

Queen Lili‘uokalani Conversation Kit



Lili‘uokalani by M. Dickson. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum.

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Queen Lili'uokalani



“You must
remember
never to cease
to act because
you fear you
may fail.”

– Queen Lili'uokalani
(1917)

Portrait: *Lili'uokalani* photographed by Harris & Ewing Studio. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Aileen Conkey. **Quote:** Lili'uokalani, 1917. Reported by her hānai daughter, Lydia K. Aholo to Helena G. Allen, *The Betrayal of Lili'uokalani*, Mutual Publishing, 1982.

Lydia Lili'u Loloku Waiania Kamaka'ehea (1838-1917), better known as Queen Lili'uokalani, was the Hawaiian Kingdom's only reigning queen and last monarch before the overthrow of the sovereign state. Queen Lili'uokalani governed Hawai'i from 1891-1893, presiding over the Hawaiian Kingdom during a time of great economic growth. By 1890, 21 international treaties and more than 80 embassies around the world recognize the Hawaiian Kingdom. Additionally, Hawai'i and its multiethnic society enjoyed universal suffrage in 1840 (a full 120 years before the United States), universal health care, state neutrality (1855), and a 95 percent literacy rate, the second highest in the world.¹

A brilliant musician, beloved leader, and proponent of access to education for all, Queen Lili'uokalani's motto was “E 'onipa'a...i ka 'imi na'auao” (Be steadfast in the

¹ Correa, Kālewa. *Smithsonian American Women: Remarkable Objects and Stories of Strength, Ingenuity, and Vision from the National Collection*. Washington D.C. Smithsonian Books, 2019, p. 78

seeking of knowledge). The word 'onipa'a, meaning steadfast, is a single word often used to describe the Queen and her inspiring legacy of aloha 'āina—a form of civic engagement—and her dedication to care for those most in need. Aloha 'āina, a Hawaiian philosophy concerning humanity's relationship to the universe, translates as both "love of land" and "love of country." Much more than an expression of environmental or political consciousness, aloha 'āina conveys an important aspect of Native Hawaiian cosmogony described in the Kumulipo: that the Hawaiian people and the Hawaiian archipelago share common ancestors and are related to one another. Native Hawaiian schools of thought developed an extensive understanding of the interconnectivity between all living things over the course of many centuries.

Expressions of aloha 'āina are also referred to as demonstrations of Hawaiian nationalism. It is important to point out that aloha 'āina (love of land, love of country) as a sentiment of patriotism is defined differently in a Hawaiian context where genealogical connection to the land is paramount. As Queen Lili'uokalani explains, "patriotism, which with us means the love of the very soil on which our ancestors have lived and died, forbade us to view with equanimity the sight of any foreign flag, not excepting the one for which we have always had the greatest respect, floating as a matter of right over any part of our land."²

Deceit and treachery also marked the queen's tenure. On January 17, 1893, the Queen was forcefully removed in a coup de main supported by American troops and warships under the direction of John L. Stevens, US minister to the Hawaiian Kingdom. The United States argued that it needed Hawaiian ports to fight the Spanish-American War deeper in the Pacific, which the Hawaiian Kingdom's neutral status prevented. Despite years of unsuccessful appeals to international states and the United States government, Lili'uokalani was confined at home in Honolulu until her death in 1917. While not an American woman, Queen Lili'uokalani marks a significant voice in the framework of American imperialism. A force to be reckoned with, she protected her country, citizens, and role as sovereign until her passing. Aloha 'āina continues today and often motivates contemporary acts of civic engagement.

² Lili'uokalani. *Hawaii's Story by Hawaii's Queen Liliuokalani*. Honolulu: Hui Hānai, 2013 [1898], p. 35.

Driving Questions

How do legacies of activists influence modern-day issues?

Why is it important to learn about critical issues impacting people in communities far from your own?

Supporting Questions

- How can a portrait demonstrate forms of resistance?
- How might a song communicate a message of social change to its listeners?
- What is activism and who are activists?
- What assumptions might we make about activists and their causes?

Civic Learning Themes

- Civic Action: Exercising one's rights as a citizen (non-legally defined) to affect change or share an opinion on public policy or actions taken by government officials. This can include lobbying, voting, canvassing, protesting, protecting, etc.

College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards

D2.Civ.6.3-5. Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families.

D2.Civ.10.3-5. Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues.

D2.His.6.3-5. Describe how people's perspectives shaped the historical sources they created.

D2.Civ.14.9-12. Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

D2.Soc.7.9-12. Cite examples of how culture influences the individuals in it.

D2.Soc.18.9-12. Propose and evaluate alternative responses to inequality.

D2.Civ.5.9-12. Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by the unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.

D4.7.3-5. Explain different strategies and approaches students and others could take in working alone and together to address local, regional, and global problems, and predict possible results of their actions.

Once they have located and read an article, have students answer the following questions on a worksheet, which is included as a printable at the end of this kit:

- What is the name of the newspaper publication and the author of the article?
- Describe the article in a few sentences.
- For what audience was the article written?
- Use a mobile device to look up any names, events, or words that are unfamiliar to you. List them below and include their definitions.
- Now that you've thought a bit about the article, whose point of view is being shared? What viewpoints could be missing?

Activity 3. Song Lyric Annotations and “Aloha ‘Oe” (Three-Part Activity)

This activity asks students to evaluate the significance of a situation, topic, or issue keeping global, local, and personal connections in mind. The three main questions for reflection:

- Why might Queen Lili‘uokalani's story matter to me?
- Why might it matter to people around me (family, friends, city, nation)?
- Why might it matter to the world?

Keeping the “3 Y's” in mind, let's look at a song written by Queen Lili‘uokalani in 1878. “Aloha ‘Oe (Farewell to Thee),” is a world-famous song with multilayered meanings. The song is believed to have been inspired by an observation Queen Lili‘uokalani made while on horseback on her way from the east side of O‘ahu to Honolulu. While admiring the beauty of Kane‘ōhe Bay, she witnessed a couple bidding farewell to each other. As she continued her trip to Honolulu, she began to hum a melody that would become “Aloha ‘Oe.” While the song is globally admired for its messages about farewells, the song is also regarded as Queen Lili‘uokalani's sense of loss for the Hawaiian Kingdom after she was forcefully removed by American troops in 1893.

Supplementary Materials: Portrait Analysis



- Facial expression: Use adjectives to describe Queen Lili'uokalani facial expression. What emotion(s) does this expression convey?

- Pose: Describe Queen Lili'uokalani's pose.

- Clothing: What clothing is Queen Lili'uokalani wearing? What might her clothing convey about her?

- Hairstyle: Describe Lili'uokalani's hairstyle. Why would hairstyle be an important element of a portrait?

- Setting: What is the setting of the portrait?

- Objects: What objects are in the portrait? Objects function as symbols. What might they be telling us about Queen Lili'uokalani?

- Medium: What is the medium of this portrait and why might knowing the medium be important?

- Historical context: In light of the history of Queen Lili'uokalani that you have learned about, what connections can we make between Queen Lili'uokalani's portrait and her commitment to the preservation of Native Hawaiian culture and Hawai'i's history?

Supplementary Materials: What Happened in 1891? Worksheet

- What is the name of the newspaper publication and the author of the article?
- Describe the article in a few sentences.
- For what audience was the article written?
- Use a mobile device to look up any names, events, or words that are unfamiliar to you. List them below and include their definitions.
- Now that you've thought a bit about the article, whose point of view is being shared? What viewpoints could be missing?

Supplementary Materials: Lyrics for “Aloha ‘Oe” (Farewell to Thee) by Queen Lili‘uokalani

Ha‘aheo ka ua i nā pali
Ke nihi a‘ela i ka nahele
E hahai (uhai) ana paha i ka liko
Pua ‘āhihi lehua o uka

Hui:

Aloha ‘oe, aloha ‘oe
E ke onaona noho i ka lipo
One fond embrace,
A ho‘i a‘e au
Until we meet again

‘O ka hali‘a aloha i hiki mai
Ke hone a‘e nei i ku‘u manawa
‘O ‘oe nō ka‘u ipo aloha
A loko e hana nei

Maopopo ku‘u ‘ike i ka nani
Nā pua rose o Maunawili
I laila hia‘ai nā manu
Miki‘ala i ka nani o ka lipo

Proudly swept the rain by the cliffs
As it glided through the trees
Still following ever the bud
The ‘ahihi lehua of the vale

Chorus:

Farewell to you, farewell to you
The charming one who dwells in the
shaded bowers
One fond embrace,
'Ere I depart
Until we meet again

Sweet memories come back to me
Bringing fresh remembrances of the past
Dearest one, yes, you are mine own
From you, true love shall never depart

I have seen and watched your
loveliness
The sweet rose of Maunawili
And 'tis there the birds of love dwell
And sip the honey from your lips

Translation by Lili‘uokalani. Hawaiian text edited by Puakea Nogelmeier. Courtesy of the Huapala Hawaiian Music and Hula Archives. Compiled by Kaiulani Kanoa-Martin, © 1997. All rights reserved.

Supplementary Materials: Lyrics for “Kū Ha‘aheo E Ku‘u Hawai‘i” by Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu

Kaiko‘o ka moana kā i lana nei Hawai‘i
Nāueue a hālulu ka honua a Haumea
Nākulukulu e ka lani ki‘eki‘e kau mai i
luna
Auē ke aloha ‘ole a ka malihini

Hooho:

Kū ha‘aheo e ku‘u Hawai‘i
Māmakakaua o ku‘u ‘āina
‘O ke ehu kakahiaka o nā ‘ōiwi o
Hawai‘i nei
No ku‘u lahui e hā‘awi pau a i ola mau

Auhea wale ‘oukou pū‘ali koa o Keawe
Me ko Kamalālāwalu la me Kākuhihewa
Alu mai pualu mai me ko Manokalanipō
Ka‘i mai ana me nā kama a Kahelalani

E nāue imua e nā poki‘i a e inu wai
‘awa‘awa
E wiwo‘ole a ho‘okūpa‘a ‘a‘ohe hope e
ho‘i mai ai
A nāi wale nō kākou kaukoe mau i ke
ala
Auē ke aloha ‘ole a ka malihini

E lei mau i lei mau kākou e nā mamo
aloha
I lei wehi ‘a‘ali‘i wehi nani o ku‘u ‘āina
Hoe a mau hoe a mau no ka pono sivila
A ho‘iho‘i hou ‘ia mai ke kū‘oko‘a

The earth of Haumea rumbles and
shakes
The highest heavens shudder up above
The sea of Hawai‘i surges in turmoil
Alas! Woeful indeed are the heartless
foreigners

Chorus:

Stand tall my Hawai‘i
Band of warriors of my land
The new dawn for our people of Hawai‘i
is upon us
For my nation I give my all so that our
legacy lives on

Where are you soldiers of Keawe
Along with those of Maui and O‘ahu
Unite, join together with those of Kaua‘i
Marching alongside the descendants of
Ni‘ihau

Move forward young ones and drink of
the bitter waters
Be fearless, steadfast for there is no
turning back
Let’s press onward straight on the path
of victory
Alas! Woeful are the heartless foreigners!

Be honored always oh beloved
descendants of the land
Let us wear the honored ‘a‘ali‘i of our
beloved land
Paddle on in our pursuit of civil justice
Until our dignity and independence is
restore