



# Treasuring future generations: Māori and Hawaiian ancestral knowledge and the wellbeing of Indigenous children

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## Abstract

This article examines *‘ōlelo no‘eau* and *whakatauki* (ancestral proverbial sayings), for messages relating to the positioning of Māori and Hawaiian children and the relationship of that to traditional child-rearing practices. In doing so, the authors explore whakatauki and *‘ōlelo no‘eau* as a means

to bring forward knowledge gifted to us by our ancestors that can inform our contemporary experiences as Indigenous Peoples.

**Keywords:** tamariki ora, traditional knowledge, whakatauki, *‘ōlelo no‘eau*

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## Introduction

In Indigenous cultures, the values, beliefs, and philosophies that underpin that culture are embedded within its language and knowledge systems. In the context of both *Aotearoa* (New Zealand) and Hawai‘i the invasion and occupation of our homelands by colonising forces and the subsequent assimilationist government policies not only disrupted the

transmission of *te reo Māori* (Māori language) and *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* (Hawaiian language) from generation to generation but also disrupted the transmission of the cultural understandings inherent within the languages themselves (Mokuau, 1991; Walker, 2004).

Despite such disruptions, traditional repositories of Māori and Hawaiian knowledge ensure that the messages embedded in the language still remain with us today. Indigenous knowledge, history, and ideas lay encoded in a variety of oral texts, including the traditional knowledge forms of *whakataukī* and *‘ōlelo no‘eau*, or ancestral proverbial sayings, many of which have also been held through the written form (Pukui, 1983). As a part of the Indigenous language regeneration movements within both Aotearoa and Hawai‘i there has been a resurgence of knowledge drawn from traditional proverbial sayings such as expressed through *whakataukī* and *‘ōlelo no‘eau*. These knowledge forms provide us with guidance and understandings of the ways in which our ancestors viewed the world and our multiple relationships with all of our relations that we live beside.

The aim of this article is to examine these particular types of oral text, namely *‘ōlelo no‘eau* and *whakataukī*, for messages relating to the positioning of Māori and Hawaiian children and the relationship of that to traditional childrearing practices. This article explores *whakataukī* and *‘ōlelo no‘eau* as a means to bring forward knowledge gifted to us by our ancestors that can inform our contemporary experiences as Indigenous Peoples.

## ‘Ōlelo No‘eau

The most significant Hawaiian collection and only publication dedicated solely to *‘ōlelo no‘eau* is a compilation by renowned scholar Mary Kawena Pukui (1983). Since the age of 15, she predicted the criticalness of translating, collecting, and documenting the sayings and proverbs her *kūpuna* (elder) raised her with as a primary means of conveying a Hawaiian worldview to the generations to follow. The collection, *‘Ōlelo No‘eau, Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (Pukui, 1983), reveals a

comprehensive understanding of Hawaiian thought and livelihood that have remained relevant despite interference by colonial influence since Western contact in Hawai‘i.

‘Ōlelo No‘eau are often referred to as Hawaiian proverbs, aphorisms, or metaphors (Pukui, 1983). Pukui provides both the literal translation and the *kaona* or hidden meaning of each *‘ōlelo no‘eau*. The Hawaiian dictionary translates *kaona* as a concealed reference, or “words with double meaning that might bring good or bad fortune” (Pukui & Elbert 1986, p. 130). *Kaona* is the art of layering meanings and being skilled at using metaphors. *Kaona* is still used in everyday conversation, as well as in songs, chants, *bula* (Hawaiian dance form), and in stories and legends. The poetry of *kaona* is an element in most expressions of love, whether in song or flirtatious conversation. *Kaona* was also a way to further passionate political struggle in Hawaiian language newspapers, particularly around the protests against annexation (Silva, 2004). Most of the excerpts below of *‘ōlelo no‘eau* come from Pukui (1983). There are also a few that were authored by a modern practitioner with skills to weave the words into poetry.

### ‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Elevating Hawaiian Identity and Belonging

Connection to *‘ohana* (family) and the environment from a young age are important factors for overall wellbeing and Hawaiian identity. The *keiki* (children) soon become our *kūpuna*, the generation that will in turn pass on the knowledge and practices of our people. Practices such as *bānai* (to feed, to care for a child) are important to the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, understandings of wellbeing and identity. The centrality of which is highlighted in the following *ōlelo no‘eau*:

#1261<sup>i</sup>

“*I ulu no ka lālā i ke kumu*”

The branches grow because of the trunk (Pukui, 1983, p. 137).

Which can also be understood as meaning without our ancestors, we would not be here.

<sup>i</sup> Each *‘ōlelo no‘eau* entry in Pukui (1983) is numbered.

Many practices of old continue to flourish within ‘ohana and are being revived in other ‘ohana such as in the arts and customary living like child-rearing, fishing, planting, and relational and medicinal practices. More ‘ohana are reconnecting to their roots and finding place within their own cultural ways of being. In doing so, identity is being nourished.

#1251

“*I pa‘a i kona kupuna ‘a‘ole kakou e puka*”

Had our ancestress died in bearing our grandparent, we would not have come forth (Pukui, 1983, p. 136).

Said to remind a member of the family to respect the senior line, because they came first. Also expressed as *I pa‘a i kona Makua*.

#863

“*He ‘onipa‘a ka ‘oiā‘i‘ō*”

Truth is not changeable (Pukui, 1983, p. 94).

Drawing upon traditional knowledge as a means by which to provide guidance today is a key focus of these sayings which assert the notion that what was good for Native Hawaiians generations ago will continue to be good in contemporary times.

### **Aloha no nā Keiki - Love for the Children**

Many sayings are connected to love. Unconditional love for a child was existent and permeated society as seen in the excerpts below. The use of the word *pua* is often used in place for child. *Pua* (a flower or school of fish) denotes not only the beautiful, exquisite, and uniqueness of a child but also the pleasant fragrance flowers fill a place and memory with.

#1518

“*Ka ‘ōpu‘u pua i mōbala*”

A flower that began to unfold (Pukui, 1983, p. 164).

Which can be said of a baby

#575

“*He hi‘i alo ua milimili ‘ia i ke alo, ua ha‘awe ‘ia ma ke kua, ua lei ‘ia ma ka ‘ā‘i*”

A beloved one, fondled in the arms carried on the back, whose arms have gone about the neck as a lei (Pukui, 1983, p. 67).

Said of a beloved child.

#740

“*He lei pōina ‘ole ke keiki*”

A lei never forgotten is the beloved child (Pukui, 1983, p. 82).

#1438

“*Ka lei hā‘ule ‘ole, he keiki*”

A lei that is never cast aside is one’s child (Pukui, 1983, p. 156).

#333

“*E lei no au i ke aloha*”

I will wear your love as a wreath (Pukui, 1983, p. 41).

Which can also be understood as I will cherish your love as a beautiful adornment.

#2836

“*Ua ola loko i ke aloha*”

Love gives life within (Pukui, 1983, p. 311).

Love is imperative to one’s mental and physical welfare.

### **Pregnancy**

The nature, character, health, and appearance of the child was dependant on how the mother cared for herself during pregnancy. Food cravings were especially telling and were linked to the disposition of the soon to be born child (Fornander, 1996; Pukui, 1942).

#578

“*He hilu na ke ali‘i?*”

A hilu belonging to a chief (Pukui, 1983, p. 67).

When a pregnant woman longed for hilu fish, the child born to her would be a very quiet, well-behaved person. Because chiefs liked reserved, well-mannered people, such persons were often found in the royal courts and were referred to as the chief’s hilu fish.

#1007

“*Hilu ka i‘a, he i‘a no‘eno‘e*”

The fish is the hilu, an attractive one (Pukui, 1983, p. 108).

A quiet, well-behaved person. When a pregnant woman longed for hilu fish, the child born to her would be well-mannered, quiet, and unobtrusive.

“*Kau-na-maka*”

Rest the Eyes (Green & Beckwith, 1924, p. 231).

Should an expectant mother have a particular longing to see one of her friends, that friend will be specially loved by the child.

#1252

*“I pa‘a ke kino o ke keiki i ka lā‘au”*

That the body of the child be solidly built by the medicines (Pukui, 1983, p. 136).

A mother ate herbs during pregnancy and nursing for the sake of the baby’s health. The herbs were given to the child up to the age of twenty so that he would be healthy and strong through maturity and old age.

## Nurturing/Parenting

#450

*“Hānai ‘ia i ka poli o ka lima”*

Fed in the palm of the hand (Pukui, 1983, p. 54).

Said of a child reared with constant attention.

#688

*“He keiki mea kupuna”*

[It shows] that the child has a grandparent (Pukui, 1983, p. 77).

Said in admiration of a child whose grandparents show affection by making beautiful things for his use or compose songs and chants in his honour.

#1875

*“Ku i ka māna”*

Like the one from whom he received what he learned (Pukui, 1983, p. 202).

Said of a child who behaves like those who reared him. *Māna* is food masticated by an elder and conveyed to the mouth of a small child. The *haumāna* (pupil) receives knowledge from the mouth of his teacher.

#492

*“Haumanumanu ka ipu ‘ino‘ino”*

A misshapen gourd makes an ugly container (Pukui, 1983, p. 59).

Said of an ugly person. Also said in warning to a mother to be careful with the body of her baby—to mold it lest it be imperfect and ugly.

## On Wellbeing

Hawaiian wellbeing is having the ability to maintain and sustain a balance among physical, spiritual, psychic, and natural elements. Native Hawaiians long believed in the healing powers of the natural environments such as land, water, and natural resources from these environments. Native Hawaiians continue to have *mo‘olelo* or stories that denote certain places and living

elements that have healing powers and are relevant today (Miller, 2012). Intrinsic to wellbeing is having access to these environments and elements which have become increasingly challenging for some ‘ohana. The first excerpt below denotes the challenge. However, ‘ohana have become increasingly vigilant in restoring land, water, and access rights to continue to bring tradition and healthy practices to the forefront.

#2299

*“Na wāhine kia‘i alanui o Nu‘uanu”*

The women who guard the Nu‘uanu trail (Pukui, 1983, p. 251).

Hapu‘u and Kala‘ihauola were supernatural women whose stone forms guarded the Nu‘uanu trail near the gap. It was around Kala‘ihauola that the umbilical cords of babies were hidden to ensure their good health. When the new road over the Nu‘uanu Pali was made, these stones were destroyed.

#2489

*“Ola no i ka pua o ka ‘ilima”*

There is healing in the ‘ilima blossoms (Pukui, 1983, p. 272).

The ‘ilima blossom is one of the first medicines given to babies. It is a mild laxative. Hi‘iaka, goddess of medicine in Pele’s family, used ‘ilima.

#2178

*“Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua”*

Unfolded by the water are the faces of the flowers (Pukui, 1983, p. 237).

Flowers thrive where there is water, as thriving people are found where living conditions are good.

#1246

*“I ola no ke kino i ka mā‘ona ka ‘ōpū”*

The body enjoys health when the stomach is well filled (Pukui, 1983, p. 135).

Often said as supplication before a meal.

#891

*“He piko pau ‘iole”*

An umbilical cord taken by a rat (Pukui, 1983, p. 96).

A chronic thief. The umbilical cords of infants were taken to special places where the cords of other family members were kept for many generations. If a rat took a cord before it was hidden away safely, the child became a thief.

#2748

“Puna maka kōkala”

Puna of the eyelashes that curve upward like the thorns of the pandanus leaves (Pukui, 1983, p. 301).

The placenta of a newborn was buried under a pandanus tree so the child’s eyelashes would grow long like the pandanus thorns.

### The Role of Collective Childrearing: Hānai, Punahēle, Kūpuna

The term ‘ohana derives from the *kalo* plant, the main staple of physical sustenance for Native Hawaiians. The *kalo* plant also represents a spiritual and traditional connection for Native Hawaiians that explains the role of *kupuna* or grandparent, *makua* or parent, *keiki* or child. ‘*Oba*’ refers to the buds or offshoot of the parent plant. *Kalo* propagates itself, representing generational strength. In child-rearing practices, it was very common that the eldest or *punahēle* (favourite) grandchild would be *hānai* or raised by their *kūpuna*. Handy and Pukui (1972) share that

responsibility for the child’s diet and health, and for its proper informal and formal training rested generally with the grandparents, or, if and when a bright child was apprenticed to an expert, with the teacher, into whose household the child was taken as a member of the family (p. 90)

With a cultural lens, it makes perfect sense for the children to be raised by their grandparents or those of their grandparent’s generation as they were more experienced and wiser.

#2294

“Nau ke keiki, kūkae a na’au”

Yours is the child, excreta, intestines and all (Pukui, 1983, p. 250).

In giving a child to adoptive parents, the true parents warned that under no condition would they take the child back. To do so would be disastrous for the child. Recognition, love, and help might continue; but removal while the adoptive parents live — never.

#1175

“I ka hale no pau ke a’o ana”

Instructions are completed at home (Pukui, 1983, p. 128).

Do all of your teaching at home. First uttered by Pupuakea, half-brother of Lonoikamakahiki,

when his instructor advised him as they were preparing for battle. The instructor’s teaching was all done at home; from then on the warrior chief was on his own. Also directed toward parents who noisily scold their children in public.

#1232

“I maika’i ke kalo i ka ‘oha”

The goodness of the taro is judged by the young plant it produces (Pukui, 1983, p. 133).

Parents are often judged by the behaviour of their children.

#1295

“Ka hana a ka makua, o ka hana no ia a keiki”

What parents do, children will do (Pukui, 1983, p. 141).

#1922

“Ku no i ke ke’u”

Like his sire (Pukui, 1983, p. 206).

Like sire, like child.

#2662

“Pipili no ka pilali i ke kumu kuku”

The pilali gum sticks to the kukui tree (Pukui, 1983, p. 292).

Said of one who remains close to a loved one all the time, as a child may cling to the grandparent he loves.

#2769

“Ua ‘ai au i kana loa’u”

I have eaten of his gain (Pukui, 1983, p. 305).

Said with pride and affection by a parent or grandparent who is being cared for by the child he reared.

#337

“‘Elemakule kama ‘ole moe i ke ala”

An oldster who has never reared children sleeps by the roadside (Pukui, 1983, p. 41).

Caring for and rearing children results in being cared for in old age.

### Whakataukī/Whakatauākī

A number of generic works on whakataukī have been published over the years, including those of Grey (1857), McRae (1988) and, more recently, a comprehensive collection by Mead and Grove (2003). Genre or field-specific analyses of whakataukī have also been published in recent

years, which include the work of Wehi et al. (2013), on the relevance of whakataukī to traditional ecological knowledge relating to marine resources; and of Tuahine et al. (2016) on whakataukī associated with Māori astronomical knowledge, or more specifically, *Te Whānau Mārama* (Celestial Bodies). Another piece of work that is of particular significance to this paper is that of Metge and Jones (1995) on Māori proverbial sayings relating to *Te Pā Harakeke* (a native plant used for weaving; Pihama et al., 2015).

Whakataukī have been referred to variously as Māori proverbial sayings (Metge & Jones, 1995), ancestral sayings (Seed-Pihama, 2005), and also as *pēpeha* (Mead & Grove, 2003). While the nomenclature used can often infer different things, for the purpose of this article, we simply use the term whakataukī. Whakataukī are mostly short, pithy sayings that are reflective of people and the environment. Whakataukī are didactic by nature; that is, they have an instructive or educational purpose, and the origins of the whakataukī are not normally known. Another type of nomenclature relevant to this discussion is that of *whakataunākī*.

Whakataunākī are also instructive by nature, but vary in length and have a known author or source. The circumstances surrounding the coining of the whakataunākī are also known. For the purpose of this article, both types of ancestral saying will be referred to simply as whakataukī. The function and purpose of whakataukī and whakataunākī is to encapsulate the traditional wisdom of our ancestors. They advise, inform, and give directions on customary practices in a concise way that remains relevant to contemporary times. We have a saying in the Māori world, “*he iti te kupu, he nui te kōrero*”, which means that whilst there may be few words the message is profound. That is the intent and nature of whakataukī.

### Whakapapa: Maintaining Identity and Belonging

The importance of maintaining links, of knowing one’s *whakapapa* (genealogy), remaining connected to one’s identity and having a sense of belonging are essential elements to the wellbeing of children. A range of whakataukī refer to maintaining *whānau* (family), *hapū* (subtribe[s]), and *iwi* (tribe[s]) relationships in order to stand tall as a Māori person.

*Hokia ki tō ūkaipō.*

Return to your place of origin.

The whakataukī *hokia ki tō ūkaipō* speaks to the significance of place for Māori. The *ūkaipō* is the place where you were fed by the breast of your mother and is symbolic of the intimate relationship that Māori have to ancestral lands. This whakataukī advocates returning to one’s *ūkaipō* in order to maintain that connection. Failure to do so will undoubtedly impact on future generations, who in time may perhaps never return to their roots (W. Milroy, personal communication, May 31, 2013).

*Mā ngā pakiaka e ti ai te rākau.*

With strong roots a tree will stand.

The metaphor of a *rākau* (tree) and its *pakiaka* (roots) is also used to elucidate the importance of *whanaungatanga*, our relationships with each other and with our kin. The roots, in this context, are one’s links to whānau, hapū, and iwi (W. Milroy, personal communication, May 31, 2013). Knowledge of one’s whakapapa and maintenance of whanaungatanga ensures a strong sense of belonging and a strong foundation on which one can stand as a person. Not knowing who you are, and not having any ties to your whānau, hapū, and iwi is equivalent to a tree having no roots and being unable to stand.

*Tamaiti piri poho, he aroha whāereere.*

A mother’s love, a breast-clinging child.

A common variation of this whakataukī is, “*he aroha whāereere, he pōtiki piri poho*” (Ihaka, 1957, p. 42). While the reference here is to the bond between mother and child, it is also possible to interpret this whakataukī in a broader sense. When a child is given love and attention by their parents, they will be more likely to respect the values of their parents and to remain close to them throughout their life (Ministry of Justice, 2001; Pihama et al., 2015).

### Manaakitanga: Nurturing

In Māori society, a child is considered to be like a seed that must be nurtured and fostered so that it may develop and grow well. The time that we have to nurture and raise our children is limited. Nurturing love in future generations is perhaps the most significant role of a parent. A number of whakataukī stress the importance of caring for our children and are often embedded with cautionary messages. In some cases, an antithesis

is also provided to highlight the point. All of the examples given use the metaphor of a plant as a symbol for a child.

*Kotahi te kākano, he nui ngā hua o te rākau.*

A tree comes from one seed, but bears many fruit.

The *hua*, or fruits, referred to in this whakataukī are children, while the *kākano*, or seed, refers to the parent(s). This Whakataukī is used as praise for producing an abundance of children. While having many children is seen as something positive, the way in which they are treated is just as important. Like a young plant, children require the right conditions to thrive, and failure to tend to their needs may be catastrophic. In the same vein, neglecting to weed around the base of a young plant and ensuring that the roots are well cared for will affect the development of the tree and its fruit (W. Milroy, personal communication, May 31, 2013). However, if the plant is properly tended, it is much more likely to flourish. A whakataukī often used in this context is the following

*Parapara waerea a ururua, kia tūpu whakaritorito te tūpu o te harakeke.*

Clear away the overgrowth, so that the flax bush will put forth many new shoots.

Metge and Jones (1995) provide an in-depth explanation for this whakataukī in their article on Māori proverbial sayings:

This saying makes immediate sense as a piece of horticultural advice: we all know that plants grow best when we clear away the weeds that compete for space and nourishment. But when we follow out the analogy between flax bush and whānau, a deeper meaning becomes apparent. If families, large and small, are to fulfil their functions effectively, we must cultivate them carefully, ensuring they have the room and resources they need for continuing growth. (p. 4)

A number of other whakataukī also emphasise the importance of practising *manaakitanga* (nurturing), such as the following from Mead and Grove (2001)

*“Nā te moa i takahi te rātā”.*

The rātā was trampled by the moa (p. 317)

This whakataukī refers to a young tree or sapling that has just begun to grow and sprout up out of the earth when it is trampled by a moa. The roots remain in the ground, but the tree itself lies in the manner in which it was trampled, continuing to

grow, but growing crooked. The same can be said for a child. If you trample on or repress a child, breaking its spirit, the child will grow crooked. What is implied in this whakataukī is that behavioural problems exhibited in a child are a result of early influences in their life—the child was not looked after properly, the child was not instructed properly, and eventually they get into trouble. This being said such behaviour is not seen as being the child’s fault, but rather the fault of the parents and of the whānau (W. Milroy, personal communication, May 31, 2013). Further interpretation indicates that it also relates to the importance of providing appropriate models of conduct early on in life.

*Te piko o te rākau, tērā te tīpu o te māhuri.*

As the tree is bent, so shall it grow.

The metaphor of a young tree, or *māhuri*, is also used in this whakataukī to stress the importance of nurturing and guidance in the early stages of one’s life. Just as a young tree is malleable and easily moulded, so too is a child. In the words of the whakataukī, *te piko o te rākau, tērā te tīpu o te māhuri*, as the twig is bent, so shall the tree grow. How the tree develops and what it is able to be used for later on in life will depend on how it is moulded when it is young.

If you want a *tokotoko* (walking stick), then the tree must be shaped when it is still young and growing. If it is a *taiaha* (long wooden weapon) you want, then it must be grown in a specific way (H. Tai Tin, personal communication, 2007). As important, however, as the way the tree is shaped, is how you nurture it. If a tree isn’t planted and tended well, it will become distorted, but if you want it to grow well and healthy, then it is up to you to ensure that happens. Thus, for the full potential of a child to be realised, the appropriate care needs to be provided by parents and whānau.

## Matua Rautia: Collective Parenting

*Matua rautia.*

Raise your children collectively.

This whakataukī refers to the nature of parenting in the Māori world. If we analyse the words *matua rautia*, its literal meaning is to have hundreds of parents or *mātua*. Encapsulated in these few words is the philosophy that raising a child is not an individual endeavour, but rather a job for the many. It requires a whānau, or a community-based approach.

When a child is raised collectively by community, it builds their confidence. They know who they are; they know who their relatives are. They know about the nature of reciprocity and about meeting one's obligations to others because it is a part of the culture that they grow up with. A communal approach to parenting not only supports and bolsters the confidence of the child but also provides a great deal of support and relief for the parents. As a child, the entire whānau would be there to guide and instruct you, not just your parents. Your older siblings, uncles, and aunts would advise you and tell you if you should not do something (W. Milroy, personal communication, May 31, 2013).

A similar whakataukī, in the context of childrearing, is

*Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari taku toa he toa takimano.*

My strength is not mine alone but the strength of many.

Once again, this whakataukī emphasises that it's not one person's sole responsibility to raise a child, but rather it is a collective responsibility. What this also means is that the collective strength that comes from the sharing of child-rearing responsibilities with others ensures not only the wellbeing of the children but also the wellbeing of parents by relieving them of unnecessary burden.

### **Whakatika: Supporting Appropriate Behaviour**

In analysing whakataukī for this article, one thing that became apparent was the dearth of sayings in te reo Māori with any connotation of violence. Sayings in English used to promote physical violence against children in the nineteenth century and beyond, like *spare the rod and spoil the child* have no equivalent in Māori. Instead, the whakataukī relating to correcting bad or inappropriate behaviour in the Māori world infer thoughtful and compassionate practices aimed at making a child more cognizant of their actions.

*Kia ora ko te mā, kia mate ko te kino.*

May good prevail over that which is harmful.

In regulating the behaviour of a child, whakataukī such as the above indicate that any action taken must come from a place of kindness and integrity, regardless of the feelings that we have as adults. While there are times when we may be angry with our children, to react violently can cause great

harm to both the physical and spiritual wellbeing of a child.

*Tamaiti ākona ki te kāinga, tū ana ki te marae, tan ana.*

A child who learns at home stands on the marae with dignity.

The modelling of appropriate behaviour and values in the home also helps to ensure positive outcomes later on in life. Providing appropriate guidance and instruction while always being compassionate ensures that a child knows how to conduct themselves in the world around them.

*Waiho mā te whakamā e patu.*

Embarrassment is punishment enough.

A number of whakataukī indicate that the behaviour of children was regulated by developing a sense of mindfulness about the consequences of one's actions. Such is the case with this particular whakataukī, *waiho mā te whakamā hei patu*. Rather than advocating for physical punishment, this whakataukī implies that the embarrassment felt by someone who has done wrong can be more than enough to dissuade them from such action again. This is especially true when one is aware that in the Māori world a wrong committed by an individual is seen as the fault of the collective; thus the saying, *hē o te kotahi, hē o te katoa*, the wrongdoing of one belongs to everyone. Knowing that your actions reflect badly on your entire whānau and hapū, and cause them shame is a much more potent deterrent to negative or inappropriate behaviour than a notion of individual responsibility.

Another form of supporting children to make good decisions in regards to their actions and behaviour are whakataukī which operate as *kōrero whakatupato* or warnings. These appear to be used in a similar way, that is, to encourage children to be mindful of their actions.

*Kia mahara ki a Rona.*

Remember Rona.

Attention is drawn here to the *pūrākau*, or story, about Rona and the moon. One night, Rona went out to fetch water and tripped on the root of a tree when the moon hid behind the clouds. She cursed at the moon and was taken away for her transgression. A variation of this Whakataukī is *kia mahara ki te hē o Rona* - "let the sin of Rona be remembered" (Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 213). Both versions allude to the fact that one must always be careful of what one does.

## Conclusion

Recognition of Hawaiian culture-based pedagogy in schools, community, and homes is prevailing. Old practices are understood, relevant, and are being re-learned. Looking to the past for answers is no longer odd; instead, it has become mainstream in almost all disciplines, formal and informal. Having three generations living under one roof in Hawai'i can no longer be viewed as an economic reality alone; in fact, it brings *wai wai* or richness to the 'ohana.

The lessons we gain from re-discovering and applying ancestral knowledge are both invaluable and necessary. These 'ōlelo no'eau are a small but very much empowering sample of Hawaiian worldview, perspective, and lifestyle. We live in a time where we are at the pivotal point of bringing forth life that honours our very existence. *Mai ka hikina a ka lā i Kumukahi a ka melona a ka lā i Lehua*, from sunrise to sunset or from birth to death - may our Kūpuna continue to enlighten us.

Within the repertoire of whakataukī outlined here, fundamental beliefs, values, and practices relating to Te Pā Harakeke have been carefully embedded in the language of our ancestors. In some cases, accessing the cultural understandings inherent within these whakataukī has been fairly straight forward, in others it has been a bit more challenging. Unpacking the messages inherent within these whakataukī provides us with a rare insight into a way of being and a way of living that has much to offer us in the troubled times in which we live today.

While the whakataukī in this article are by no means exhaustive, they do however give us some useful examples which demonstrate not only the value of children in the Māori world but also provide a number of guiding principles to ensure the wellbeing of both our *tamariki* (children) and Te Pā Harakeke in the decades to come.

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