

Staying In: The Study of Pacific Islanders in College Football Using Indigenous Methodologies

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Received: October 20, 2017

Accepted: November 28, 2017

Online Published: November 30, 2017

doi:10.20849/ajsss.v2i4.231

URL: <https://doi.org/10.20849/ajsss.v2i4.231>

Abstract

This is a qualitative study that investigates how culture and race impact the college experiences of PI football players, how those experiences enhance or inhibit their persistence in higher education, and to introduce Pacific Islander Cultural Racism Theory (PI-CRiT) as a guiding framework for the research. The methodology for this study weaves three Pacific Islander cultural constructs together to ensure that the research process is respectful of each participant, their community, and their gift of mo'olelo (story). This PI methodology disrupts dominant research paradigms by suggesting that data collection, analysis and interpretation should align with its participants' ontology, epistemology and axiology. That is, the methods to gain more knowledge about reality (methodology), should align with the participants' views about reality (ontology), their ways of thinking about reality (epistemology), and their ethics, morals and values that guide their interaction in that reality (axiology).

Keywords: cultural racism, PI-CRiT, indigenous methodologies, pasifika, pacific islanders in sport

1. Introduction

Museus and Quaye (2009) state, "if current racial and ethnic disparities in educational attainment persist, projections indicate that the numbers of college educated workers in the United States will fall short of those needed to sustain current levels of economic and social growth, a reality which may have devastating consequences for the nation's economy" (p. 68). For example, Pacific Islander's (PI) four-year graduation rates in 2013, was 26.7 percent compared to their white counterparts of 43.7 percent (US Department of Education, 2016). As economic pressures continue to confound PIs place in higher education, it will become increasingly more important to improve the persistence of those PI student-athletes who have circumvented the rising costs of higher education through "athletic scholarships." The NCAA (2015), however, reported that the Football Championship Series (FCS) division, only graduated 11% of their PI college football players compared to 63% of their White counterparts. While PIs are strategically targeted for their athletic labor, the corresponding graduation rates suggest that colleges and universities are the only ones benefiting from "scholarship" agreements, and that the relationship between PI communities and US higher education has become one of exploitation.

This study operates under the hypothesis that higher education operates as a mechanism of US colonialism (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Wright & Balutski, 2016), and therefore, low PI graduation rates are a natural outcome of institutionalized cultural racism. The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate how culture and race impact the college experiences of PI football players, how those experiences enhance or inhibit their persistence in higher education, and to introduce PI-CRiT as a guiding framework. The following research questions guide this study:

- 1) How do PI college football players experience culture and race?
- 2) What experiences of culture and race enhance, or discourage, the transition and persistence of PI college football players?

2. Literature Review

This literature review informs the theoretical framework of this study, and challenges dominant paradigms in higher education that marginalize, obscure, and erase the unique experiences of PI college football players. Uperesa (2015) called this particular phenomenon the hyper/in-visibility of PI college football players. The research that support these dominant paradigms suggest that colleges and universities are intractable and hegemonic institutions where student success is the responsibility of the students, and entirely depend on their ability to adjust and accommodate the dominant culture. These frameworks, however, assume that students have no transformational value to the institutions they attend, and that students have everything to gain by their assimilation. This study operates on the hypothesis that institutions optimize learning environments when they recognize the nuances of a diverse student population, and respond accordingly to better serve them.

To understand the unique experiences of PI college football players, this literature review will define the hegemonic paradigm in US higher education, or the dominant culture, that determines “otherness” for this particular student population. The literature review will also consider foundational studies in higher education on student departure (Tinto, 1988), social reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), factors that contribute to PI college football players’ academic success, and culturally specific and responsive frameworks that enhance PI college transition and persistence.

2.1 *The Hegemony of US Higher Education*

The hegemony of US higher education originates from its exclusive power over the politics of knowledge – the governance over what knowledge is valid, important, published, etc. – which have become the standards that impose the hegemonic identity, or dominant culture in higher education. Said’s (1993) discourse from the politics of knowledge to the politics of identity proposes that when politics of knowledge become hegemonic, it then reflects the superiority of the hegemonic identity, which then becomes the standard within the institutions ruled by that hegemony. This is illustrated in Benham and Heck’s (1998) examination of educational policies in Hawai’i settler colonialist school systems. (Note 1) Their study uncovered how cultural values of the colonizing regime, or dominant culture, were impressed upon the colonized Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) subjects through its governance of the politics of knowledge. That led to the complete erasure of Kanaka Maoli culture from the public school system for nearly a century, cultural genocide, and the adoption of identities disconnected from Kanaka Maoli axiology, ontology, methodology, and epistemology. If institutions of higher education do not continue to evolve and accommodate the contemporary issues specific to PI cultural identities and communities, the academy risks becoming obsolete and irrelevant to this population.

2.2 *Student Departure Model*

Tinto’s (1988) student departure model, suggests that college freshman must disrobe their “home cultures” and instead adopt the dominant culture to achieve student success; consequently, and perhaps unknowingly, advocating for the continued assimilation, deculturalization and erasure of nonwhite students’ cultures and communities. Tinto’s model places the responsibility of socialization onto the student, a perspective that has increased the popularity of research in student “resilience,” as opposed to institutional change. This dominant paradigm implies that PIs are participating and graduating at lower rates because they are unable, or unwilling, to disconnect themselves from their home culture. While the high attrition of PI college football players may have a high correlation to cultural dissonance (Note 2) (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Museus, 2008), Tierney (1992,1999), insists that there is an institutional responsibility to preserve nontraditional college students’ cultural integrity – students who are not white, middle class, and ages 18-24 – which is focused on the affirmation of students’ cultural identities and enacted through “programs and teaching strategies that engage students’ racial/ethnic backgrounds in a positive manner toward the development of more relevant pedagogies and learning activities” (p.84).

2.3 *Social Reproduction Theory*

Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1977) social reproduction theory argues that knowledges of the middle and upper classes are forms of capital that can be converted into economic resources, and that those born of “high” status in this hierarchal society are socially and culturally rich. This assumes then that “others” of lower economic status are socially and culturally poor. Bourdieu (1977) further asserts that habitus, an individual’s view of the world and their place in it, is the product of social structure, producer of social practice, and the reproducer of social structure that “forges the unconscious unity of a class” (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 77). This habitus is transferrable, and therefore, a college student born into low socioeconomic status may achieve sustained social mobility for herself/himself and their future generations by: 1) acquiring access to social capital through higher education and investing it into “fields,” or competitive markets, and 2) the assimilation of middle and upper class habitus. This

is another foundational study in higher education that normalizes the assimilation of the dominant culture at the expense of “other” cultures, and perpetuates dominant research paradigms that insist cultural assimilation will promote “student success,” even when racial assimilation is impossible.

2.4 Predictors of Academic Success for Polynesian College Football Players

Keung (2014) used the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) to study what factors, or predictors, influence and impact Polynesian college football players’ academic performance. Keung (2014) found that 1) attitude toward behavior, 2) perceived behavioral control, and 3) subjective norm directly impact several types of motivation that ultimately make up student athletes’ intentions about their academic and athletic career, and consequently, their academic success. Attitude toward academic behavior, for example, reflects one’s willingness to exert effort towards their academic success. Perceived behavioral control is the confidence one has in their ability either academically and/or athletically, which can also influence their effort towards those corresponding goals, plans, or decisions. Subjective norm refers to “the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior” (Ajzen & Driver, 1991, p. 188), and is driven by ethnic identity, culture and family for PI college football players (Keung, 2014). This finding suggests that when the home culture is absent from the college experience of PI college football players, negative results may include 1) an unwillingness to exert effort towards academic or athletic success, 2) a decline of confidence in their academic or athletic ability, or 3) loss of motivation to perform academically or athletically.

2.5 Impact of Cultural Identity and Cultural Integrity on PI “Student Success”

Wright (2003) research highlighted the importance of Native Hawaiian identity in the transition and persistence of Kanaka Maoli students at the University of Hawai‘i. Her research called for institutions to make academic curriculum, programming and campus spaces responsive to students’ cultural identities to nurture a sense of belonging. The study also claims that colleges and universities best serve their students when implementing policies and practices that support students’ psychological, social and cultural well-being. Wright’s (2003) and Lomawaima & McCarty (2002) emphasize the importance of space, or pu‘uhonua (place of refuge), to recognize the cultural identities of Indigenous students, and to participate in their development by creating decolonized spaces on campus to cultivate them (Tierney, 1992, 1999). Tierney’s (1992, 1999) research similarly advocates for universities to enact cultural integrity on campus, or otherwise, maintain learning environments that alienate and isolate nontraditional students (Stanton-Salazar, 1997), and contribute to their cultural dissonance (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Allen’s (1991) study substantiates the significance of cultural reinforcement on higher retention and graduation rates for black students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

3. Theoretical Framework

This section responds to the conceptual gaps identified by the literature review, and offers Pacific Islander Cultural Racism Theory (PI-CRiT) as a guiding framework for this study. PI-CRiT is a framework of colonialism that 1) connects the history of US colonialism in the Pacific to the contemporary circumstances of PI communities, 2) identifies forms of cultural racism (Note 3) that operate within institutions of higher education, and 3) is ultimately fulfilled in the praxis of its seven tenets. Beginning with a brief history of Critical Race Theory (CRT), this section will explain the importance of both culture and race in critical frameworks, and how these lenses help to examine the unique experiences of PI college football players’ in US higher education. Before introducing the seven tenets of PI-CRiT, this section will also describe its theoretical roots in TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005) and ŌiwiCrit (Wright & Balutski, 2014).

3.1 Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) sprouted from Critical Legal Studies, a framework further developed by Derrick Bell (1979) to investigate how the US legal system created different sets of experiences and outcomes that privileged whites and maintained the subordination of African Americans. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995) then applied the theory to education, and since then the theory has been used to frame issues across multiple disciplines and contexts. However, traditional CRT focuses on the black and white binary, which is problematic when studying PI participation in American football. For example, the Racial and Gender Report Card for the NFL in 2013, reported all players within two racial categories: African-American and White (Lapchick, Beahm, Nunes, & Rivera-Casiano, 2013). While PIs are celebrated for their size, physicality and contribution to the most successful NFL teams (Corbett, 2015), they remain invisible within the data.

3.1.1 The Importance of Culture and Race in Critical Frameworks

PI communities’ experiences within the US cannot be framed by race alone, and Howard (2015) addresses the

importance of both race and culture in closing the educational achievement gap. (Note 4) It is the claim of both racial and cultural superiority that are the legacies of US Imperialism, (Note 5) and subsequently, US colonization of the Pacific. The history of US colonization has worked to eradicate Indigenous cultures by normalizing capitalist values, and therefore, perpetually marginalize Pacific Islander peoples through various forms of cultural racism (Grainger, 2006; Mayeda & Dutton, 2014; Okamura, 2008; Trask, 2006). Akumatsu (2002) states, "If cultural racism is like the air we breathe; if it is everywhere amongst us; if it is within the social discourses and social histories that shape our very identities; then we will enact racist thoughts and practices without necessarily realising that we are doing so, or realising the effects on other people's lives" (p. 50). In short, race alone is not responsible for the persisting mechanisms of colonization that normalize dominant ontology, axiology, epistemology and methodology in US higher education today.

3.1.2 Colonialism as a Framework

Racism is an inherent symptom of the process that is colonization (Smith, 1999), but identifying the symptom is different than identifying the process by which power structures are built, reified and evolve over time. Policies and educational reform that treat the symptom do not address forms of cultural racism that operationalize the process of colonization. The first goal of the colonizer is to eradicate Indigenous culture, because living Indigenous cultures inhibit assimilation to the dominant culture and encourage Native resistance (Silva, 2004). Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) suggest that while the US colonial education system "masquerades" as a tool for equal opportunity, its process of standardization has continued to marginalize Native peoples. Standardization is a persistent strategy and operational tactic of US colonization, achieved through the compulsory education of Pacific Islanders within settler colonialist school systems that institutionalize cultural racism (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013).

As a result of US colonization in the Pacific, PI community issues extend beyond race and equity into various issues of sovereignty (i.e., intellectual, cultural, political, etc.). While racial oppression has certainly influenced the opportunities for PIs to access US higher education, but it does not explain the experiences of anomie (Note 6) and aboriginalism (Note 7) found in PI communities. Alfred (2009, p. 50) explains that anomie and aboriginalism are contemporary outcomes of US colonialism, and are products of the unresolved historical trauma caused by three of its directives: 1) Ongoing multigenerational processes of dispossession and oppression; 2) Violent and systematic marginalization and assimilation; and, 3) Forced acculturation to Christianity and forced integration to market capitalism. Alfred (2009) suggests that the enduring function of colonialism enables it to be used as a theoretical framework to investigate its psychophysical effects (Note 8) on Indigenous people within institutions of the colonial regime. College football has enabled institutions of US higher education to maintain the colonization of PI communities by industrializing sport (Holthaus, 2011), indenturing PI college football players (Branch, 2011; Edwards, 1991; Hawkins, 2013), and profiting from them through the exploitation of their athletic labor (Beamon, 2008; Holthaus, 2011).

3.2 Theoretical Roots of PI-CRiT

TribalCrit. A prevalent component of my analysis is the prioritization of colonization within CRT, a precedent set by Brayboy (2005) who enhanced the CRT framework to incorporate the pervasive impact of US colonization on the contemporary circumstances of Native Americans. TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005) stipulates that culture and epistemology also define the framework from which Native American experiences should be researched and understood. Here, I summarize Brayboy's (2005) nine tenets of TribalCrit that guide research on issues of Indigenous peoples in the US (pp. 429-430): 1) Colonization is endemic to society, 2) US policies towards Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, white supremacy, and a desire for material gain, 3) Indigenous people occupy liminal spaces, 4) Indigenous peoples desire cultural sovereignty (Tsosie, 2002), (Note 9) 5) Culture, knowledge and power have new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens, 6) Government and educational policies toward Indigenous peoples are intimately linked to assimilation, 7) Tribal ontology, axiology, epistemologies and visions for the future are central to understanding lived realities of Indigenous peoples, 8) Stories are ways of knowing, of collecting and gaining knowledge, and therefore, are legitimate sources of theory and methodology, and 9) Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways that compel scholars to enact critical praxis through activist research.

ŌiwiCrit. Research on Pacific Islanders in higher education should not only create new knowledge, but also empower PI communities to create praxis from this knowledge, thus, empowering them to create a future of their own making. Labrador and Wright (2011) first introduced the need for a Pacific Islander CRT to "incorporate the experiences and political struggles of Pacific Islanders that focus more on ideas of indigeneity, land, and sovereignty" (p. 139) when functioning within the context of Asian American Studies. Recently, Wright &

Balutski (2014) proposed ŌiwiCrit and defines specific tenets for framing the research of Kanaka Ōiwi in higher education. Wright and Balutski (2014) state that ŌiwiCrit “enables us to simultaneously name the oppression, whether structural, normative, or overt, while helping us to reframe the issues and build equitable educational environments” (p. 3).

While ŌiwiCrit is built on the CRT principles of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and Brayboy (2005), the authors clearly direct their narrative to Kanaka Ōiwi scholars. Three of their five tenets of ŌiwiCrit are: 1) Aloha ‘Āina, 2) Kuleana, and 3) an insistence that consequence of colonialism and occupation are pervasive and unique to Hawai‘i in its exploitation of ‘āina and appropriation of identity. The first two tenets are fundamental pillars of Hawaiian epistemology that counter the US educational principles of individualism and meritocracy. The third tenet pertains to the awakening and realization of a Kanaka Ōiwi critical consciousness. Wright and Balutski (2016) focus their message on empowering Kanaka Ōiwi to occupy theorizing spaces and use ŌiwiCrit to create our own narratives with our own voices and from our own way of conceptualizing the world, within academic spaces dominated and controlled by the colonizing regime.

3.3 PI-CRiT

This paper offers Pacific Islander Cultural Racism Theory (PI-CRiT) as a theoretical framework of colonialism that ensures research (a) of PIs in higher education are historically contextualized, (b) remediates harmful effects of cultural racism in higher education, and (c) deconstructs dominant research paradigms in higher education that normalize “western” ontology, axiology and epistemology. PI-CRiT offers seven tenets that guide the research of PIs in higher education:

The mechanisms and institutions of colonialism continue to fulfill their four directives through seven forms of cultural racism.

Re-center marginalized voices and PI epistemologies with cultural survivance: a decolonizing qualitative methodology that collects analyzes and interprets mo‘olelo (stories) through culturally relevant and contemporary lenses.

PI activist research enacts critical consciousness development through cultural survivance, and necessary to challenge legal neutrality and cultural racism in US higher education.

US educational policies create positions of liminality for PI student-athletes that complicate their transition and persistence in higher education.

Kuleana to name experiences, policies, programs and structures of power that maintain cultural racism in U.S. higher education.

Reject blood quantum logic.

Develop Agents of Transformational Resistance (ATRs) and Revisionist Histories.

The four directives of colonialism and seven forms of cultural racism. The first tenet of PI-CRiT asserts that mechanisms and institutions of colonialism maintain four essential directives that are fulfilled by US education: 1) Rationalize and justify US colonization through slavery and genocide, 2) Maintain colonial privilege of conquerors, or normalize socioeconomic, political, and cultural superiority, 3) Relieve settler colonialist of guilt and historical responsibility, and 4) Integrate and subjugate conquered peoples into the colonial regime (i.e., market capitalism). These four directives are enabled by educational policies, curriculum, programming and leadership that operationalize seven forms of cultural racism: objectification (dehumanization), epistemicide, erasure, elitism (i.e., racism, sexism, etc.), colorblindness (whiteness, individualism, and meritocracy), deculturalization, and symbolism (i.e., stereotypes, symbols of dominant values).

Cultural racism occurs when the culture of the colonial regime becomes the default standard “by which all other groups of colour are compared, evaluated and made visible. Racial minorities are judged using this standard and often found to be lacking, deviant, inferior, or abnormal” (Addy, 2008, p. 11). Consedine & Consedine (2005) define cultural racism as the assumption that one culture has the right, power and authority to define “normality.” PI-CRiT predicts that when PI student-athletes are exposed to institutions in higher education that fulfill the four directives of colonialism through its seven forms of cultural racism, there will be experiences of self-hate, cultural dissonance (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Museus, 2008), liminal identities, psychophysical trauma, and perceptions of exploitation as athletic laborers.

Objectification. This study defines objectification as a process of dehumanization by treating human beings as objects, and/or profit centers. Within the sports industrial complex, student-athletes are the profit centers in a multi-billion-dollar industry (Holthaus, 2010). The Ed O’Bannon case claimed that the NCAA and their

membership institutions have exploited student-athletes and have been allowed to profit from their likeness in perpetuity. In 2014, the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of O'Bannon, a former collegiate athlete, and "all others similarly situated," but the NCAA and its member institutions have been decidedly undecided on how to respond to the ruling (McCann, 2014). While there have been several attempts to relieve some of the exploitation by offering "four-year athletic scholarships," 1-year renewable scholarships remain the norm and pro-student-athlete educational policies have not been standardized, and remain within the purview of the individual institutions (Byers, 1995; McCann, 2014; McCormick & McCormick, 2006). Objectification is operationalized within higher education when the athletic labor of student-athletes is more valuable to the institution than their cultural and racial identities as students.

Epistemicide. This study defines epistemicide as the destruction of cultural ways of thinking, in order to normalize dominant ways of thinking. Epistemicide has "valorized and affirmed western epistemology and absolved it from its existential and epistemological violence against Indigenous epistemology" (Lebakeng, Phalane, & Dalindjebo, 2006, p. 71). This process continues to standardize a politics of knowledge in US higher education that "privilege western symbols, rituals and behaviours" (Lebakeng et al, 2006, p. 70), and therefore, Nakata, Nakata, Keech & Bolt (2012) contend that critical theory and decolonizing methodologies are forms of epistemic disobedience essential in countering epistemicide. Thus, PI-CRiT calls for a PI methodology that marginalizes dominant symbols, rituals and behaviors by centering Indigenous rituals ('awa ceremony), symbols (kakau), and behaviors (kauhale). Epistemicide is also operationalized in higher education when PI student-athletes lack the space to analyze and interpret knowledge through their cultural and racial lenses, or when those spaces are limited and defined for them (i.e., spaces amongst other PIs through prayer, song, dance, or only on the football field).

Erasure. This study defines erasure as the process 1) to negate, suppress, or remove people, or their culture, from an academic environment, 2) to withhold information that maintains institutional power over athletic labor, or 3) to erase evidence of their experiences through the obliteration of writing, recorded material, or data. Erasure is operationalized in US higher education in various ways, and several examples are specific to college football players. First, college football players are required to sign 1-year renewable contracts that are marketed to them as "full scholarships," which many incorrectly assume are for the duration of their degree earning tenures. (Note 10) These contracts also do not address necessary health care for players that incur injuries caused by college football. It is not until college football players arrive to campus that they are asked to sign a waiver that indemnifies the university from any unpaid medical expenses, and players are prohibited from participating in any team sanctioned activity until the waiver is signed. Since 2005, the NCAA requires that student-athletes at member institutions have accident insurance, but does not require institutions to pay for it (Sheely, 2015). Currently, educational policies do not require institutions to provide transparency in what medical expenses they are paying for – or what medical expenses college players are left with – and ignore altogether the long-term psychophysical and financial consequences of football injuries that require health care after college players leave the institutions. (Note 11)

There is also the literal erasure of information, research and discussions on the degenerative brain disease chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) caused by the number of collisions players endure over a career in the sport of football. Football players of all ages are treated for concussions but not educated on CTE, a disease that has claimed the lives of at least 87 NFL football players including Samoan prodigy, and Hall of Fame inductee, Junior Seau (Vrentas, 2015). A recent study presented at the American Academy of Neurology in 2016, found signs of traumatic brain injuries in more than 40 percent of retired NFL players (Conidi, 2016). This erasure in college football exists despite 1) the \$20 million dollars that the NFL has spent on developing technologies that diagnose and prevent traumatic brain injuries, 2) the blockbuster movie "Concussion" that revealed the erasure of scientific evidence connecting football collisions to CTE, and 3) the \$765 million dollars that the NFL spent to settle the lawsuit brought by 4500 players that alleged the NFL concealed the dangers of head trauma (Vrentas, 2015).

Lastly, the "critical mass argument" – the notion that relatively small numbers of PIs justify their invisibility within data collection – is used to validate the absence of funding for culturally relevant support services, programming, and curriculum. The aggregation of PIs within the pan-ethnicity of the "model minority," or Asian Pacific Islander affiliation, is an example of how the critical mass argument is operationalized, and contributes to PI invisibility within educational outcome data. (Note 12) The invisibility of PI data leads to common sense paradigms that exclude PIs from conversations of sport and culture, race, education, politics, etc. Kaomea (2003) reasons that erasure necessitates methodologies that "include the persistent excavation of perspectives and circumstances that have been buried, written over, or erased" (p. 16).

Elitism. This study defines elitism as the power of a dominant group to maintain privilege and assert their superiority over other groups through discrimination, as in race, gender, class, etc. Elitism identifies all the “isms” from cultural racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, etc. Elitism is inherently tied to power, specifically, the power to discriminate using contemporary socioeconomic and political processes that reify its many forms, and maintain their stratification (i.e., cultural, racial, etc.). While elitism is most often operationalized through microaggressions (Solorzano, 1998; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), it is most egregiously operationalized in US higher education by institutions’ inability and unwillingness to educate and respond to its many forms. In this way, the intractability, stubbornness and embeddedness of elitism in US higher education maintains the structures, processes, and institutions of white supremacy in the US through the education of its leadership. This was illustrated in the 2016 election for US presidency, when Donald Trump received the larger share of white college-educated votes.

Colorblindness (whiteness, individualism and meritocracy). This study defines colorblindness as the inability or unwillingness to recognize race or culture as having an impact on individual, or group, experiences and opportunities. Colorblindness is the refusal of the dominant group to see white as a color, or having its own culture, while maintaining a commitment to the assimilationist agenda of Americanism. Colorblindness asserts that the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s catapulted U.S. society into a post-racial era where race no longer matters. Whiteness, a “symptom” of colorblindness, serves three objectives: 1) “downplaying” white privilege and being unwilling “to name the contours of racism”; 2) avoiding to identify with a racial experience or group, thereby, normalizing Whiteness, and marginalizing ethnically identified groups as “other”; and 3) minimizing racist legacies by placing racism in a historical, rather than contemporary context (Addy, 2008; Ulluci & Battey, 2011, p. 1199). Other symptoms of colorblindness include meritocracy and individualism: standards for success that are based on merit and individual accomplishments. (Note 13) Colorblindness is operationalized in higher education when physical diversity is ignored as having impact on students’ of color sense of belonging, and therefore, transition and persistence. (Note 14)

Deculturalization. This study defines deculturalization as the educational process of destroying a people’s culture (cultural genocide), and replacing it with a new culture. This is operationalized by the normalization of dominant culture within “core subjects” required of college students to fulfill graduation requirements in US higher education. When PI courses in history, language, religion, cultural practices, and service learning are available, they are offered only as course electives. While the introduction of the Diversity Requirement at some schools would allow such courses to fulfill a single course requirement, students are still obligated to complete courses in US history, English, Sciences and sometimes Religion to graduate. Goodyear-Ka’ōpua (2013) “literacies are not politically neutral skill sets but social practices embedded within cultural and historical contexts. Literate practices as forms of knowledge are imbricated with power” (p. 36). The absence of cultural knowledge from the education of PI college football players can lead to a heightened sense of liminality and self-hate, as they are forced to participate in their own deculturalization to maintain their roles as athletic laborers.

Symbolism. This study defines symbolism as the process of attaching meaning to symbols, and/or defining an individual by generalizing the characteristics and values of a group, or community. Stereotyping is one way that symbolism is operationalized in US higher education, which is different from elitism because oppressed groups may stereotype other groups, but they do not have the power to discriminate based on those stereotypes. For dominant groups it is important to understand and identify stereotypes because of their ability to institutionalize the values they attribute to those symbols. This can directly impact the ways that PI student-athletes are able to maintain their own self-defined identities, or whether they live within the symbolic identities that are constructed for them by coaches, media, college football fans, etc. Symbolism is also operationalized in US higher education through physical diversity (or lack of), culturally and racially specific resources (or lack of), and other symbols that have institutional values attached to them (i.e., the names of buildings on campus). (Note 15) Therefore, symbolism can impact the way that PI college football players interpret their athletic, academic, and cultural/racial value to the institution, their football program, and themselves.

PI methodology. The second tenet conjoins Indigenous methodologies to critical theory (Dunbar, 2008), as complementary and symbiotic components in the research of PIs in US higher education. In an Indigenous framework, the research methodology is the theory and analysis of how the research should proceed, while research methods are the techniques used for gathering evidence. The Indigenous methodologies address the politics and strategic goals of the researcher, while the methods become the “means and procedures through which the central problems of the research are addressed” (Smith, 1999, p. 143). What Smith (1999) makes clear in her Twenty-five Indigenous Projects, is that the application of Indigenous methodologies is intentional and

purposeful, grounded in cultural knowledge and practices, but also operationalized through its specific methods, and therefore, replicable. PI-CRiT offers a PI methodology that marginalizes dominant research paradigms, in order to, center the ontologies, axiologies and epistemologies of its PI participants. PI-CRiT utilizes three cultural constructs – ‘Awa ceremony (ritual), Kakau (rite of passage), and Kauhale (community) – to guide its PI methods and methodology. (Note 16) Applying these cultural constructs (a) safeguard the data collection as a safe and familiar process for participants, (b) gathers multiple perspectives from diverse actors who inform issues around PI college football players, while (c) protecting the integrity of the qualitative data within a culturally contextualized analysis.

PI activist research enacts critical consciousness development through cultural survivance, and necessary to challenge legal neutrality and cultural racism in US higher education. The remaining five tenets of PI-CRiT necessitate an activist research design, because they enact standards for educational policies, pedagogy, and curriculum that enhance the college experience for PI students, improve their transition and persistence, and minimize mental well-being issues associated with colonial education systems (Mayeda & Dutton, 2014). Hale (2008) said activist research “is predicated on the collaborative relations of knowledge production with members of that group” (p. 20), and Goodyear-Ka’ōpua (2013) added that activist research “explicitly aims to contest existing relations of power and to envision and live new relations” (p. 40). Activist research is an outcome of PI critical consciousness development (Wright & Balutski, 2016), a form of critical praxis (Note 17) (Freire, 1970), and a counter mechanism that challenges legal neutrality (Note 18) (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The social embeddedness of settler colonial education systems requires that contemporary education “decolonize the minds” of generations of PIs that have been taught that their intelligence and success are represented by the accumulation of western symbols, values and knowledge outside of their own cultural ways of knowing (Thaman, 2003). The colonial process casts a wide web that captures everything within its system, numbing and desensitizing its victims with cultural racism; thus, PI critical consciousness not only liberates conquered peoples, but empowers each individual to deconstruct mechanisms of colonialism. The development of critical consciousness in PI student-athletes realizes the political potential within the PI communities, by equipping these catalysts with the ability to deconstruct contemporary issues with historical contexts, finding root issues to colonial oppression, empowering them to imagine alternate realities, and enacting social change through their critical praxis. This critical praxis is disruptive to the tranquility of the colonizing regime, because it refutes assimilation as a standard of citizenship.

PI critical consciousness is a reclamation of language, history, communal definitions of success, and ways of knowing as a matter of cultural survivance. Kukahiko and Barrera (2015) suggest that cultural survivance offers forms of experiential learning that develop students’ cultural and racial identities, which directly corresponds to their critical consciousness development. Vizenor (2008) defines cultural survivance as the “active survival and resistance to cultural dominance” (p. 24), a “renewal and continuity into the future rather than loss and mere survival through welcoming unpredictable cultural reorientations” (Goodyear-Ka’ōpua, 2013, p. xii). Survivance is perhaps the most vital political weapon of PI sociopolitical and educational movements, because PI culture disrupts the normality of colonial oppression, provides a counter narrative to eugenic explanations manufactured by dominant groups, and liberates PIs from the psychological shackles of whiteness and cultural racism (Alfred, 2009). Cultural survivance is enacted through this research, the methodology, the sharing of stories, and in its critical praxis.

US educational policies create positions of liminality. Brayboy (2005) describes liminality as an “in betweenness” where Indigenous peoples are both political and racialized beings. The following types of policies heighten PI college football players liminal identities as athletes, students and cultural/racial beings: 1) One-year renewable scholarships; 2) colorblind admissions and hiring policies that ignore physical diversity of student populations, administrators, faculty and staff; 3) policies that do not extend the medical care of injured college football players after they leave their college or university; 4) policies that ignore the importance of culturally responsive curriculum, programming and support; 5) aggregated data and research methodologies that continue to lump the educational experiences of PIs with those of “model minorities” (i.e., Asian Pacific Islander). These types of policies exacerbate PI college football players’ perceptions of belonging, enhance internalization of “imposter syndrome,” and remind PI football players of their perpetual roles as athletic laborers, whose cultural/racial knowledge and identities are non-consequential in their roles as students.

Kuleana to name experiences, policies, programs and structures of power that maintain cultural racism in U.S. higher education. Tengan (2008) explained experiences of anomie and aboriginalism in Kanaka Maoli males as outcomes of colonialism, but more specifically, due to the loss of kuleana: communal roles and responsibilities. Kuleana is not only a responsibility to serve our family and community, but it is our right,

authority, privilege, and burden. Wright & Balutski (2014) found that Kanaka Maoli students at the University of Hawai'i often articulated kuleana as "the culmination of their educational journeys" – both as privilege and burden – and felt compelled to participate in higher education to improve the conditions in their community, or towards the betterment of lahui. If PI participation in higher education is to improve the conditions in our communities, PI students, staff, faculty and administrators must challenge cultural racism in educational research, programming, curriculum, and policies. Critical praxis is the fulfillment of our kuleana, which disrupts processes and structures that 1) fail to create decolonized spaces for PIs to gather and learn, 2) minimize cultural racism's impact on PI educational experiences and outcomes, and 3) inhibit participation, transition, retention, and professional matriculation of PIs into academe.

Reject blood quantum logic. Blood quantum is a concept that "measures" race, and excludes cultural significance in the construction, or deconstruction, of identity. Kauanui (2008) states that "Blood quantum logic presumes that one's 'blood amount' correlates to one's cultural orientation and identity" (p. 35). PI-CRiT offers six counterpoints to blood quantum logic that are essential in the research and education of PIs. First, mobilizing communities diminish their political power by alienating, or stratifying, its members based on "blood quantum" (Kauanui, 2008). From a Kanaka Maoli perspective, blood quantum (Note 19) is a colonial construct that is used to limit the resources of conquered peoples, and a process that divides lahui (the Hawaiian nation). Second, the prioritization of race in the absence of culture marginalizes the voices of multiracial individuals, because blood quantum logic considers them less than "whole." (Note 20) Third, discussions of race and "diversity" mean little without an actual understanding of the cultures within communities of research. Fourth, recognition of race and privilege is not the same as having empathy, cultural knowledge and an understanding of cultural nuances. These are important components of qualitative data analysis. Lastly, PI cultural education as survivance is necessary to progress PI students and activist researchers through continued stages of critical consciousness that contextualize 'ike kupuna (cultural and ancestral knowledge) in contemporary terms, which enable future generations to identify modern translations of cultural racism.

Develop agents of transformational resistance (ATRs), and revisionist histories. Revisionist histories provide context to contemporary issues and problematize eugenic explanations for low PI educational outcomes, and expose how communities of color have resisted, and continue to resist, oppression as agents of transformational resistance (ATRs). Alejandro Covarrubias & Anita Revilla (2003) name six critical roles of ATRs: 1) create a community of inclusiveness; 2) provide valuable resources for community members; 3) provide a critical voice for the community regarding community issues; 4) empower the community through the expansion of resources and development of skills; 5) help members of the community develop a raised level of consciousness and a commitment to social justice; 6) provide hope for educational advancement of many community members by providing visible symbols of academic achievement. Four events illustrate how these roles have been fulfilled by student-athletes, and the scope of their immense political potential.

In 2013, Grambling players refused to participate in football activities due to poor working conditions, including mold and mildew in facilities, maintenance conditions that led to staph infections, etc. In 2014, O'Bannon vs. NCAA, the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of O'Bannon and other former college student-athletes that claimed the NCAA had exploited them by profiting from their likeness in perpetuity. On March 26, 2014, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in Chicago ruled that the Northwestern Football team could unionize, because Northwestern football players had successfully argued that the one-year renewable "scholarships" were identical to "at will" employment contracts. On Saturday, November 7, 2015, 30 black members of the University of Missouri football team announced on social media that they would not participate in any football related activities until the university president Tim Wolfe resigned due to his responses to racism on campus. By Monday, November 9, the rest of the Missouri team stood in solidarity with their black teammates, and President Wolfe and Chancellor Loftin resigned. There are many other historical examples of student-athlete activism, but it is important to understand revisionist history not only as examples of political action, but contemporary relevance and the ability to participate in making revisionist history.

4. PI Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach that weaves three PI cultural constructs together to protect the integrity of the research process, and that the process is respectful of each participant, their community, and their gift of mo'olelo (story). This PI methodology disrupts dominant research paradigms by suggesting that data collection, analysis and interpretation should align with its participants' ontology, epistemology and axiology (Lebakeng, Phalane, & Dalindjebo, 2006; Wilson, 2008). That is, the methods to gain more knowledge about reality (methodology), should align with the participants' views about reality (ontology), their ways of thinking about reality (epistemology), and their ethics, morals and values that guide their interaction and interpretations of

reality (axiology). ‘Ōlelo No‘eau (proverbs) are integral cultural references of how these components intersect to form Pacific frames of reference (Pukui, 1983). These are gifts of ike (knowledge) passed on to us from our kupuna (ancestors) to help guide us, but also meant to ground us in ways that define who we are as individuals and communities. Embedded within the proverbs are kaona (hidden meanings) that teach us to be aware and mindful of multiple perspectives, to think critically and creatively. A common tool of ‘Ōlelo No‘eau are their use of metaphor to develop critical thinking. PI-CRiT uses three cultural constructs in weaving together its PI methodology: ‘Awa ceremony (ritual), Kakau (rite of passage), and Kauhale (community).

4.1 Positionality

I am Kanaka Maoli, the oldest son, brother, cousin, nephew, and grandson. I am the father to Makoā, Kekoa, Kaleimamo‘oka‘ala, and Kaleiwaihonahalia. I am husband to Kalehua Kukahiko. I am a teacher, a student, a coach, a friend, and a Pasifika activist researcher. I am not simply interested in the recognition of racial inequity, but it is my kuleana (responsibility) to challenge western-neocolonial education systems whose agendas are realized by the institutionalization of cultural racism. While there has been some return of investment on PI athletic labor in college football, there is a significant socioeconomic, cultural, psychophysical, historical, educational and moral debt owed to our communities due to US colonialism. Since college football players represent a potential source of political leadership, it is of paramount importance that this population perseveres in higher education, and that education should develop their critical consciousness and cultural identities, while presenting opportunities for new knowledge to be made relevant to issues within their communities. In this way, their education can become relevant and transformative.

4.2 Cultural Protocol

The process of colonialism has embedded itself into US institutions (i.e., settler colonial education systems, prisons, etc.) that strip PIs of their cultural rituals, rites of passage, and communal roles and responsibilities. Cultural rituals and rites of passage, connect PIs to our heritage, reminding us that we were born to greatness as royal descendants, intellectuals and warriors. The participation in cultural rituals and rites of passage unshackle us from colonial measurements of success (individualism and meritocracy), and commit PIs instead, to identities that are grounded in communal roles and responsibilities meant to improve the collective. As researchers, it is important to recognize the rituals, rites of passage, the different hale ike (houses of knowledge) within the communities we study, and the protocols that guide them. To properly gather qualitative data in PI communities, researchers must navigate cultural protocol to locate “cultural leaders” that act as gatekeepers to research participants, and to maintain those relationships once the data has been collected.

The value of cultural protocol can be illustrated in a study where I visited the Waianae boat harbor – the largest houseless (Note 21) camp on O‘ahu – where I was looking at the benefits of incorporating the kauhale system in Hawaiian houseless communities. Several friends of mine had once lived in the community, understood the rituals and protocols that guided it, and had offered to take me to visit with its members. Before entering the camp, I was taken to a Hawaiian minister at the corner of the park, where we sat and talked story. After he shared his testimony, he introduced us to his daughter, who was the selected leader of the houseless community. After we properly introduced ourselves (my name, where I grew up, my parents’ and grandparents’ names, etc.), she explained to us what was expected from members of the community and the general rules, but in short manner gave us her blessing to walk through the community and talk to whomever we wanted.

4.3 Awa Ceremony

The ‘awa ceremony is an important ritual of PI Methodology, because it centers PI narratives in research. The use of the ‘awa ceremony as a research methodology disrupts dominant research paradigms, and is therefore, a mechanism of decolonization. This is fitting given the colonial history of the drinking culture in the Pacific. The properties of the ‘awa root calms and relaxes the drinker, and therefore, the ritual has been used to promote peaceful relationships in both formal and casual settings (Patrinos & Perry, 2010). The introduction of alcohol in the Pacific, however, disrupted and changed the drinking culture from one of “social cohesion and cultural integration,” to a violent and deviant drinking culture that changed the cultural identities of its participants, and arguably the gender and familial dynamics of our PI communities (Patrinos & Perry, p. 142). (Note 22) From this perspective, the ‘awa ceremony is literally a decolonizing methodology.

The traditional ‘awa ceremony has different protocols all over the Pacific, but it has always been a place where mo‘olelo are shared, discussed and made relevant to contemporary circumstances and the future of PI communities. Tengan (2008) says that the ‘awa ceremony is a ritual space for transformation and sharing of stories, and is a ritual that has evolved to accommodate multiple Pacific Island influences. The protocol has become fluid and innovative, but guided by Pacific epistemologies and the needs of its attendees. During one ‘awa ceremony for the Hale Mua

(Note 23) in 2005, members were served from oldest to youngest and each shared their mo'olelo, which referenced something of the past, the present and the future (Tengan, 2008). At the end of each narrative a member of the 'awa crew called out pa'i ka lima (clap hands) and the members would clap three times to honor the speech and drink.

Some sharing circles are in "other" languages. Dominant research methodologies often record these narratives, and then translate and transcribe them later. 'Awa ceremony can provide a more seamless and interactive technique. I attended an 'awa ceremony at the Sea Life Park on O'ahu that was hosted by the park's fire knife dancers, which included two matai (Samoan chiefs), and a contingent of the University of Hawai'i college football staff. We formed one big circle with the matai and Samoan native speakers to one end of the circle, and the younger non-Samoan speakers to the other. Sitting in the circle with us, but at a place where he could hear and translate, was a member of the UH football staff. He would translate the matai's stories, culturally contextualize it for us, and teach us the language. This lasted about four hours. In this way, qualitative data can be extrapolated from a fluid conversation within a culturally familiar context, and provide context without subordinating the cultural framework of the storyteller (participant).

The 'awa ceremony reminds researchers to make time for rituals and protocol when addressing PI individuals and communities. This may include reaching out to the appropriate kupuna (elders), or asking permission from community leaders and organizations. Presentation of gifts and sharing food are appropriate at any prospective meeting. Another appropriate expectation is that research on PIs require lead authorship is offered to a PI researcher, if one is on the research team. This ensures that PI scholars are properly trained to conduct research in their own communities, and not tokenized or used for their access to PI participants. It is also important to understand that the interview process is not about getting answers to your questions. It is about participating in the sharing of stories, and allowing participants to connect and communicate in a way that is non-threatening to their epistemologies, their intellect, and their identities. In the same way that Wilson (2008) presents research as ceremony, the 'awa ceremony organizes the findings section of this study by presenting participants' narratives around various topics in a conversational format.

Identification and recruitment. Following the example of the 'awa ceremony, this methodology followed cultural protocol by approaching elders from the AIGA Foundation (Note 24) to discuss my research and its value to the PI collective. The elders of the AIGA Foundation agreed to participate in this study in hopes that research on this population would help inform policies that will improve access, retention and diversify PI professionalization; specifically, the promotion of PI college football players to faculty, administration, and coaching positions in higher education. The caveat was that I would maintain control of the data and be responsible for the statements made by any resulting studies. The participants were selected from an annual Polynesian cultural event held by the AIGA Foundation for top PI high school football recruits, an event they have coordinated since 2011. These college football players were identified at several high school football developmental camps, and were sent consent forms and surveys with their invites to AIGA's annual cultural event. The volunteers at the AIGA event are predominantly Polynesian ex-college and NFL football players, who were also asked to participate in this study. Participants of the event come from any of the 49 states in the continental US, Samoa, Tonga, Hawai'i, Australia and New Zealand. Each cohort is made up of 70-85 high school football recruits, and this study uses the data collected from the 2011 through 2016 graduating cohorts.

4.4 Kakau

Kakau (tattoo) is an ancient rite of passage. For PI men, the pain endured during kakau is perhaps as close as we can get to childbirth, a rite of passage experienced by women. (Note 25) While traditionalists of kakau often defend rigid cultural rules and practices, contemporary kakau kumu (teachers and master practitioners of tattoo) insist that historically those rules and practices varied by geographic location and island affiliation. The common thread between the two schools of thought is the ability of kakau to connect PI people to their land, to their specific island community and to communicate an individual, familial, and/or collective story that is a narrative of their identity. Contemporary kakau kumu allow our mo'olelo (story) to reach beyond the rigid boundaries of traditionalists, by allowing each of us to narrate from a contemporary lens, one that weaves the mo'olelo and experiences of the Pacific Islander collective. As a research methodology, kakau empowers us to not only interpret the world through our own lens, or specific Pacific island affiliation, but to see the historical and contemporary experiences that connect a PI collective to colonial legacies.

Kakau is a rite of passage that draws from traditional ike (knowledge) and mana'o (thought) to acknowledge our past, its connection to the present, and a commitment to the future. This methodology allows for this researcher to favor a Kanaka Maoli lens because it is the Pacific island culture and epistemology I am familiar with, and a framework that I can identify the commonalities of other PI communities and experiences. At the same time, this

methodology allows me to integrate other specific Pacific island lenses to recognize the nuances in our cultural identities, and the anomalies that might make an individual participant's narrative uniquely different. Contemporary kakau kumu remind us that in the data analysis we cannot code our PI participants' narratives and experiences into cultural boxes with static and formulaic symbols, but to allow our PI participants to choose the symbols and design that will tell their stories, and relate them to their culture as they define it. Their perspective is reality, and their kakau represents the ways in which culture defines their reality, and their identity. I am also reminded during my time with kumu kakau Jordan Souza that mo'olelo, mana'o and ike are exchanged during kakau. The two of us talked story, I shared my mo'olelo, and we learned from each other through the process. During kakau there is a telling and recording of one's story, a trust between the narrator and researcher that the story will be articulated in kakau appropriately, and a relationship between the two are established and maintained.

Table 1. Seven forms of cultural racism.

| 7 Forms of Definition Cultural Racism | |
|--|--|
| Objectification | A process of dehumanization by treating human beings as objects and/or profit centers |
| Epistemicide | The destruction of cultural ways of thinking, in order to normalize dominant ways of thinking |
| Erasure | This study defines erasure as the process 1) to negate, suppress, or remove people, or their culture, from an academic environment, 2) to withhold information that maintains institutional power over athletic labor, or 3) to erase evidence of their experiences through the obliteration of writing, recorded material, or data. |
| Elitism | The power of a dominant group to maintain privilege and assert their superiority over other groups through discrimination, as in race, gender, class, etc. |
| Colorblindness (whiteness, individualism, and meritocracy) | The inability or unwillingness to recognize race or culture as having an impact on individual, or group, experiences and opportunities |
| Deculturalization | The educational process of destroying a people's culture (cultural genocide), and replacing it with a new culture. |
| Symbolism, or stereotyping | The classification of culture and race as symbols of social value, or the process off using static and rigid generalizations to define individuals, groups, or communities. |

Data analysis. Data analysis procedures in this methodology are thoughtful to the interconnectedness of the PI collective, the nuances between island cultures, and the fluidity of culture itself. While participant responses are often similar and connected, each experience reflects a unique perspective from various cultural contexts. The kakau method is analogous to a constant comparative analysis (Creswell, 2003) but grounded in the ike and mana'o of contemporary kakau, allowing the participants to dictate what symbols of culture and race are relevant, or irrelevant, to their identity and college experiences. During the initial stage, or open coding, narratives were categorized into each of the seven forms of cultural racism defined in Figure 1 below. The axial coding stage, or interconnecting of categories, was used to find narratives of cultural racism that overlapped with experiences of self-hate, cultural dissonance (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Museus, 2008), liminal identities, psychophysical trauma, and perceptions of exploitation as athletic laborers. During the selective coding process, the kakau analysis attempted to understand whether participants' experiences of *culture* and *race* were associated to specific characteristics of *colonialism* in a predictive manner. It is important to understand, however, that the "success" of the kakau method is not in finding predictive patterns in qualitative or quantitative data, the research value of this methodology is its inherent cultural quality of honoring kaona (hidden meanings and multiple perspectives), by centering the narratives of diverse perspectives. The kakau method aligns with Wilson's (2008) description of Indigenous methodologies in *Research is Ceremony*, which calls for researchers to present data in a way that does not muddle the narratives of its participants. This methodological concept allows mo'olelo to dictate the nuances and similarities within the Pacific Islander collective from participants' meaning making perspectives, while limiting the "validation" effect of the researchers' synthesis and interpretation.

4.4.1 Kauhale System

The kauhale system is a community design whose construction and designation of each hale (building) is role specific. Each hale serves a purpose: sleeping, cooking, menstruation, men's meeting house, etc. When a male child comes of age, for example, they enter the hale mua (men's house) and dawn their malo (loincloth) marking their coming of age. The child will learn many things but is expected to follow a craftsman whose skill aligns with their own interests. The child is then expected to master their craft and contribute to the community by learning and then teaching. It is the child's kuleana (responsibility) to learn the 'ike (knowledge) of their kupuna (ancestors) through their kumu (teachers), and then to teach and share the mo'olelo of our kupuna with the next generation.

As researchers in the kauhale system, we are participating, learning and teaching. In the kauhale system, ways of knowledge are transmitted and absorbed in everything and everywhere, and in every structure. Education and knowledge are valued outside of the traditional classroom, and taught and absorbed by students and teachers who are defined in cultural ways. In the Kauhale system, researchers cannot gather all the knowledge in one house, they need to recognize who the cultural teachers are, and where the places of learning are taking place. Researchers need to talk to people across the kauhale for breath and depth, and be perceptive to the ways that knowledge is transmitted, adopted into value, and expressed. These ways of knowing and learning do not align with western politics of knowledge, but can disrupt and contribute to dominant research paradigms.

This methodology also requires that researchers provide context to their investigations. What are the issues that drive the study? The investigative process cannot be a one-way relationship, where the research mines participants for information and provides the community with nothing in return. In these cases, the "objective" researcher is more often an exploitive opportunist. For social justice to be realized in activist research, full disclosure of the issues that concern the study, or the concepts by which it will be interpreted, should be disclosed, or taught. Thereby, enabling participants to politicize if they choose. In this way, everyone in the process are research participants that learn and teach. Research participants listen and learn from the mo'olelo of elders and colleagues in sharing circles, and then teach through the telling and sharing of their own mo'olelo. This activist research is participatory and empowers our collective mo'olelo to transform contemporary circumstance to fit the true needs of our participants as individuals, family members, specific community members and the PI collective.

Data collection. Of the 120 PI college football players that agreed to participate in the college choice study, forty volunteered to participate in a survey and interviews on the impact of culture and race on their college experiences. The survey was meant to complement the qualitative focus of this study with a descriptive analysis, but also defined the seven symbols of cultural racism. This process allowed the participants to understand how the study defined those symbols, and self-select the relevance of each symbol to their college experiences. The complexities of these symbols were then unpacked during our interviews, which followed 'awa ceremony protocol. The participants who agreed to participate were chosen based on diversity of island affiliation, college type, location, whether they had Pacific Island courses available at their college or university, campus proximity to PI communities, and overall nuances in college experiences. The Kauhale method of data collection understands that all knowledge does not reside in one hale. To further extend the application of this methodology, this study required PI participants that had experienced college football from diverse perspectives. To accomplish that goal, eight participants were found that fit one of the following five classifications:

- 1) Former PI college football players
- 2) Former PI college football players that are now college football coaches
- 3) Former PI college football players that are now college athletic directors
- 4) Former PI college athletes that are now community activists working to improve opportunities for PIs in sport
- 5) PI scholars who have published on PI participation in sports, and the specific dynamics of PIs in US college football.

5. Limitations

Method limitations of Staying In. The number of interview participants in the Staying In study was purposeful to ensure a specific diversity of experiences (e.g. type of institution, geography, PI course offering, etc.). The number of participants that were interviewed, however, puts a constraint on the generalizability of the qualitative data. At the same time, the diverse perspectives of this study does not account for all the nuances of individual island identities and intersectionalities, and how those nuances influence college experiences. Because

perspectives from various PI affiliations were absent (i.e., Fiji, Guam, etc.), I must acknowledge my part in the erasure of those communities from the research. It will also be important that as PIs continue to fill diverse roles at institutions of higher education, their perspectives on the issues brought up in this study should be considered for future research as well. This study also failed to include the perspectives of the individual families of PI college football players, an important perspective to consider for future studies, since family (i.e., ‘ohana, aiga, etc.) is a fundamental cultural concept in PI communities, and represent a resource that enhances, or inhibits, transition and persistence. Lastly, the methodologies were crafted from Kanaka Maoli concepts of ritual, rite of passage, and community, because it is the cultural lens I am most familiar with. Future studies should integrate cultural concepts (i.e., rituals, rites of passage, and community) that are familiar to both the researchers and their participants.

Theoretical limitations of Staying In. PI-CRiT is meant to provide a framework for activist research on PIs in higher education. The theory suggests that 1) four directives of colonialism are fulfilled by US education systems, 2) the four directives of colonialism are enabled by educational policies, curriculum, programming and leadership that operationalize seven forms of cultural racism, 3) Indigenous methodologies are necessary to disrupt dominant research paradigms that maintain colonial politics of knowledge, and 4) activist research must enact critical praxis. While PI-CRiT takes research one step closer to becoming intracultural, (Note 26) future research will have to be vigilant about acknowledging both the connections between individual Pacific Island affiliations, and the cultural nuances of each. Context is also important, and not just cultural context, but gender, sexuality, and various intersectionalities of identity. PI-CRiT is a framework of colonialism based on the agenda of settler colonial school systems, but experiences of colonialism within the Pacific were also dissimilar and extended beyond US colonization. Future research that uses the collective identity of Pacific Islanders should consider the nuances in colonial experiences, and be clear about what island communities are not represented in the study, and whether the research is meant to improve the experiences of those island affiliations as well.

6. Findings

The findings herein are framed by the cultural components of its methodology. The qualitative data is presented in the manner of the ‘awa ceremony, with participants’ sharing their mo‘olelo in a forum that connects individual narratives to collective experiences. Kakau honors kaona, and allows for symbols of culture and race to be interpreted differently by individuals within the PI collective. The kauhale model enables participants’ narratives to inform one another and safeguard the mo‘olelo of diverse perspectives. These three cultural components of PI-CRiT’s methodology disrupt dominant research paradigms that value statistical significance, correlation and linear relationships, rather than the uniqueness of mo‘olelo, which reflect our participants’ individual realities. The findings herein do not calculate static, or standard, outcomes for fluid inputs (culture and race), but they do suggest that when PI student-athletes are exposed to institutions of higher education that fulfill the four directives of colonialism through its seven variations of cultural racism, there are experiences of self-hate, cultural dissonance (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Museus, 2008), liminal identities, psychophysical trauma, and perceptions of exploitation as athletic laborers. The findings in this section are presented in separate discussions based on the seven variations of cultural racism.

6.1 Objectification

Descriptive analysis. 82 percent of all participants believed that PI players are exploited for profit by college football. Interestingly, all participants that believed PI players are exploited, also experienced psychophysical trauma (mental stress and/or physical injuries) as a result of their participation in college football. Many open-ended survey and interview responses reveal struggles in maintaining liminal identities, as students, athletic labor, and Pacific Islanders.

Discussion question. In what ways do you believe that PI student-athletes are objectified, or exploited? What physical injuries and mental stress have you endured that are specific to your experience as a college football player?

Samoa. played and recently graduated from a military academy on the East Coast:

College Football is a billion dollar industry in which athletic departments, coaches, and even [general] students are making out. Athletic departments are receiving free publicity, ticket sales, and merchandise sales... Coaches are putting in the hours; however, it is not for nothing. They are receiving six figure pay checks, housing, and clothing. And lastly [general] students are receiving the benefits of the athletics such as new workout facilities... All of this while athletes are struggling to take care of themselves on a daily basis. [Student-athletes] are also spending time and energy earning a college degree. Many of these remarks and statements are from my observations, conversations, and studies as an economics major.

Psychophysical trauma: *Concussions and torn knee ligaments; Stress of balancing football, college, and military.*

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Northwest coast of the US:

We work as many hours as a full time job yet don't receive the equal compensation. For example, jersey sales every year are one of the top consumer products yet the person who wears that jersey at the collegiate level will never see a cent.

Psychophysical trauma: *Torn ACL and broken scaphoid; The stress came from the irregular study habits while on the road. Having to play catch up in class only reinforced the stereotype that we didn't do our work or used football as an easy excuse to not do work.*

Samoan, former college football player at a Power 5 program in Oregon:

My first semester at OSU I had a .7 GPA. Dealing with early meetings, workouts, classes, practice, games, and more meetings was so draining and I had zero prep for it. Competing for a starting spot was also new. That year was the first year I didn't start on a football team. My first start didn't come until week 5 or 6 vs UCLA. It definitely was a grind.

Psychophysical trauma: *Both knees, left shoulder and multiple concussions; The stress I felt was from having to be the best on and off the field at a pace I was unprepared for, and failing at what I was supposed to be good at.*

Hawaiian, former college football player now a college football coach at a D1A program:

I injured my shoulder and it got so bad that the doctors medically disqualified me, not allowing me to play. As I researched my injuries, seeking out doctors, I found out that my injury was not curable. I attempted to go home and attend a local JUCO but my parents wouldn't allow me to. With the support of my parents, family, friends and football coach, I stayed at [college] and joined the football staff as a student assistant. I fell in love with the coaching side of football and have not turned back. I just finished up my first season as a graduate assistant and cannot wait for what the future has in store for me.

Psychophysical trauma: *Career ending shoulder injury; I struggled to find a balance between school and friends. I also lacked motivation due to my inability to play and compete in the game that I love. I did not feel that I was in the right place. I did not have any confidence based off the fact that I thought everyone else was smarter than me.*

Tongan, played at Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

Most players aren't told that scholarships are one-year scholarships. Most of us just sign the scholarship paper, not knowing that it's only for a year... As a freshman you don't really care about things like this, but as you get older these things become important. Because if you're not performing, or not getting along with the coaches, that scholarship could be gone the next year. I believe that the money these big programs make off of us does not equal the compensation that we receive within our scholarship, or the physical abuse we are put through does not equal the money we receive.

Psychophysical trauma: *4 ACL tears each within a year of one another and 2 on each knee; Stress with injuries and recovery.*

Member of the AIGA Foundation, Samoan, former college football player:

I think that the low graduation rates of PI players are also masked by "push out" factors. One player told a story about how his coaches made him push a 45-pound plate across the football field with his chin at 5:30am in the morning. These techniques are used to make certain kids quit, so they [football program] don't have to wait till they [players] graduate to recycle their scholarships.

Psychophysical trauma: *Torn left PCL, dislocated fingers, and separated shoulders; Stress of performing at a high level with challenging incoming QB's, while maintaining my academics.*

Community Activist for PI's in sport, and co-author of *Performing Polynesian Masculinities in American Football: From 'Rainbows to Warriors'*:

The two things that quickly come to mind are the time commitments of these players in season and off season. The amount of time that they spend on football related activities leaves them substantially less free time to be a college student like non-student athletes. The second thing that comes to mind is apparel for our top tier college football players like Juju Smith-Schuster. USC sells his #9 jerseys from \$50 to \$100 and he receives nothing in return for marketing his likeness. Walk around the parking lot and inside the Coliseum or the Rose Bowl and his jersey is everywhere alongside #2.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

I think they're primarily exploited because universities only really provide care when they're student athletes and not students. I've had about 12 student athletes over the last three years in my classes, men and women from a variety of sports, including football - and [four that were my graduate students]. After their eligibility is up, they're pretty much thrown away into the general student population without any assistance with making that transition. For me, this is a huge disservice to students especially those who are vulnerable from the start (e.g. low-income, first gen, students of color). At Mānoa, they don't get any formal graduate or professional school or career advising or support with the emotional baggage of being a former student athlete. Then I also think about my one student who suffered a few concussions in his college career now in his late 20s and the absence of any kind of support (health care or otherwise) should he become severely impacted down the line. A college degree ain't worth shit if you can't remember your name or feel like killing yourself. I guess my big statement is I feel student athletes are exploited because universities are not accountable once the student athlete has outlived her/his usefulness. When I think of exploitation, I also think of cases like O'Bannon. But since UH is not a prestigious collegiate sports program, I also believe they are exploited because of the way the university monopolizes their time in college. Yes, student athletes have said there are definite perks to being an athlete but there are also tremendous sacrifices. So, in short, the university benefits from this control on the student athletes' time. A side note, too, is the verbal abuse I hear about. For me, it exploits these kids' ability to access higher education because they are in no position to defend themselves lest they lose their spot and scholarship. So I feel like these students are unable to explore, define, and enact their fullest selves -- again, especially those who come into college vulnerable (e.g. low-income, first gen, students of color) because of these constraints.

6.2 Epistemicide

Descriptive analysis. 86 percent of the participants believed that their football programs' concepts of "team" were similar to their cultural concepts of family. 84% felt they were able to incorporate cultural perspectives in class discussions and academic writing. Many interview and open-ended survey responses, however, reveal statements of cultural dissonance by participants whose cultural knowledge was contested, refuted, or unacknowledged in their academic spaces. Also, all of the participants believe their individual definition and standards of success are very different than those of the football program, and the academic institutions where they attend classes.

Discussion question. What cultural knowledge, education, and ways of knowing are missing from the college experience of PI college football players? What experiences illustrate how PI cultural knowledge is different than "college" thinking, understanding, and/or teaching at your university?

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

The football program didn't show any type of interests in promoting the education of Pacific Islander cultures, at least when I was there, other than asking me to bring in more Polynesians to play football.

Hawaiian, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

Administration have very different values than Pacific Islanders simply because there are barely any locals in admin.

Samoan, plays at community college on the Southwest coast of the US:

Not sure if instructors are able to use an analogy that relates or connects to help us understand; all I know is that it's a different atmosphere in college to where I feel they believe I am dumb, or am never going to get it, so they give up?

Tongan, played at an NAIA school in the Midwest of the US:

Cultural values were taught to me every day of my life from my parents, aunts, etc. Sometimes I would have loved to use it in writing but the people and teachers that read my work wouldn't understand why my people's values are the way they are. For example, I wrote in a paper that because of respect, the boys in the family would not really "hang out" together like other American families do. Being around each other in a general sense is okay, but we wouldn't be allowed to watch movies together, or isolate ourselves from the rest of the family. During peer-review my classmates could not understand the logic behind it, and some criticized the gender roles we had growing up in my home.

Samoan, former college football player that is now an athletic director at a Power 5 university:

One way would be looking at the methodology in teaching. It's the complete opposite of how PI teach and develop individuals. By using the western methods of teaching, it could still be missing the mark on how PI's

were taught. Another difference I see is in the voice of the students. There is a huge emphasis on students' contributions to discussion and critical debate that challenges both students and teachers, but this is not the case in Samoan culture where the emphasis is on listening, learning and respect. Silence is often misinterpreted by instructors as ignorance, apathy, or resistance.

Samoan, ex-NFL player that played college at the University of Utah, and now coaches college football:

I had an incident that one would think had no effect on the University or the football program. However, the individual whom I had an altercation with was the son of a booster to the University and so the parents wanted me reprimanded. Within the Samoan culture, elders would have found a way to appease both sides without including the law, where at "the U," money talks and so the booster was much louder than I was in 2001. However, I don't think the University normalized American culture as the standard when I was at "the U." With the influence of coach Mac and the surrounding Pacific Islander communities near campus, we were often looked at to set the norm for the next group of student athletes. Fortunate for me, coach Ron McBride, loves the Polynesian culture and it's people. There really wasn't much difference in values with coach Mac and the veteran Polynesian players that came before me. Within various Sociology courses, I would often have to refer to where I grew up and how it affected who I was as a person.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

UH Manoa is supposed to be a "place of Hawaiian learning" but this has yet to be really conceptualized and institutionalized. I don't think Pasifika folks anything is really acknowledged in any normalized way aside, perhaps, from performance value. Brah, this is every day, all day at pretty much every university lol You can take any piece of this institution - general education requirements (though they do have an "Asian or Pacific" requirement) or the names of the buildings - American hegemony is always evident.

6.3 Erasure

Descriptive analysis. 75 percent of the participants have a PI community near campus, but only 50 percent said that their universities help them to connect to those communities while enrolled. Given that this is a small research population and that some participants were chosen specifically because of their university's proximity to PI communities, these percentages are most likely not representative of US higher education as a whole. Many participants' expressed feelings of cultural dissonance in response to the erasure of their home culture during their transition to college.

Discussion questions. By attending universities, what cultural experiences are removed from the lives of PI college football players? In what ways do you recognize the omission of PI culture from the college environment? How are their college experiences impacted by a misrepresentation of facts, hidden agendas, lack of cultural understanding, or manipulation of data?

Samoan, college football player in PA:

I missed being away from my family. Family couldn't afford to visit me, and I couldn't afford to get home. There are no polys in Pennsylvania.

Hawaiian, plays at a division 2 school in the Midwest of the US:

I have mostly missed my family bond. The kanikapilas that I missed out on and the love and laughter that I knew was present.

Samoan, plays for a Power 5 program on the East coast of the US:

One thing that I missed most about my culture is the feeling that you're always a part of something bigger. With me living in North Carolina I don't have many opportunities to interact with people of my culture. When I was at the Polynesian All American Bowl that was one thing that I enjoyed the most.

Tongan, plays for community college on the Southwest Coast of the US:

They have a Black Student Union here yet there's no help or outreach for the Polynesian students.

Samoan, former college football in the Midwest now coaching college football:

Too often we are grouped under "Asian-Pacific Islander" and resources are directed towards our Asian counterparts. Polynesian college football players like myself need more support than just a football scholarship, because if that's the only thing helping us then too often we rely on football too much to meet your needs. The NFL career is a rarity, and to compromise your college education is to give away the opportunity to better yourself off the field and ultimately put yourself in a better position to support your family.

Tongan, played at Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

I have had countless interactions with people who ask my ethnicity, and when I answer Tongan they are unfamiliar with my culture. Most people assume that there are only Samoans. If there were Polynesian ethnic studies courses we could educate people on the cultural differences, and why those differences matter. If they don't know we exist, they won't care. If they don't care, they won't help us.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

Student athletes have told me about "voluntary practice," which all team members know is not really voluntary but the coaches need to call it that because of NCAA policies. Every single athlete said they would have to attend regardless of classes (like I would let one student leave my class 15-30 minutes early so she could make it to voluntary practice at 7pm) or assignments, otherwise they could be cut or benched; thereby, jeopardizing their scholarships. Another would be the inability to choose a major of their interest - they have to "choose" majors which fit into their travel and practice schedules. So between athletics and academic departments, there are no compromises with time and structure for these kids.

Samoan, ex-NFL player that played college in the Northwest, businessman and community activist.

When I entered college football in 1974, I didn't know I was on a one-year scholarship. When I was recruited they told me I would be receiving a full scholarship, and I assumed that meant for the duration of the 4 to 5 years needed for me to get my degree. Given the low graduation rates of our PI college football players, it is a crime that these are sold to our communities as full scholarships. It's fraud and outright exploitation.

Samoan, former college football player and member of the AIGA Foundation:

We had one of our high school football players from American Samoa committed to [a Northwestern University], but a coach from [a Southwestern University] told the family that [the Northwestern University] was not a sanctuary campus, and that [the Southwestern University] was. He told the family that their son could be deported if he went to [the Northwestern University]. Neither of the statements were true, but the coach was able to flip the kid right before signing day. In the current political environment, it will be important that our organization helps Polynesian families make informed decisions that enable our kids to fulfill and complete their college dreams.

6.4 Elitism

Descriptive analysis. Only 25 percent of the participants reported that they had college experiences where they were made to feel inferior to others because of their race, culture, wealth, religion, etc. However, a majority of the participants shared that they had experiences where they believed their culture and race created different sets of expectations by faculty and staff. These narratives also reflect cultural dissonance, perceptions of exploitation, and psychophysical trauma from negotiating their liminal identities, as students, athletes and racialized beings.

Discussion question. In what ways do you believe that PI student-athletes are treated differently, or that staff and faculty have different expectations for them? What college experiences illustrate how some form of elitism impacts PI college football players' ability to transition and/or persist?

Samoan, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

It's hard to come up with a specific example and hard to explain, but I know that many folks become surprised that I am able to hold an intelligent conversation with them.

Hawaiian, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

Being told we were lazy and probably going to take the easiest way through college just to play.

Samoan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Northwest coast of the US:

I was expected to be better at the athletic challenges that were thrown at me while in football, which I succeeded in doing so because I felt that I had to for the pride of being Tongan.

Tongan, plays for community college on the Southwest Coast of the US:

They think I can play the ukulele and know how to dance hula. They expect me to play like a fierce warrior but on a different level than everyone else and to have more passion for the game.

Samoan, played college football and is now an athletic director at a Power 5 university:

Going to school on the east coast lacks large Polynesian communities. Professors, peers, and staff have preconceived notions about me based off media or personal experiences (Good or bad).

Samoan, college football player at a Power 5 program in Oregon:

Being a minority in Oregon pretty much announced to everyone that I was an athlete. I just remember wherever I went people would ask me what sport I played.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

Again, American hegemony IS the university. So the physical and intellectual structures in the university are all American. I think student success for different groups (and different people) are more complex and specific.

Samoan, ex-NFL player that played college in the Northwest, businessman and community activist:

After practice during my freshman year, my position coach came after me. He had played quarterback three years before me, a tough guy from [place omitted] and I looked up to him, respected him. One day he abruptly stopped me in the tunnel and asked me, "Why do you wear that number?" He singled me out and told me I was an embarrassment, and that he didn't believe I had the right to wear my number. He pointed at a white teammate that was competing for the QB position, and said, "He should be wearing that number." I almost left college that day, but my Dad wouldn't let me. Ironically, the university ended up retiring my number. When I look back at the fact that I was the only Samoan on the football team, and that my jersey number was reserved for Quarterbacks, a white position, I see it for what it was... It was racism.

Tongan, played at Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

I was an early admit, so I started college in January of my senior year in high school. My plan was to earn my Master's degree while I played football, but now that I am ready to graduate in my redshirt sophomore year, the academic support staff told me not to enroll in my final political science class. They said graduate school and football would be too hard for me, even though other guys [non-PIs] on the team were doing it. They expect me to take 2 more years of undergraduate courses that will not count towards my degree. My family and I decided that I am going to graduate and play somewhere else next year.

6.5 Colorblindness

Descriptive analysis. 50 percent of the participants believed that their universities operate on the notion that race and culture has no impact on individual success, or future opportunities. Participant narratives reflect cultural dissonance and struggles to maintain their liminal identities due to the absence of culture and race from educational policies (i.e., admissions), programming (i.e., academic support, student organizations, etc.), and classroom pedagogies.

Discussion question. How do color and culture-blind educational policies, programing and pedagogies impact PI college football players? How can race and culture inform educational policies, programing and pedagogies for PI college football players?

Tongan, plays at community college on Northwest coast of the US:

At the college level, the teachers' teaching style does not help grasp concepts well; they assume most students grew up the same way and teach as if everyone knows everything about most public topics or issues.

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

There are really little to no Polynesians on campus here at CAL which to me is hard to relate with the university and its values towards our Islander communities.

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Northwest coast of the US:

The lack of diversity. At lunch, when I'm in the cafeteria, the whole place is full and the minorities can fill up maybe two of the tables out of the 50 plus there.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

Unrealistic perspectives of expectations - what balancing school and sport will be like, what will happen when your eligibility is done, no culturally responsive support in athletics (and no time to access those programs which may be available on campus), isolation of student athletes from other students...

Samoan, played college football and is now an athletic director at a Power 5 university:

A program interested in helping Poly student-athletes adapt to college life will create a family atmosphere, recruit more than just one Poly student-athlete – must have a good concentration of them – and must have at least one Poly coach on staff... If there are more than one or two Poly students, than they will support each other as aiga does, but we had just one when I got here to [university name omitted] and without the aiga atmosphere, he eventually dropped out of school.

Samoan, ex-NFL player that played college at the University of Utah, and now coaches college football:

I received a Pacific Islanders Student Association (PISA) grant for Utah residence even though I moved from Hawaii. That's typical Polynesian hook up, but it's what the culture does to help those in need. PISA worked closely with the football program when I was in school to allow for the Pacific Islander student athletes to have a community on campus.

6.6 Deculturalization

Descriptive analysis. Only 25 percent of the participants attended universities that offered Pacific studies courses, but 94% reported that they would have taken the courses if they were offered. Participant responses suggest that the absence of Pacific studies courses, or the apathy of the university to provide these courses, have caused cultural dissonance and the internalization of self-hate in some participants.

Discussion question. What would Pacific Studies courses mean to PI college football players, or to their university? How does the absence of Pacific studies impact the college experience of PI college football players?

Hawaiian, plays at a division 2 school in the Midwest of the US:

You don't know where you're going if first you don't have an understanding of where you came from, and I feel it's very important for PIs to know the sacrifices that their ancestors made for our future.

Samoan, plays for a Power 5 program on the East coast of the US:

It is very important to me. My sister was able to take Pacific Islander studies courses at UCLA but unfortunately many schools on the east coast don't offer the same opportunities.

Samoan, ex-NFL player that played college at the University of Utah, and now coaches college football:

I believe there was a Pacific Islander awareness week that included talks by Pacific Islander professors and concerts. Honestly, [Pacific Studies] was an easy A for me knowing it was a course I should be familiar with. However, for Pacific Islanders that did not grow up in the islands, it is a chance for them to learn about the culture that they may not have had the chance to learn while growing up.

Tongan, plays for community college on the Southwest Coast of the US:

I'd value it a lot because I want to learn more about my culture.

Samoan, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

Takes your knowledge of your culture to the next level and beyond what you have learned from your family. Shows you how to apply your cultural values in the classroom.

Hawaiian, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

We are listed as a Hawaiian place of learning and have Hawai'iniuiakea. However, I don't feel as if the university and its admin have taken it upon themselves to actually promote the education of PI cultures to the rest of the campus community.

Tongan, plays on the Southwest coast of the US:

To me I would like language courses being that my dad struggled to learn English, so he didn't take time to teach us Tongan.

Samoan, plays at community college on Northwest coast of the US:

I value it but we're a small percentage of the population and the majority vote wins; my close friends and families help me understand the history of the Samoan people as well as reading about it in available textbooks or online; it's plenty for a small group of people; besides, I don't think our record keeping doesn't date back too far as the American culture; on a personal level, it is useful; in the real world, not at all; just like the Samoan language, it only benefits the Samoans if it is used often; if not, then there's no use learning it.

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

It would provide us with an opportunity to know that our community is being acknowledged the same way other ethnic courses are being studied and it would also offer a space for the PI students on campus. When your education doesn't reflect your history or culture, it reminds us that we can only truly be understood, or belong, amongst our own, or that we are only here to play football. I think that without an understanding of your culture and history it is hard to help our community with the challenges we face today.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

Hegemony and objectification (and monetization) of the body. PI football players should have access to culturally-responsive student programming which attends to identity and student success. For Hawaiians, building stronger sense of self and kuleana in relationship to family, community, lahui; exploring "Hawaiianness" and connecting it to the college experience and vocational aspirations; supports conventional measures of success like retention, persistence, and matriculation. Not just for PI football players but for everyone. Same like anything else, the histories, experiences, knowledges, and ways of knowing should be included. For PIs, I think it would be helpful for them to gain a stronger sense of self, again, in relationship to broader socio-historical, socio-political contexts.

6.7 Symbolism

Descriptive analysis. 63% of the participants reported that they had experienced being stereotyped because of their Pacific Islander heritage while in college. Participant responses reveal that experiences of symbolism and stereotyping can create cultural dissonance, perceptions of exploitation, and having to negotiate liminal identities.

Discussion questions. What symbols of culture are attributed to PI college football players? What symbols of culture are they allowed to exercise and present publicly? What symbols reinforce the presence of a dominant culture, and/or PI as other? What symbols of culture are used to recruit PI football players, and help them to transition and persist in college?

Samoaan, played and recently graduated from a military academy on the East Coast:

They allow us to share our cultural dances, the Haka for example, or gather around and sing, and speaking with one another in our language.

Tongan, plays for a Power 5 program on the Southwest coast of the US:

We are given time for us polys to get together and pray.

Hawaiian, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

Most of the polys or PIs that I see are only the ones playing sports.

Hawaiian, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

They let us perform the Haka.

Tongan, plays on the Southwest coast of the US:

Everyone thinks that all polys are related.

Samoaan, recently played and graduated from the University of Hawai'i:

All the academic buildings are named after White Folks except for William S. Richardson and Hawai'i inuiākea.

Hawaiian, Professor at UH Manoa:

Brown bodies all over the field; again, the mascot and "haka" reeking of cultural appropriation at UH.

Samoaan, ex-NFL player that played college at the University of Utah, and now coaches college football:

I believe being a Pacific Islander is the huge reason we were recruited to play at the University of Utah. Our football team was well represented, and we had a lot of support as Pacific Islander players by the coaches, faculty and staff. I did recognize that none of that support was really institutionalized though. PISA was a student organization, certain coaches provided support in addition to coaching, and there were Pacific Islander staff that would host events and support us unofficially, but not as their primary role at the university. I heard that they are now starting a Pacific Studies department that is not attached to some other ethnic studies program, so I think that's an improvement.

Community Activist and historian of PI's in sport, and co-author of Performing Polynesian Masculinities in American Football: From 'Rainbows to Warriors':

There are schools like UH-Manoa, BYU, Utah, and Oregon State who have consistently recruited Polynesians since the 1960s. I'd say these schools do not see Polynesians so much as a commodity or novelty. However, in the last five years, I've seen more and more coaches or coaching staffs say they want Polynesian football players but not necessarily understanding the nuances between the groups within the community. I'd also add that Polynesian college football coaches are often tokenized for their ethnicity to recruit PI players to a particular school and too often leave for better coaching opportunities and thus leaving those kids at the school. That's the nature of the college football coaching business but these coaches also know how important culture is in landing

a kid but often disregard that bond when they jump to their next better opportunity.

Samoa, former college football player and member of the AIGA Foundation:

PI coaches symbolize the home culture for PI players, and this familiarity is used to lure high school recruits to college football programs, but when PI coaches are fired, or leave for better paying jobs, the kids are left without cultural advocates. I don't blame the coaches for taking higher paying jobs elsewhere, the policies that prohibit players from following those coaches to other colleges is the problem. The coaches that recruit our kids, the ones that sit down with our families, are often the reasons our kids commit to their schools. Our community believes in relationships, not promises. As parents we look to these college coaches to be the surrogate family for our sons, nephews and grandsons while they are in their care. As it is, the rules only protect the institutions, not the athletic laborers, or the players and coaches.

7. Significance and Implications

7.1 Future Research

The professional matriculation of PIs into US higher education is of the utmost importance if we are to see long-term improvements in college participation and graduation rates. Improving college aspiration, sense of belonging, transition, and persistence for PIs in higher education is fundamentally connected to this goal, and are enhanced by “visible pipelines” (i.e., PI scholars, administrators, staff, and coaches) for PI communities (Teranishi, 2009; Wright, 2003). This means that while “getting in” (college access) and “staying in” (persistence) are important aspects of this research, the “moving on” study that investigates the professional trajectories is crucial to correcting the institutional cultural racism that isolates and alienates PIs within US higher education. Furthermore, some scholars suggest that participation and persistence in higher education can bridge the socioeconomic gap between colonized communities, and positions of influence within the academy, legislation and governance (Alfred, 2009). For this reason, professional matriculation of PIs from higher education is paramount to the long-term improvement of their community.

7.2 Conclusion

An analysis of the data has established that PI college football players believe they must be resilient to persevere the demands of being student-athletes, and that too few institutional agents, support programs, activities, policies, and curriculum that reinforce their cultural identity development, or make their education responsive to the specific needs of their communities. The qualitative data also reflects a critical awareness about issues of cultural racism, their exploitation as athletic labor, and a desire for praxis to create transformative change on campus, and in the PI communities. Participants name specific types of institutional agents, support programs, curriculum and policies they believe would improve the academic and professional return on the athletic investments of PI college football players. The framework of colonialism provided a critical lens to understand PI college football players’ otherwise disconnected narratives as a manifesto to institutions of higher education, demanding that their athletic labor be compensated with an education that is culturally and racially informed, enacted upon, and supported by policy that allows for sustainable and fluid programs meant to adapt to the needs of this population’s many intersectionalities.

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Notes

- Note 1. Settler colonial school systems “enact the logic of elimination by suppressing Native histories and contemporary realities, by discounting Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge bases, and by individualizing and disciplining Native bodies” (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013, p. 24).
- Note 2. Cultural dissonance is the conflict caused by the inconsistencies between college students’ home culture and the university campus culture (Jayakumar & Museus, 2012), or “the tension students feel as a result of incongruence between their cultural meaning-making-systems and new cultural information they encounter” (Museus & Quaye, 2009, p. 81).
- Note 3. Consedine and Consedine (2005) define cultural racism as the assumption that one culture has the right, power and authority to define normality.
- Note 4. Howard (2015) defines the achievement gap as “the discrepancy in educational outcomes between various student groups” (p. 11), and insists that comparisons “must be informed by both a historical understanding of the experiences of those groups in the United States, and an examination of the correlation between their systemic exclusion from educational opportunities and the current state of their educational performance” (p.12).
- Note 5. Imperialism is generally understood as the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring and holding colonies and dependencies.
- Note 6. Alfred (2009) defined anomie as “the state of profound alienation that results from experiencing serious cultural dissolution, which is then the direct cause of serious substance abuse problems, suicide and interpersonal violence” (p.49).
- Note 7. Alfred (2009) defined aboriginalism as “the social and cultural reimagining of genocide, is based on the idea that what is integral to Indigenous peoples is an irrelevant relic, and that if First Nations are to have a viable future, it will be defined by and express itself only at the discretion of the dominant society” (p. 51).
- Note 8. Trask (2006) also discusses the psychophysical effects of colonization and states, “neo-colonialism refers not only to dominant colonial retentions but also to psychological injuries suffered by the colonized that continue to wound our internal and external lives” (pp. 102-103).
- Note 9. Tsosie (2002) defines cultural sovereignty as the process of Indigenous peoples reframing the content of Native sovereignty through a Native lens, or through their own cultural and spiritual values, rather than “western” jurisprudential ideals.
- Note 10. In 1973, the NCAA made a total break from its original four-year scholarship model and allowed athletic scholarships to be renewable on an annual basis. This shift enabled the cancellation of an athlete’s scholarship at the end of one year for virtually any reason, including injury, lack of contribution to team success, the need to make room for a more talented recruit, or failure to fit into a coaches’ style of play (Byers, 1995; Sack & Staurowsky, 1998; Yasser, 2012). In 2012, the NCAA “revived” the multiyear scholarship (Sack, McComas & Cakan, 2014). It is important to note, however, that multiyear scholarships were simply made available for member institutions to use at their discretion, making them the exception, not the standard.
- Note 11. The NCAA Catastrophic Injury Insurance provides \$20 million in lifetime benefits to student-athletes who become “totally disabled” while practicing or playing, but the NCAA defines totally disabled as “complete loss of sight or hearing, loss of use of at least two limbs, loss of the ability to speak or severely diminished mental capacity (Sheely, 2015).
- Note 12. The aggregation of PI educational data within the API pan-ethnicity creates an invisibility in the research of PIs; specifically, the low educational outcomes for PIs, and certain Asian groups.
- Note 13. As core values, meritocracy and individualism are destructive to PI communities whose people and cultural knowledge have survived on the principle of communalism and genealogical responsibility

(Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013). Fa'a Samoa, for example, literally means the Samoan way, and is an epistemology that prioritizes family and community before self, a realism that constructs Samoan identities (Ng Shiu, 2011).

Note 14. Colorblindness is also realized when educational policies fail to educate and create protocol that responds to elitism, even on “zero tolerance” campuses.

Note 15. In the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, the Native Hawaiian Students Services office decided to display the Hawaiian flag in its window, and in response, the cashier's office next door put the American flag up in their window.

Note 16. Vaughn (2016) employed lei making as a methodology, to gather, interpret and present knowledge, and through this cultural construct, was able to understand the nuances and connection between place and people. In her study, Vaughan used three strands in the weaving together of her lei (or methodology): 'Āina (land) as source, 'Āina as people, and 'Āina as ongoing connection and care.

Note 17. Critical praxis is the combination of knowledge and action, the inherent outcome of critical consciousness development (Freire, 1970).

Note 18. Neutrality is the belief that doing nothing, despite the recognition of social injustice, is a neutral act, rather than a deliberate decision to maintain the status quo. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) suggests that neutrality is racism, and challenges traditional claims of legal neutrality, objectivity, and color-blindness (whiteness, individualism and meritocracy) in education as camouflages for the self-interest of dominant groups in American society.

Note 19. The poem by Namoi Noe Losch (2003) entitled Blood Quantum, ends with the line “They not only colonized us, they divided us” (p. 120).

Note 20. Multi-racial people experience holistic racism (Kukahiko, 2013) that is experienced by the sum of one's racial identities and not solely between the racial binaries. This racism places multi-racial people within a liminal identity, and presents the opportunity for more complex discussions of racial conflict in the US.

Note 21. The term houseless is often used to identify with Kanaka Maoli that do not live in hale. Since the aina (land) is our home, we can never be homeless.

Note 22. Patrinos & Perry (2010) share one 'Ōlelo No'eau that says, “He kanaka ka mea inu 'awa; he pua'a laho ka mea inu kuaipa,” which means “The man who drinks 'awa is still a man, but the man who drinks liquors becomes a beast” (p.146).

Note 23. The Hale Mua is an organization that believes the loss of traditional protocol, ritual and rites of passage have left many kane (men) Kanaka Maoli without a sense of kuleana (responsibility) to lahui (Hawaiian nation or community). It is the absence of this sense of kuleana that the Hale Mua seeks to instill in kane Kanaka Maoli through cultural reclamation, and in doing so, reframe the way this demographic is socially defined (i.e., violence, crime, drug abuse, etc.).

Note 24. Aiga is the Samoan word for family, but it is also an acronym for All Islands Getting Along (AIGA). The acronym is significant because the elders, representative of many different island affiliations, are committed to what they believe is a movement to increase opportunities for PI student-athletes in higher education. Their events also celebrate and teach their participants culture from the various Pacific Islands to reinforce connections to the PI collective.

Note 25. The author acknowledges that the pain of childbirth can be significantly more painful than kakau, not having experienced the pain of labor, but having witnessed the birth of his own children.

Note 26. Intracultural describes research conducted between at least two people who are from the same culture or have culturally similar backgrounds, while Intercultural describes research between at least two people who are different in significant ways culturally (Luster & Koester, 2003).

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