian music is simple and commonly used during ceremonies. Its component is very different but beautiful in its own way. The *Mele hula* are chants presented by musical instruments and dances. The Hawaiians would use more musical rhythms by pitches of instruments. Instruments such as the ipu, pu'ili sticks, 'ili 'ili, and 'uli 'uli. In my experience of taking hula classes, the instruments and dances that we practice translates into stories of past generations. The tempo of the music influences how the story is told. Is it a slow beat paired with contemporary music or a fast paced beat made with huge drums and loud vocals? Native Hawaiians shared their lived experiences through music, chants, and stories. It was a way to

document the history of their people throughout generations making it an integral part of their culture.

By listening to the stories of past native Hawaiian generations through their music and chants, people can gain a better understanding of who they are as a people and why they believe what they do. This allows for people outside the native Hawaiian culture to see why building the thirty meter telescope is offensive. On August 21, 2020, many protests came to Mauna Kea and blocked a road to the summit. This day proved how many people cared about the mountain and their culture. This also shows that these people would sacrifice anything for their culture with some getting arrested. Kealoha Pisciotta who worked as a technician on Maunakea explains, "This is not only an ecologically sensitive area. For Hawaiians, it's where our origin story begins, where significant ancestors are buried." This statement shows that Mauna Kea was a part of this culture and that Hawaiians thought of the mountain as the beginning of the traditions and customs they follow. By building TMT, the people who respected Mauna Kea will feel unappreciated and that their culture is not important. Colette Machado, the chair of the OHA Board's Ad Hoc Committee, and Trustee, Dan Ahuna, realized that this was a problem for all people. In a letter they proclaimed that the workers who are building TMT should discontinue. The reason for them is that the telescope is affecting others safety and beliefs.

What can all people do, including non indigenous people, to protect and honor the beliefs of Hawaiian people? The first solution is to make learning the Hawaiian language mandatory in schools here. By doing so, students will be more involved in this custom that many people have not acknowledged. This can be taught by patient people who are well aware of the slow disappearance of this language which is crucial to the culture. It is important for the teachers to

connect with the youth of Hawai'i so that they will identify with the lessons being taught.

Making this course mandatory will restore native Hawaiian culture. Another solution is to let

Native Hawaiians have leadership roles which will affect how society sees them. This

opportunity in leadership roles will help them be recognized publicly and it will make them feel

respected. The last solution is to extend the Hawaiian Studies class in college more than a

semester. Extending this class gives students more time to learn about the culture of Hawaii. The

students can have an opportunity to get a deeper understanding of the aloha spirit. These

solutions will bring people together as well as teach them why this culture is important.

Clarence T.C. Ching provided many things for Hawaii. One was the construction of Kukui Gardens. It is an apartment building for low-income residents. The shocking part is that he did not make money from the building. Instead of keeping it to himself, he donated the money to charity. These demonstrations showed respect and kindness to the people of Hawaii. How and why did Clarence T.C. Ching choose to make these decisions? He chose these decisions because of ren. According to Confucius, ren is "Loving people. You should love people; love others."

We have seen what the Hawaiian culture is, why it's an important topic to know and some

solutions to maintain the culture. Today many Hawaiians are losing their identity but by

following the steps of ren, we can restore Native Hawaiian culture. We can show love or aloha to

the indigenous people of this land.