

SOCIOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CRITICAL INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY OF PLACE: PREPARING NATIVE HAWAIIAN YOUNG ADULTS TO BECOME CHANGE AGENTS

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Native Hawaiian young adults face challenging sociopolitical conditions. It is necessary to involve them in critically understanding their environment and encourage them to take action. This article highlights the growing literature linking health disparities to the construct of place. It examines critical indigenous pedagogy of place (CIPP) as a method that encourages young adults to question the social inequalities that exist in their communities with a focus on Native Hawaiian epistemology. Data are drawn from a case study in rural Hawai'i of a community-based, youth-run organic farm. A content analysis of the interviews was conducted using critical indigenous qualitative research to build a working conceptual model of CIPP. Findings indicate that CIPP can serve as a major conduit to the sociopolitical development of Native Hawaiian youth as it helps them become change agents in their communities.

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E ala e. E ala e. Rise up. Rise up. Rise for justice.
 —Lyrics in a song by Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole

Native Hawaiian youth and young adults¹ face an array of social disparities. They have the highest rates of teen pregnancy, school suspensions, substance abuse, and juvenile arrests (Gao & Perrone, 2004; Pearson, 2004; Sonoda, 2008; Stannard, 2008; Young, 2005). They live in impoverished communities (Young, 2005) that offer poor educational opportunities and have high risk for food insecurity² in Hawai‘i (Baker et al., 2001). Moreover, Native Hawaiians have the highest rates in Hawai‘i of preventable diseases due to obesity, such as diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1989, 2001, as cited in Else, 2004; Stannard, 2008; Young, 2005).

The disparities Native Hawaiians face are compounded by their displacement in their homeland and the threat of their survival as indigenous people or Kānaka Maoli (true or real people). As Trask (2000b) indicated, “The struggle is not for personal or group identity but for land, government, and international status as recognized nation” (p. 6). She further emphasized that the “terrain of battle now involves control of lands and natural resources, including water and subsurface mineral” (p. 6). The dispossession of land is a major factor affecting health and wellness for Native Hawaiians (Marshall, 1999) as well as ongoing legal challenges to Native Hawaiian rights and entitlements by non-Hawaiians (Okamura 2008; Watson 2006).

To be healthy and well under such sociopolitical conditions, Native Hawaiian youth and young adults need an alternative approach to enhance their well-being that includes personal, socioeconomic, cultural, spiritual, and political domains. Exclusively focusing on individual risk factors, problem behaviors, and their consequences (Dryfoos, 1990; Zimmerman, Ramirez-Valles, & Maton, 1999) in youth development and health potentially treats youth as “the problem” and further perpetuates a “victim-blaming” mentality (Levine, Perkins, & Perkins, 2005, p. 430). It further ignores the sociopolitical understanding and competencies necessary for building collective consciousness toward inequities, which can promote wellness through the pursuit of social justice. More proactive, community-based approaches, such as critical indigenous pedagogy of place (CIPP), that incorporate youth organizing and sociopolitical development (Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Watts,

Griffith, & Abdul-Adil, 1999; Watts & Guessous, 2006; Watts, Williams, & Jagers, 2003) are needed to address root problems of oppression and inequality and to promote both individual and collective empowerment.

This article examines the potential of CIPP as a facilitative tool for encouraging Native Hawaiian young adults to recognize and confront existing inequalities in their community. With a focus on Native Hawaiian epistemology, the study investigates the function or role of a rural, community-based youth program in promoting sociopolitical development among Native Hawaiian young adults and documents program efforts to create social change through CIPP. A series of key research questions guide this work. What are the key functions or roles of the youth program related to CIPP that encourage critical consciousness of oppression and inequalities? What are the processes related to CIPP that promote learning about political, social, and economic contradictions? And, what other program-related outcomes are linked to the use of CIPP?

Results from the study indicate that the program provided access and engagement of critical ideas, social networks, and learning experiences related to CIPP. Findings also demonstrate the potential of CIPP to help Native Hawaiian young adults achieve the following learning outcomes: (a) identify the disparities that exist in their community, (b) critically explore the complexity of oppression and systemic inequalities related to health, (c) acquire a commitment to serve the community while cultivating a sense of kuleana (responsibility), and (d) participate in a knowledge-action-reflection cycle of critical praxis. Data suggest that CIPP can serve as a conduit to sociopolitical development among Native Hawaiian youth. Through its emphasis on power relations, critical consciousness, native epistemology, and attachment to place, CIPP has promise to build social change agents among Native Hawaiian youth.

A FRAMEWORK FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY OF PLACE

Sociopolitical Development

Sociopolitical development refers to “the psychological process that leads to and supports social and political action” (Watts et al., 1999, p. 256). It “emphasizes an understanding of the cultural and political forces that shape one’s status in society” and is used “to describe a process of growth in a person’s knowledge, analytical skills, emotional faculties, and capacity for action in political and social systems” (Watts et al., 2003, p. 188). Sociopolitical development offers a conceptual framework for youth—in particular, minority youth—to recognize their positionality in society and redefine themselves in affirmative ways (Watts et al., 1999). As such, sociopolitical development encourages youth to engage in community activism and builds capacity in them to envision and recreate a just society (Watts et al., 2003).

The sociopolitical development of youth contains three building blocks: (a) a critical consciousness of authority and power, (b) a sense of agency, and (c) a focus on commitment and action as key outcomes (Watts & Guessous, 2006). A critical consciousness is central to sociopolitical development because it helps youth make connections between what is happening in their lives to larger sociopolitical forces, thus contextualizing the issues relevant to them. A sense of agency emerges when youth take action on social issues they believe they can influence (Watts & Guessous, 2006). In sociopolitical development, a sense of agency is conceptualized as collective efficacy, or a shared experience whereby a community pulls together to realize common aspirations (Bandura, 2001; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997).³

In the sociopolitical development model, once critical consciousness and a sense of agency interplay, action or praxis can arise. At higher stages of development, a change in thinking as well as action often occurs (Watts et al., 1999). Praxis informs societal involvement and a sense of agency via reflection and the continuous application of insights. As such, an action-reflection cycle is central to sociopolitical development (Freire, 1970/1995). Likewise, the role youth play in a project or activity, including the involvement of their voice, is critical. Voice embodies real responsibilities, challenging tasks, active participation in planning the project, and being part of important decisions (Morgan & Streb, 2001). Generally, to confront

oppression effectively, youth must deconstruct the ideological foundations of oppression and then develop voice through their commitment and active role in challenging overt societal abuses and deprivations (Watts et al., 2003).

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is a means to sociopolitical development as they overlap in the processes of decolonization, conscientization, and praxis. Like sociopolitical development, critical pedagogy provides a venue for understanding systemic injustices and offers an outlet for youth and young adults to further examine their positionalities in society. Rooted in the discourse of critical theory (Freire, 1970/1995; McLaren & Giroux, 1990), critical pedagogy helps youth to challenge the assumptions, practices, and outcomes of the dominant culture. Critical pedagogy raises questions about inequalities of power, attempts to dispell the false myths of opportunities and merit, and challenges the way dominant belief systems are internalized and deemed as hegemonic (Burbules & Berk, 1999). In this context, learning about healthy lifestyles becomes a sociopolitical process (Freire, 1970/1995; McLaren & Giroux, 1990).


Critical pedagogy begins with a recognition that learners exist within a cultural context (Freire, 1970/1995). *Situationality*, a term coined by Freire, suggests that a given situation has spatial, geographical, contextual, and cultural dimensions (Fullilove, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Massey, 1994; Smith, 1999; Tuan, 1977). Reflection on one's situation often corresponds to one's relationship to a political place through *decolonization* (Keith & Pile, 1993). Decolonization involves learning to recognize disruptions and injury and addressing their colonial causes.⁴ It is a "process of cultural and historical liberation; an act of confrontation with a dominant system of thought" (hooks, 1992, p. 1). Decolonization's major intent is to take apart the story, reveal underlying texts, and give voice to things that are often known intuitively (Smith, 1999, p. 3). It helps one to "come to know the past" and to "hold alternative histories" and "knowledges" (Smith, 1999, p. 34). *Conscientization* and *praxis*⁵ are also core elements of critical pedagogy and provide opportunities for growth, leadership development, and participation in sociopolitical movements toward health and well-being (Burbules & Berk, 1999; Freire, 1970/1995; Giroux & Giroux, 2008; Jaramillo & McLaren, 2008).

Place and Well-Being

There is a growing literature linking health and well-being to the construct of place (Fullilove, 1996; Gieryn, 2000; Kawachi, 1999; Kearns, 1993; Kelly, 2003; Wind, Sickel, & Wright, 2004). Social context has been identified as an important factor to health, but prior research has focused mainly on the concept of community (i.e., geographic place). As such, researchers have overlooked the social, psychological, and cultural dimensions of geographic place that capture the deep symbolic meaning people have for the areas in which they live (MacIntyre, Ellaway, & Cummins, 2002; Wilson, 2003; Zapf, 2003). Building on the work of John Agnew (1987) in which he turned *space into place* as a meaning-filled location, this article pays particular attention to the social, psychological, and cultural dimensions of place. At the same time, I approach place and place-making with attention to the dynamics of power, oppressive forces, colonial structures, and historical trauma (Duran & Duran, 1995; Trask, 1993; Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

The relationship between health and place among indigenous peoples tends to be overlooked by the helping professions.⁶ Place is not only a site of social relationships and positioning; a cosmological and metaphysical relationship with the land also serves as a reference point for health and well-being (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). The notion of land as both place and therapeutic landscape (Wilson, 2003; Zapf, 2005) can activate healing through the use of cultural symbols (Wilson, 2003).⁷ For Native Hawaiian communities, health and wellness are inextricably tied to land; more specifically, the colonial experiences of dispossession and oppression are related to the *loss* of land, traditional knowledge, language, and culture (McMullin, 2005; Trask, 1993). Thus, here I refer to place as an embodiment of the processes of critical consciousness of historical trauma of one's community and as community knowledge on how to live well and healthy in one's environment. I attempt to set place as a geographical setting for political action and to relate its changing character to the political outlook it produces (Agnew, 1987) among youth and young adults in relation to wellness.

FIGURE 1 Critical indigenous pedagogy of place



Critical Pedagogy (CP)	CP is an instructional method rooted in critical theory challenging dominant culture and conventional ways of learning, and understanding systemic injustices
Critical Pedagogy of Place (CPP)	CPP is CP connected to place, environment, and social context
Critical Indigenous Pedagogy of Place (CIPP)	CIPP is CPP rooted in Native epistemology, connection to place, and the practices and responsibilities nurtured through place

Critical Indigenous Pedagogy of Place

CIPP builds on the literature of critical pedagogy, the concept of place, and indigenous (in this case, Native Hawaiian) studies. I suggest that it is through CIPP that sociopolitical development can become tangible and practical for Native Hawaiian youth and young adults. Because the literature on sociopolitical development does not address place and culture, CIPP provides a tool (i.e., praxis) for engaging those issues through indigenous epistemology (see Figure 1). CIPP focuses not only on community liberation (Lee, 2006; Trask, 1993) but also on rootedness or genealogy and spirituality (Meyer, 2001, 2003). CIPP brings sociopolitical development to what Fanon (1963, as cited in Watts et al., 2003, pp. 186–187) referred to as “true liberation” that “stem[s] from the indigenous culture of the oppressed with a focus on creating new unified beings (i.e., the liberated) and new institutions that reflect these changes.” CIPP also makes the concepts of empowerment specific to a cultural group and its historical experiences, and most importantly, makes empowerment ecologically valid and credible to a community knowledge base. Thus, CIPP provides a culture- and place-specific means to achieve sociopolitical development.

Critical pedagogy of place (CPP) is connected to experiential learning, constructivism, and a variety of specialized educational methods (e.g., ecological, bioregional, democratic, multicultural, and community-based education; Gruenewald, 2003a, 2003b). It is concerned with the context and the value of learning from and nurturing of specific places, communities, or regions. CPP conceptualizes culture as always nested in ecological systems (Bowers, 2001). It urges that learning about place can help youth engage and understand their environment through

experiential and intergenerational learning that is relevant and, most importantly, contributes to community well-being (Gruenewald, 2002; Theobald & Curtiss, 2000). Furthermore, CPP helps youth understand how place becomes politicized via dynamics of power and domination (D. Harvey, 1996; Massey, 1994; Soja, 1989).

CPP aims (a) “to identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (e.g., decolonization)” and (b) “to identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments (i.e., reinhabitation)” (Gruenewald, 2003b, p. 9). Reinhabitation requires learning to live well, socially and ecologically, in a geographic place that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation (Berg & Dasmann, 1990). It involves reeducating people by building intimate, organic, and mutually nurturing relationships with a place, which requires detailed knowledge, the capacity for observation, and a sense of care and rootedness (Orr, 1992). Reinhabitation is the process of reconnecting through collective memory and recovering the historic truths that were erased as a result of colonialism. As part of critical consciousness, reinhabitation helps in recovering oneself and the strengths of one’s communities by building on economic and political resources (Absolon & Willett, 2005). CPP encourages agency—the ability of youth and their communities to be the lived experts and cultivate the capacity to recover knowledge about where they live (Potts & Brown, 2005). CPP also helps youth address the specificities of the experiences, problems, languages, and histories that communities rely on to construct a narrative of collective identity, empowerment, and transformation and to move toward social justice (McLaren & Giroux, 1990). Most important, it helps youth strive for self-determination and liberation as oppressive political structures are disrupted (Trask, 2000a).

A CASE STUDY OF THE HAWAI‘I FARM

This case study focuses on a youth-run, organic-farm program (“the Farm”) that targets Native Hawaiian and other Asian Pacific Islander (API) youth in a rural community in Hawai‘i. It was part of a larger national study of youth programs across the United States funded by the Ford Foundation between 2004 and 2006. Formed in 2000, the youth program is part of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nongovernmental community development organization. The overarching goal of the parent

organization is to empower the rural community to move toward self-sufficiency, especially around the issue of food security.⁸ In response to this particular issue, the founders of the parent organization characterize the youth program as a social movement to develop a comprehensive plan and sustainable local food system by educating youth; fighting hunger; improving health, nutrition, and wellness; and being part of the expanding organic agricultural industry. To meet its mission, the program formed a holistic and interconnected economic development and educational project. Youth and young adults are recruited to the program primarily through word of mouth or local advertisement.

The Farm's Role in Promoting Critical Praxis Through CIPP

A study done by Ginwright and Cammarota (2007) indicates that community-based organizations can facilitate a process of critical civic praxis through engagement with ideas, social networks, and experiences. Community-based organizations can provide a place for youth to engage in community alliances and intergenerational networks and opportunities to participate in critiquing information and ideas in the political process. They also can provide critical knowledge to community members and offer them ways to respond to pressing community problems. When a process of critical praxis is provided, youth can effectively respond to community problems or social issues collectively (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007).

The Farm provides youth activities related to managing and running the youth-run organic farm, participating in cultural-based workshops and leadership and entrepreneurial training, and administering the community organic agricultural center. Specifically, when managing the youth-run organic farm, youth produce and sell over 25 different varieties of high-quality organic fruits and vegetables. In addition to farmers' markets, their vendors include an array of local grocery stores, restaurants, and hotels. Additionally, youth highlight the Farm's produce at various community fairs. Young adults at the Farm also plan and implement hands-on, culturally based workshops at the intermediate school. These workshops promote youth and families to use traditional Hawaiian agricultural and food practices. Participants also coordinate the youth-run organic garden at the local high school, which enables hands-on study of contemporary agricultural science in the context of traditional Hawaiian culture and knowledge. More important, young adults participate in a leadership training program and paid internships that provide them with hands-on, entrepreneurial, agricultural, and educational

experience through a community–university partnership that allows them to earn an Associate of Arts degree from a local community college. Lastly, participants help administer the Community Organic Agricultural Center, which is a partnership between the local community college and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This center establishes and expands expertise in the field of tropical organic agriculture. Generally, youth and young adults involved in the program activities are provided with opportunities to volunteer at organizational sponsored events and participate in community-based conferences related to sustainability, food security, and Hawaiian culture.

Sample and Data Collection

To address the research questions, the case study included an analysis of in-depth, open-ended interviews with 17 participants: eight young adults, four youth staff members, two parents, one board member, one person who was both a parent and a board member, and one community advocate/kupuna (elder) who eventually became a board member. All the young adults were male except for one and ranged in age from 18 to 21 years. All identified themselves as part-Hawaiian, except one person who self-identified as Samoan. Three staff members were male, one was female; all ranged in age from 28 to 49 years. Two staff members were part-Hawaiian, one self-identified as half-Japanese and half-Jewish–Hungarian, and the other as Caucasian from New Zealand. Among the parents, board members, and community advocate, four were female and one was male. They ranged in age from 35 to 55 years and all self-identified as part-Hawaiian. Pseudonyms were assigned to all individuals (see Appendix A). Data also included an analysis of newspaper articles and other online materials about the youth program.

Interview Guide and Procedure

The in-depth, open-ended interview⁹ covered topics about the youth program: (a) its activities, (b) the youth and parents or community members involved in the program, (c) the neighborhood or community and its role in the youth program, (d) resources of the youth program, and (e) what youth take away from their involvement in the program. The interview protocol contained 26 questions with prompts and was administered primarily via telephone. Five interviews were administered in-person because of the difficulties of recruiting and retaining the study participants. Each interview lasted about 1 hour and was subsequently transcribed and coded.

Content Analysis

The content of the interview transcripts and text materials was analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive techniques aimed at building a working model. Open and axial coding, constant comparison, and theoretical sampling procedures from an interpretive method called *grounded theory* were used to construct categories and identify major relationships in the analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Building on a symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective (Hollander & Howard, 2000; Stryker, 1987), I used a critical indigenous interpretive stance (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; L. Harvey, 1992) to interpret the participants' implicit and explicit meanings and experiential views on their contexts.

The content was explored with qualitative data analysis software (i.e., Atlas) to identify and compare ideas. Categorical codes were established, and impressions and interpretation of the data were recorded in memos.¹⁰ My interpretation of the data included critical self-reflexivity (Braidotti, 2002, as cited in herising, 2005; see also Kimpson, 2005)¹¹ of my past community organizing and research work with Native Hawaiian and other API youth and young adults in Hawai'i. As a critical researcher, I strive to align my research methodology with the purpose of emancipation: knowledge for progress (Kovach, 2005). Additionally, the interpretation of data was validated by sharing the findings with the youth program's participants (e.g., program director, youth and young adults, and others) or individuals who worked with the target population. Other methods, such as prolonged engagement and data triangulation, were used to ensure the credibility of the findings (Drisko, 1997).

RESULTS

The study presents a working conceptual model of CIPP and describes sociopolitical development among Native Hawaiian young adults. Although the program does not call it as such, it implemented activities that align closely with CIPP. Findings indicate that the Farm capitalized on the potential of CIPP to help Native Hawaiian young adults by providing access to and engagement with critical ideas related to food security, sustainability and health, relevant social networks, and learning experiences otherwise not available for Native Hawaiian youth and young

adults (see Figure 2). Specifically, the Farm facilitated the following learning outcomes for participants: (a) identify the disparities that exist in their community, (b) critically explore the complexity of oppression and systemic inequalities related to health, (c) acquire a commitment to serve the community and instill a sense of kuleana, and (d) participate in a knowledge-action-reflection cycle of critical praxis (see Figure 3). The Farm provided a real-life arena to help Native Hawaiian youth and young adults to develop sociopolitical knowledge and skills through CIPP. Appendix B illustrates how the Farm functioned as a place for Native Hawaiian young adults to achieve these four learning outcomes.

FIGURE 2 Role and function of the Farm in administering critical indigenous pedagogy of place (CIPP)

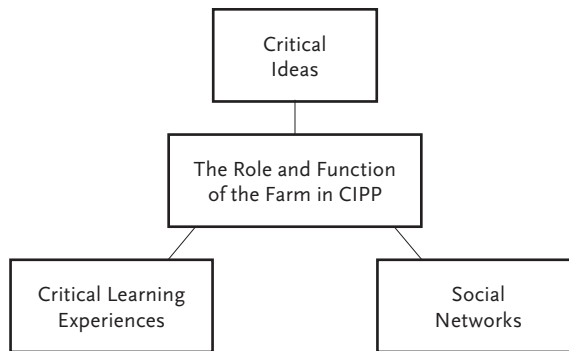
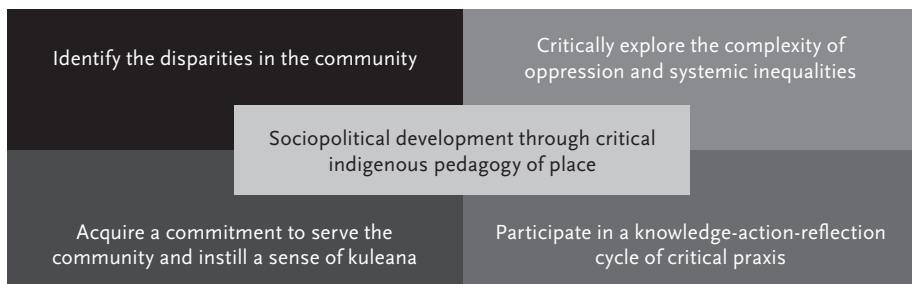


FIGURE 3 The potential of critical indigenous pedagogy of place to build sociopolitical development



Identify the Disparities That Exist in the Community Through the Food Movement

Young adults who participated in the Farm recognized the disparities and social issues that existed in their community, mostly in the lack of education and related opportunities embedded in place. For example, Leilani, a female young adult, explained:

I believe that youth here have a reputation of getting into fights and taking drugs. There's some lack of opportunities, especially educational, because we have low SAT scores and high dropout rates, but it's being changed. I've seen some changes in school now. Even though we lack some part of education, we have other kinds of education we're high in. We are high in media production and oceanography. There [are] things, like math and science and English, we're pretty low in. The teachers need to be doing their job. People in the community lack education and opportunities to go out and do things on their own. It's hard, because we're so far away from everything [resources]. Lots of people don't have cars, so we have to take the bus. So, we have to take the initiative to go out and do something for ourselves.

Leilani identified not only the stereotypes that exist among youth from this specific community but also the lack of educational opportunities for youth and basic resources such as transportation. Kamalu, a male young adult, added:

I think that growing up in [this community], you're kind of limited to certain options, just education-wise alone. Whereas with someone who has grown up in [a more privileged urban or suburban part of Hawai'i] would have everything kind of opened up to them with all kinds of possibilities. But down here, you pretty much have an 80% possibility to fail.

In addition to the lack of educational opportunities, the lack of quality jobs was another form of disparity that Keola, a male young adult, identified:

The opportunities that we have over here [in this community] are not as great as on the [U.S.] mainland. Like technology. When I compare the opportunities on the [U.S.] mainland to here, what I see and what I learn is that there's a lot of colleges, and a lot [of] opportunities to get jobs right after college, and a lot [of] work on the mainland. Hawai'i is like a chain of islands that you can just run to vacation on. The jobs here are pretty much limited. With all the population we have, we just don't have a lot of jobs. Our jobs could probably last maybe 10 years, and then the jobs run out, and you are going [to] be unemployed...you will have to move from the place you grew up all your life to get a job.

Although young adults recognized these disparities, the leaders or founders of the Farm purposely framed them as part of a larger social movement they call the *food sovereignty movement*. Participants of the Farm were encouraged to critique Hawai'i's dependence on imported produce and fast-food chains and to assess high rates of obesity and diabetes in the community. One activity that facilitated such a critique was a mapping exercise of the existing food sources in the community. Young adults recognized the abundance of fast-food chains and the lack of access to healthy, locally grown food.

The Farm purposely linked disparate indicators such as educational attainment, health (e.g., chronic diseases), substance use, homelessness, and other negative behaviors to the loss of culture and history. For example, Ian, a Caucasian male and director of the Farm, explained in the following way:

We encourage kids to look at culture and the history of this place through both a Western and Hawaiian sense of the truth. So that way at least we are looking at agriculture and community security all the time. For example, 90% of our fresh vegetables and other things are being imported now. We emphasize that this was not always the case. Ships were

coming here before the Western contact, but some people lived pretty self-sufficiently. I know it may be romantic to say that we can get to be 100% self-sufficient, and that is not really our goal. But it's important for youth to understand that their ancestors had it going on. Their ancestors might have had it tough, but they were industrious and smart and able to take care of their community. So it's real important for us to know our history.

While the young adults recognized many of these disparities in their community, the Farm provided a place for them to unpack and critique the structural forces that shape and maintain them. The Farm promoted intergenerational discussions on social issues among youth and various community members (e.g., community kūpuna, food sovereignty advocates) through conference workshops. Observations and personal narratives such as the ones cited earlier were highlighted in discussions. Moreover, Farm-sponsored conferences encouraged community members, farmers, professors, scientists, and traditional practitioners from all walks of life to build on their personal and collective relationships with the 'āina (land) and each other. The active sharing and comparison of their stories and experiences drew further awareness of existing disparities.

Critically Explore the Complexity of Oppression and Systemic Inequalities

The Farm provided the youth and young adults with the opportunity to gain awareness of the injustices related to health and wellness within their community. Many youth found an outlet to talk about these injustices through weekly workshops, side conversations as they worked, or workshops and gatherings organized by the Farm. The process of critically exploring these injustices was facilitated through group discussions. As Leilani observed:

There's a lot of trouble going on. A lot of drugs, abuse, [and] hunger going on. A lot of sickness, because of the food that has been put out.... The community has potential, because there's a lot of land, fish, veggies and livestock. Our community should be sustainable, but it's not because there's imported stuff. The question is why. The community needs a lot of education.

Kawika, another male young adult, made the following comment:

Now people need to be educated, because people drop out of school at a young age. It's pretty bad here; there's lots of crime. Drugs are a big power over here. The cops try their best, but they can't do that much. The social structure is not good here. The program has showed me that there's more stuff out there. It has taught me how to talk to people and that there [are] good things—being healthy, being respectful to others—and that there's more to what we see.

Some youth identified the inequalities and injustices related to land and to the abuse of land and its natural resources by others (e.g., military). Kai, a 19-year-old male, stated:

[Our community is] surrounded by the military. Seventy-five percent of what surrounds this valley is owned by [the] military and less than 15% is actually farmland in production. You could hear them bombing the mountains. We used to have fresh water flowing through the land, but now the military is rerouting it and we don't have access to fresh water anymore, except water from the tap.

Noa, a 28-year-old male added, "Where we live is either fast food [restaurants], convenience stores, or the military. But we have land. So the solution is to create more opportunities for local markets and cooperatives."

Many young adults also became aware of structural inequalities (e.g., stereotypes and prejudices) about the community. The program not only supplied a safe place to deconstruct these issues and their complexity but also provided practical ways to deal with them. In a communication class offered at the Farm, Leilani gave specifics on how oppression played out in the hiring process:

If you go to a place where the guys who are hiring are from [other more privileged communities] and all that, and you tell them that you're from [this community], they'll think, "I don't know if he is really dependable."

Kawika, a male young adult, added:

I've been out to jobs where I applied in town [the city of Honolulu]. And [they ask] "You from the homestead, huh?" I'm like, "Yup." So they think, "If I hire this guy, I'm taking a particular risk. He might steal from me. He's from the homestead, and he might not show up at work, because he lives on the homestead."

The Farm provided a place for the young adults to examine these sensitive issues and enabled them to critique the existence of inequalities and oppression more generally. Noa shared his thoughts about the media's role in diverting youth attention from critical issues:

Well, I think a big part is that the media has a lot to do with distracting young people from important things in life... The media doesn't put value on food and the sacredness of food in the way we promote it.

Noa pointed out how working with others in the program helped youth, including himself, to be more enlightened or aware:

But after working with a lot of students, they become much more aware. Because of our discussions that we have—political or philosophical—a lot of students become enlightened. They get exposed to a lot of ideas...we talk about a lot of other things. Mainstream media's ongoing narrative is pretty self-centered, and that doesn't really work on the farm. It's the diversity and shared effort that is the value we promote.

While participants were able to untangle the oppressive mechanisms that play out in their lives, adult leaders of the Farm were mindful of facilitating discussions that help them understand the global impact of capitalism and its role in perpetuating systemic inequalities (e.g., such as the lost of culture). For example, Ian shared:

They [the young adults] are dominated by a Western model of education and a global concept of capitalism that make use of proper nouns in really curious situations. Some of those things that are being taught, like what the teacher tells the kid in school to learn—their curriculum—up to a certain point, are not true. The Hawaiian Monarchy was not taught over here up until 5 to 10 years ago. So I think we really have to look up to the youth to give them a voice.

Additionally, Ian described how some of the youth activities further connect oppression and its complexities with parallel experiences in other cultures:

From the program, the important thing for them to learn is that Hawai'i and young Hawaiians and youth of color have similar experiences today, and the root of their experiences in the history of this place is not unique. Many, many countries have had similar colonial experiences. We try to teach them, through videos and stories, what has happened around the world so they can understand the global context of what their situation is. We also try to look at their history and culture as an asset for them—somewhat of a road map. We try to look at their own lives and the lives of their community—[to show] that we do have values, and we do have road maps to get to a better place for our community. Those are the things we look at.... In one of the first leadership training classes, they look at agriculture and food through an older person's eyes. They do an oral history by interviewing an older person in the neighborhood. They get [to appreciate] a worldview [through] that. For example,

they deconstruct a song that we give them and after that they look at a song that they like. We use a Somali song that talks about the oppression of African people and the movement of African people around the world. We really try to get them to look at the complexity of the issue.

At the Farm, participants harnessed critical ideas about community inequalities and fostered a new vision of their community, one free of oppression and anchored in the strengths of Hawaiian culture. Through the program, young adults recognized that dismantling oppression requires critical collective consciousness, social networking, and community knowledge. Critical consciousness is not realized in a vacuum; findings suggest that alliances played a pivotal role. Allies, such as people from other indigenous communities, and experts in the field of agriculture, business, and community planning, health, and education were necessary to establish collective awareness and to compile an adequate community knowledge base. One example of solidarity expressed by the young adults was the strong commitment to learn the Hawaiian language. A 16-year-old female youth who was sponsored by the Farm to attend the World Indigenous People's Conference on Education (WIPCE) in New Zealand attested:

It makes me sad to see how much these [Māori] people know their culture and their language. They're so proud of who they are and they...they look up to us! To us! But really, we should be looking up to them. I mean...we're like... four people [from Hawai'i] who wanted to learn Hawaiian. It's sad that our people have lost their language and their culture. And I know what I have to do. When I go home, I'm going to do everything I can to learn my language and to teach my family the language.

This youth recognized a parallel experience with the Māori community regarding cultural preservation and was peeved by the loss of Hawaiian culture and language in her own community. The effect of attending WIPCE spurred her desire to learn and share the Hawaiian language with her family. A key point in the process of understanding the complexity of oppression and systemic inequality is the juxtaposition of other settings, whereby participants reflect on local and global situations.

Acquire a Commitment to Serve the Community, and Instill a Sense of Kuleana

Through the use of CIPP, the Farm encouraged youth to commit to their community and be responsible for their place. Being grounded in one's roots has helped youth develop their self-esteem, the responsibility to stand up for their community, and their ability to advocate for important issues. Many youth expressed how knowing about their community and the sociopolitical climate led them to understand their cultural identity. As a Samoan male youth, Ronnie, shared:

I think it's very important for the youth to understand where they're coming from. It's always good to know good points and also bad points of the community to work on them. Youth should understand where they're coming from. If they understand [more] about their community, they'll grow up with confidence and self-esteem and they'll be able to work.

By participating in the Farm's activities, not only did the youth learn how to make a difference, but they also developed a sense of attachment to the community. The Farm also provided opportunities for youth to take part in a larger social movement of resistance—promoting food security, community health, and self-sufficiency. A male youth, Kamuela, summed it up thus:

Being in the program helps me to care more about the community. I learn small things like recycling, etc..... Being in the farmers' market helps the population with knowledge about health, selling the produce. They also take the knowledge to the family and help the family out. It's also about the community and helping the community to be healthier. I'd say the one thing I want to see improved is to have youth see a bigger picture, not [to] see this just as a normal job. It's not all about making money, but about helping the community, providing the community with food security, helping the community become self-sufficient and healthy.

Most youth indicated that the Farm positively affected their thinking about their community. Leilani explained that the Farm built awareness and urgency among youth to get involved in local political issues:

[The program director] would teach us about the Farm and all that, but he would also teach us about all kinds of political stuff. Like we would talk about stuff in the newspaper a few times, oh yeah, like when they voted for whatever. Whatever affects us, he would tell us: “Why aren’t you guys getting into this, or why aren’t you guys stepping in. It’s going to affect you guys more than me.” And us, personally, we don’t really think about it. But when someone puts it bluntly like that, you think, “Oh, okay. Maybe we should do something.” The classes opened our eyes a bit. I admit that most of the time if you were to ask [the program director] personally, he probably thought I was sleeping. But I heard some of the stuff he was saying.

The food sovereignty movement was used as a launch pad to encourage youth and the general community to take greater responsibility and control of their food systems. The study found that the Farm’s youth and young adults’ leadership roles effectively harnessed widespread community commitment. For example, the youth-run conferences sponsored by the Farm have led to the following testimonies by community members:

I plan to make a garden. I plan to educate our ‘ōpio (youth) here in Windward–Ko‘olau Loa about food sovereignty and help them spread the word.

—Adult staff member of a local, Native Hawaiian nonprofit organization

I commit to eating more veggies, and trying to eat more food from Hawai‘i if it can fit my budget. I commit towards getting [the organization I belong to] and everyone to think more on these issues. I commit to work towards building bridges among diverse interests to build our agricultural

capacity and support systems for growing our own food and perhaps energy (not so much other folks' food and energy). I commit to work towards conserving land in general for cultural and natural resources.

—Adult from a local, Native Hawaiian agency

I commit to continue buying local, to bring my own bags to the grocery store and to the farmers' market. But more importantly, I commit to continue teaching University of Hawai'i, West Oahu (UHWO) students about issues by incorporating them into the curriculum of the classes I teach, even those that go beyond the politics of food.

—Staff at UHWO

I commit to educating and enlisting the youth at [an organization's] project to participate in a food sovereignty project (e.g., community mapping of the food sources in the Ko'olau Poko area, creating a business plan for marketing the goods from our garden at the regional park, creating a link with Castle Complex schools to encourage healthy eating there in conjunction with the "Eat-Ins").

—Adult participant

Testimonies such as these demonstrate how individual sense of agency, shared among community members, can potentially affect broad social change. Moreover, conferences or community meetings organized or attended by the Farm's youth and young adults provided the crucial social networks necessary to identify positive role models and adult allies in the community. The study reveals that the Farm—through social networking opportunities and access to ideas of building a food movement—helped the youth connect with each other, to their communities, and, ultimately, to the land. With the opportunities made possible by the Farm and the supportive environment and sense of belonging it created, youth and young adults understood the tremendous potential to restore, rejuvenate, and take care of the land and each other.

Cycle of Critical Praxis (Knowledge-Action-Reflection)

Ma ka hana ka 'ike.

In working one learns.

—'Ōlelo No'eau (Pukui, 1983, no. 2088)

The Farm provided a range of political action-oriented activities to engage in critical praxis. Activities included testifying at political events, developing and implementing food sovereignty campaigns and conferences, attending to the daily tasks of running the Farm, and working at a café to create a sense of place for the youth and the general community to carry on discussions pertinent to community needs and political agendas. For example, Jason, a male staff, observed the Farm's youth participants testify at a community meeting:

We had four youth who wanted to testify; we had the unique position to be the only youth [organization involved] in the formal testimony. There was no rehearsal. We were asked by the lawyers if we'd please get our youth up to testify. When we did, it was remarkable, because they had testified that they were raised on [this side of the island] and they had never been to the freshwater streams until they went to the windward side to these particular taro patches. And that most of their parents had never been to a freshwater stream and were amazed at their children's experience and that it was just wrong to them to take water and pipe it to another side, especially to use it to keep dust down and to water golf courses. And the lawyer said that the youth[']s testimony woke up all the trustees of the water commission. He said that they paid more attention to the youth than anybody who'd gone before them. They were very passionate, some were in tears. I saw, given the opportunity to immerse themselves a little bit on a consistent basis over a period of time, the youth come to their own connections and love for the earth, water, taro, and with a little bit of prompting, they were able to express that in a room full of strangers. It was beautiful. The land manager came out after the testimony to

meet the youth. There was an awkward feeling because the youth saw him as the enemy. He's a really wonderful guy. He expressed that it does appear that we were on different sides of the present issue, but actually we weren't in the broader picture...policies are changing and it's testimony like this that pushes them forward. He was really grateful for the testimony.

The youth had the opportunity to participate in a community hearing that would affect a water resource. As the staff witnessed, the testimonies by the youth provided a venue for critical praxis, a constant process of acting and reflecting on one's action for the betterment of the community. Another example was provided by a parent's perception of her son's participation at the Farm and how he has learned to understand how to maneuver through the decision-making process at the neighborhood level:

He is just learning about the community meetings, and how they take effect, and how to speak out in terms [of] what you believe in. He is just getting to that stage right now in learning about community meetings and what [kind of] difference it makes when you speak out and [how it] makes you feel.

The impact of participation in these activities not only provided youth with a political voice but also brought them to reflect on how their actions affect decision-making processes. Such venues can have lasting effects for youth participants.

The Farm was also a place for youth to develop leadership skills as a result of engaging in critical praxis. Their comments suggest that participants became more confident and aware of their environment and community as they developed a sense of kuleana. Kamalu shared how participating in critical praxis encouraged him to be actively involved with his community:

For me personally, the [Hawai'i] Farm has given me a different outlook on things—on subjects. We always have heated discussions on the politics of the [Hawai'i] Farm....

The program does help me learn to get involved, because through the program, there were a couple of times where we went, as a group, to the [State] Senate to see bills being voted on. One of the bills we went to observe was on making genetic food legal in Hawai'i. We saw how that process went. It was pretty fun. It was also educational. We found out some of the views of the public and how a lot of people really don't want it, but on the flip side we see how it could be beneficial.

Findings also reveal that communal reflection processes, such as chanting an oli (chant) or gathering as a group to reflect on the day's work, were embedded throughout the program. Specifically, an oli, *E ho mai* (grant us) was used at the beginning of a conference or work day to ask for wisdom or knowledge from above as the youth embark on the task on hand. Another oli was used to express mahalo (thanks) at the end of a particular journey or event. Having these purposeful processes allowed participants to truly express and connect on a spiritual level with others. Critical praxis taught many youth to take on the responsibility of being informed, active members of their community and connecting spiritually or emotionally with like-minded people.

DISCUSSION

The Farm contributes to the growing body of literature on critical pedagogies, place-based interventions, and sociopolitical development among minoritized¹² populations. A working model conceptualizing sociopolitical development through the use of CIPP was developed based on study findings. The examination of sociopolitical development revealed that a critical, educational approach was appropriate for the target population. The Farm promoted critical consciousness and decolonization among program participants through the use of CIPP. These processes are as necessary to sociopolitical development as they are to overall community youth development. Sociopolitical development helps youth understand the contradictions and disparities that exist in their communities. Further research is needed to examine its impact in addressing multiple and interconnected disparities, such as health and education.

As part of the decolonizing agenda, the Farm provided a place for youth to identify the community disparities framed by a food security movement. It also encouraged young adults to disentangle the complexity of oppression and systemic inequalities through workshops and informal interactions with colleagues and adult allies in the community. The Farm provided spaces for youth to discuss sensitive issues such as stereotypes and prejudices, as a community. As part of sociopolitical development, continuous reflexivity was practiced, and collective hope was instilled. Aligning with the literature on community youth development, the Farm created a venue for Native Hawaiian young adults to learn first about their community and how they locate or position themselves in the community, and then acquire the commitment to serve and take responsibilities for social change. To learn about one's community is a result of a growing sense of attachment to a place. This attachment stems from the feeling of *mālama* (care) as well as *aloha* (love)—caring and loving a place and its people—and the desire to make a difference by making it a better place.

Generally, CIPP encourages Native Hawaiian youth and young adults to explore and reflect on historical, social, cultural, and environmental injustices related to their individual and collective health and wellness. The Farm equipped participants to become active agents of change as they responded and resisted cultural hegemony from a local, indigenous standpoint. CIPP also promotes empowerment beyond the self and further encourages the participants to commit to serving their community. Such processes were crucial to helping youth understand the disparities related to health and wellness and promoting a social justice agenda. The Farm's community-based, youth-organizing effort demonstrates how place can be a site for healing past and present injustices. It also helps demystify interlocking systems of oppression. As Grande (2008) indicated, CIPP too has potential to help youth validate the overlapping cultural or hybrid identities they possess and relate them to the materiality of social life, power relations, and localities of place. CIPP has the promise to embrace the diversity in approaches to health promotion as it engages communities, especially marginalized communities, in a dialog.

Revisiting CPP: The Centrality of Native Hawaiian Epistemology

Although CPP is relevant to native and other minoritized communities, its dominant discourse uses Western hegemonic definitions and has not addressed the needs of specific minoritized youth communities. For instance, CPP's definition of reinhabitation emphasizes the identification and recovery of spaces and places, but it neglects to mention active efforts to preserve, sustain, and strengthen

places and clarify the symbolic cultural connections to these places (Johnston-Goodstar, Trinidad, & Tecele, 2010), which constitute the Native Hawaiian connection to place. The CPP definition of decolonization is also problematic. Although it identifies and changes ways of thinking that injure and exploit *other* people and places, it is especially vital for native or ethnic minoritized peoples to identify and change ways in which they and their sacred places have been/are being injured and exploited (Johnston-Goodstar et al., 2010).

To engage with culture, CPP must move toward an *indigenized* critical pedagogy of place—that is, critical indigenous pedagogy of place (CIPP). Indigenization, a parallel process to decolonization and reinhabitation, brings out spatial and historical dimensions to reclaim one’s own story or past—local and global, the present, communities, cultures, languages, and social practices. This process could then become a space of resistance and hope by foregrounding indigenous knowledge, worldviews, and concerns at the center (Grande, 2004; Smith, 1999; Trask, 2000b). Most important, indigenization can help youth represent their own perspectives, experiences, and histories (Absolon & Whilett, 2005; Smith, 1999).

In sum, CIPP stresses the importance of focusing on community liberation (Lee, 2006), self-determination, sovereignty, and critical reclamation of ancestral knowledge (Denzin et al., 2008; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001; Grande, 2004; Kanahele, 1986; Kanai’aupuni & Malone, 2006; Meyer, 2001, 2003; Smith, 1999; Trask, 2000a). Rooted in native cosmology, worldview, and history, CIPP encourages Native Hawaiian youth and young adults to move toward sociopolitical development through their connection to place and the practices and responsibilities nurtured through it. It is through CIPP that I demonstrate how youth and young adults can understand the land as a place of healing and further understand the health disparities that exist in their communities. This article links the layering of critical pedagogy, CPP, and CIPP with sociopolitical development and investigates how that is done at the community, grassroots level.

Although the Hawai’i case study contributes to the growing body of literature in sociopolitical development and place-based critical pedagogy among youth, more research and theorizing are needed. The role and function of youth organizations and community-based health interventions need to be examined because the concepts integrated in sociopolitical development and CIPP are complex. Specifically, future scholarship needs to focus on how community-based organizations provide places to engage in critical ideas from the grassroots level, opportunities to provide learning experiences regarding culture, and access to

social networks within and across communities. Greater understanding regarding the creation and maintenance of critical infrastructure and support is needed for community-based organizations to fully implement CPP. Moreover, stronger connections are yet to be made with ecological perspectives, which stress the role of context, setting, and embedded social dynamics.

In addition, further research on interactions between place and people vis-à-vis health and wellness, its transaction through time, and its cumulative impact on health will provide a better understanding of how youth increase their sociopolitical understanding and their capacity for liberatory action (Watts et al., 2003). Wider critiques that highlight contextually grounded health interventions as forms of social entrepreneurship with oppressed youth populations are equally vital. As members of helping professions, we need to ask ourselves if our interventions promote sociopolitical development, support resistance to oppression, build skills for critical praxis, and advance liberatory processes (i.e., social justice) for our stakeholders. Overall, with the growing health disparities among native and other minoritized youth and young adults, it is necessary to involve youth in critically understanding their social context. It is imperative that we create opportunities for youth and young adults to own and actively participate in action-oriented, empowerment processes.

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NOTES

- 1 In this article, the term *young adults* refers to persons 18 to 25 years old.
- 2 Food insecurity is defined as “the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so” (Baker et al., p. 9). It relates to hunger.
- 3 Brewer and Gardner (1996) argued that when youth identify with a community, they are more willing to relinquish individual gain for the collective good, thus becoming part of a greater social movement in promoting health.

4 Decolonization is also an act of resistance that must not be limited to rejecting and transforming dominant ideas, but depends on recovering and renewing traditional, noncommodified cultural ways of learning (e.g., mentoring and intergenerational relationship and knowledge building; Bowers, 2001).

5 There is overlap on the processes of conscientization/critical consciousness and praxis in both sociopolitical development and critical pedagogy. The definitions are essentially identical.

6 The helping professions include fields such as social work; child, youth, and family studies; education; psychology; health; and so forth.

7 The dimensions of healing are embedded within the epistemology, belief, and value system of a specific cultural group (Gesler, 1993, as cited in Wilson, 2003).

8 Results from a study (Baker et al., 2001) indicate that food insecurity affected over one in four Native Hawaiians. Native Hawaiians were also three times as likely to be food insecure when compared with Japanese or Chinese in Hawai'i. The prevalence of food insecurity for household members above 30% included the geographic area of this case study as well as other areas in which Native Hawaiians reside. Food insecurity was associated with obesity and various chronic health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, or arthritis.

9 See Trinidad (2009) for more information on the interview guide.

10 A selective review of the literature on concepts related to sociopolitical development, youth organizing among minoritized youth, critical pedagogy, and critical pedagogy of place guided the content analyses.

11 Braidotti (2002, as cited in herising, 2005) asserted, "Self-reflexivity is, moreover, not an individual activity, but an interactive process which relies upon a social network of exchanges" (p. 11). In this case study, my critical stance is based on the multiple interactions with Native Hawaiian youth, families, and communities in Hawai'i during my practice as a social worker, community organizer, and researcher over the past 12 years. Bearing witness to the issues they face and being an "ally" to assuring the services address their need inform my stance.

12 I use the term "minoritized" to denote that communities such as Native Hawaiians do not see themselves as a "minority," but rather structural processes "minoritize" them. It is also a term adopted from theorists and literature in critical pedagogies.

APPENDIX A PARTICIPANTS

Role	Age (Years)	Gender	Race/Ethnicity (Self-Identified)	Pseudonyms
Young adult	20	Female	Hawaiian	Leilani
Young adult	21	Male	Samoaan	Ronnie
Young adult	19	Male	Hawaiian, Portuguese	Kai
Young adult	20	Male	Hawaiian, Guatemalan, Japanese, Pacific Islander	Kamuela
Young adult	20	Male	Portuguese, Hawaiian, Chinese, mixed	Kawika
Young adult	20	Male	Hawaiian, Samoaan	Keola
Young adult	18	Male	Hawaiian, Caucasian	Kamehana
Young adult	20	Male	Part-Hawaiian, part-Caucasian	Kamalu
Youth staff	28	Male	Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, German, Russian, Polish, mixed	Noa
Youth staff	48	Male	Half Japanese, half Hungarian-Jewish	Jason
Youth staff	49	Female	Hawaiian, Caucasian	Lehua
Youth staff	35–45	Male	Caucasian from New Zealand	Ian
Parent board member	45–55	Female	Caucasian, Okinawan, Portuguese, Spanish, part-Hawaiian	Kealoha
Parent (of 16-year- old youth)	35–45	Female	Part-Hawaiian	Kilia
Parent (of 13-year- old youth)	38	Female	Hawaiian, Caucasian	Pua
Community member (former board member)	41	Female	Hawaiian, Japanese, Portuguese, Chamorro	Pi'ilani
Community member, advocate, kupuna (elder), eventually began a board member thereafter	45–55	Male	Part-Hawaiian	Kekula

APPENDIX B CRITICAL INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY OF PLACE’S LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE FARM’S FUNCTION OR ROLES

<p>Identify the disparities in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight youth’s place-based observations and personal narratives of the community • Facilitate intergenerational discussion and interweave parallel stories that are generated
<p>Critically explore the complexity of oppression and systemic inequalities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunity to participate in workshops and conferences focused on ideas related to place-based food security, sustainability, and health • Provide social networking opportunities with people in the field that serve as allies • Facilitate and build critical collective consciousness among the communities and allies • Share community knowledge through global-local connections
<p>Acquire a commitment to serve the community and instill a sense of kuleana</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through social networks and allies, provide positive role models through cross-generational involvement • Provide supportive environment and belonging to validate youth’s voice
<p>Participate in a knowledge-action-reflection cycle of critical praxis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to political action-oriented activities • Provide explicit communal reflection process (e.g., oli)