

STATE OF ALOHA

Discussion Outline Guide

Documentary Film
Runtime: 78 minutes
Copyright 2009, 2010 (HD edit)
Academy for Creative Media,
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Color Stereo 1:1.85 NTSC

From the Filmmaker

From 2004-2010, professionals, faculty, and students have worked on an Academy for Creative Media, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa research project on the topic of Hawai‘i Statehood which culminated in the production of a feature-length documentary, STATE OF ALOHA. Research delved into diverse areas of Hawaiian and international history that led to Hawai‘i Statehood, as well as into current topics of importance—Hawai‘i’s viability and issues of interconnectedness with the U.S. mainland, federal government, and discussions of self-governance and sustainability.

I hope that this film can be a starting point of discussion, of generating dialogue within the community, as a call to action for each person to consider the priorities that need to be actively cared for in Hawai‘i, and to be motivated to take action.

—Producer, Director Anne Misawa

The Film

The 2009 release of this film marked the 50th Anniversary of Hawai‘i Statehood and the 2019 educational release marks the 60th, and hopefully will encourage further discussion upon topics that are still relevant to Hawai‘i’s future. Largely anchored by personal narratives, the motivating paths toward statehood are illuminated as well as the legacy left behind. Interviewees cover a representative span of the population in Hawai‘i, including people from the political, cultural, business, academia communities as well as the person next door.

From the overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani to the annexation of Hawai‘i and to Statehood in 1959, the documentary highlights a range of issues related to these historical events. Areas explored cover immigration, the Massie case, WWII, the 442, and Japanese Internment, ILWU and the “threat” of Communist takeover, pursuit of parity, and the democratic revolution, in which a group at the bottom of the social/political/economic hierarchy rose to a prominent political/economic position through the electoral process, a rare step in international history. The current dialogue and controversy about the legitimacy and future of Hawai‘i’s state status are addressed, culminating in the Question—What is the next step for Hawai‘i?

Discussion Questions

1. What is the story of Hawai‘i’s path towards Statehood?
2. What were the motivating factors and factions?
3. Why does history play such a large role in the community’s dialogue about issues of self-governance and Hawaiian sovereignty?
4. What are people’s experiences living in Hawai‘i?
5. What are current topics of importance for Hawai‘i’s next generation?

Suggestions for a “Call to Action”

1. What are some community issues and/or issues facing Hawai‘i today that you think are important to resolve for the health and viability of Hawai‘i’s future? Consider volunteering in organizations or joining forces with persons in your community who are actively striving to resolve these issues or to preserve these priorities.
2. Contact representatives in the City Council, State Legislator, U.S. Congress, and other local and national community leaders, and express your views on current initiatives and bills.
3. Interview, “talk story,” with your elders, and community members to get a perspective of their experiences in Hawai‘i. Document them in some manner than can be shared and archived.

Chapters Outline with Questions

(More information, specific questions, and curriculum suggestions can be found in the Curriculum/Educator’s Guide.)

Chapter 1: Opening

What does the event and conflict documented at ‘Iolani Place in 2006 signify?

Chapter 2: Celebrating Statehood 1959

What is the public sentiment conveyed by individuals as they recount their experiences on March 12, 1959 when the Statehood bill passed?

Chapter 3: Current Homeless Situation in Hawai‘i

What are some reasons given for the Native Hawaiian homeless issue in Hawai‘i?

Chapter 4: Who are the Hawaiians?

How was the Hawaiian nation viewed internationally?

Chapter 5: Westerners Arrive—1778 to 1850

What was Hawai‘i’s main driving force in the economy of this period?

Chapter 6: New Political Reality—*1890-1930

During this period, why were sugar growers motivated to support Hawai‘i statehood?
What is the significance of the Overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani to the Hawaiian people?

Chapter 7: Voices in the Street—Contemporary “Everyman” thoughts regarding Hawai‘i Statehood.

What are your views?

Chapter 8: More on New Political Reality—1890-1930’s

What is the legal controversy surrounding Hawai‘i’s annexation?
Why did some local Hawaiians express a support for statehood for Hawai‘i?

Chapter 9: Unequal treatment under the Law—The Massie Case

Why was the Massie case such a significant event in light of the argument for or against statehood for Hawai‘i?

Chapter 10: World War II – 1941 to 1945 – Racism trumped by political expediency

What was the Big Five and how did their power serve as a catalyst for the move towards statehood for minorities in Hawai‘i?

Chapter 11: Post-war Hawai‘i, 1945-54

How do you interpret the voter turnout for the June 27th 1959 plebiscite on Statehood?

Chapter 12: Admissions day—2007 at ‘Iolani Palace

What does the approach to the event at ‘Iolani Palace in 2007 indicate to you?

Chapter 13: Labor Unions and the Communist Threat

What common sentiments did the ILWU have with the Democratic party?

Chapter 14: Democratic Party Victory

What do you think were the motivations of the Democratic party to support statehood for Hawai‘i?

Chapter 15: Statehood—August 21, 1959, President Dwight Eisenhower signs legislation

How was movement for statehood for Hawai‘i tied to the Civil Rights movement?

Chapter 16: Statehood—Consequences & Reflections

What is the Native Hawaiian view of the land and what tie does it have to other Pacific Islander perspectives?

What are some of the issues Hawai‘i today that need to be addressed for a viable future?

How can you involve yourself in these community issues?

What is your opinion on Hawai‘i’s status as a state?

Do you think that Hawai‘i’s status as a state will change?

What role in the global community do you see Hawai‘i having?

What is your definition of the word “aloha”?

* The limits of time mean that an in depth history of the Hawaiian Kingdom could not be covered in STATE OF ALOHA, thus between chapters 5 and 6 there is a 40 year gap between 1850 and 1890. That time period was one of continuous and tremendous change in the kingdom, which saw the reign of 5 different monarchs and 3 different constitutions issued in 1852, 1864, and 1887. Please see the resources section in the Curriculum Guide to learn more about this time period and those discussed in the film.

Individuals Featured in STATE OF ALOHA

Neil Abercrombie	US Congressman, Hawai'i Governor, 2010-2014
Daniel K. Akaka	US Senator, 1990-2013
Leonelle Anderson Akana	Teacher/ Historian
Peter Apo	Director of Culture and Education, Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
George Ariyoshi	Hawai'i Governor, 1974-1986
Pat Namaka Bacon	Mother to Dodie Browne, Cultural consultant
Cobey Black	Journalist
Kekuni Blaisdell	Founding Chair, Dept. of Medicine, University of Hawai'i
Dodie Browne	Young Girl in Newspaper Photo
H. William Burgess	Attorney/ Aloha for All
Judge James Burns	Son of John A. Burns, Governor, 1962-1974
Kippen de Alba Chu	Executive Director, Friends of 'Iolani Palace
Tom Coffman	Historian
Kenneth Conklin	Co-founder of Aloha for All
Elmer Cravalho	Mayor of Maui, 1969-1979
Beadie Kanahele Dawson	Hawai'i State Deputy Attorney General, 1982-1996
Jeanne Davis	Moved to Hawai'i, 1959
Hannah Embree	University of Hawai'i student
Hinaleimoana Falemei	Cultural Consultant
Alice F. Guild	Former President, Friends of 'Iolani Palace
Don Ho	Singer/ Entertainer
Daniel Inouye	US Representative, 1959-1963 US Senator, 1963-2012
Dennis "Bumpy" Kanahele	Founder of Pu'uhonua O Waimānalo
Kealoha	Slam Poet
Stephanie Launiu	Former Executive Director, Hilo Bay Clinic
Jason Scott Lee	Actor
Naomi Losch	Professor, Hawaiian Language University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Charlie Maxwell	Hawaiian Kahu (Priest)/ Radio Show Host
Ah Quon McElrath	Former Social Worker Int. Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 142
Lolena Nichols	Ni'ihau resident
Jonathan Osorio	Professor, Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Bozo Pualoa	Native Hawaiian Artist
William & Nancy Quinn	First Governor-State of Hawai'i & First Lady, 1959-1962
Harold "Freddy" Rice	Hawai'i Island Rancher
William S. Richardson	Chief Justice, Hawaii State Supreme Court, 1966-1982
David Keanu Sai	Founder of the Hawaiian Society of Law and Politics
Sam Slom	Hawai'i State Senator
Travis K. Thompson	Slam Poet
Haunani-Kay Trask	Professor, Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Dan Tuttle	Former Professor, Political Science, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Thurston Twigg-Smith
 John Waihe'e
 John Whitehead
 Melvin Won Pat-Borja
 Polani Wong
 Alice Greenwood
 Annie Lipscomb

Person on the Street:

Tony Agao
 Keli'i Bright
 Joe Daniels
 Jo Manner-Howerton
 David Nahoopi
 Lori Nordlum
 Tully Pettigrew
 Naturalee Puou

Publisher, Honolulu Advertiser Newspaper, 1961-1993
 Hawai'i Governor, 1986-1994
 Historian
 Slam Poet
 Ni'ihau resident
 Herself, "Blue Tarp City"
 Queen Lili'uokalani, "Shrines to Paradise"

Jeff Smith
 Sarah Teehee
 Tim Troxol

State Motto Children:
 Kaulani Kinimaka
 Landon Luna
 Jared Sugihara

Principle Crew for State of Aloha

Producer/ Director: Anne Misawa
Associate Producer: Connie M. Florez
Executive Producers: Chris Lee, Tom Brislin
Cinematographer: Bennett Cerf
Editor: Ruth Chon
Narrator: Jason Scott Lee

(Crew list includes professionals and students of the Academy of Creative Media, UHM and is available upon request.)

Print Contact:

Academy for Creative Media
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
2550 Campus Rd., Crawford 210
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
acm@hawaii.edu

or Attn: Anne Misawa
amisawa@hawaii.edu