

HOLOI Ā NALO WĀHINE 'ŌIWI:

Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women
and Girls Task Force Report



"WHEN I WORKED ON
THE INTERNET IN
WAIKĪKĪ IT WAS
TOURISTS. IN CHINA
TOWN IT WAS LOCALS
INCLUDING COPS &
PEOPLE HIGHER UP
THAN COPS IN THE
JUSTICE SYSTEM."
- Testimony from sex 2018
trafficking survivors

af3irm
Hawaii
WE ARE MILITANT BECAUSE WE MATTER

LAND
BACK
BODIES
BACK

WA
SEX
CAPI
THE

May 5, 2022 marked the largest coordinated, multi-island commemoration of National Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S) Awareness Day in Hawai'i to date. The unity of diverse ceremonies and communities generated strong emotions and relationships that have carried this report forward. Photo: Jason Lees

We recognize that we occupy Kānaka Maoli land and acknowledge the original peoples of this land as Kānaka Maoli. We recognize that her majesty Queen Lili'uokalani was illegally overthrown in 1893. We further recognize the ancestors and descendants of Kānaka Maoli and their ways of knowing and being that have protected Hawai'i in the past, present, and future.

This report is in solidarity with and recognition of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S) movement that originated in Canada and across Turtle Island. We recognize and honor the Indigenous peoples of Canada and Turtle Island in their struggles and strengths in setting precedence for the voices of native peoples across the Pacific and the world to be heard in ending violence. We mahalo the tribal nations who have created space for Kānaka Maoli to be a part of the MMIWG2S movement.

This is the first report of a two-part report. Part II will have more comprehensive information about MMNHWG and will be available in 2023.

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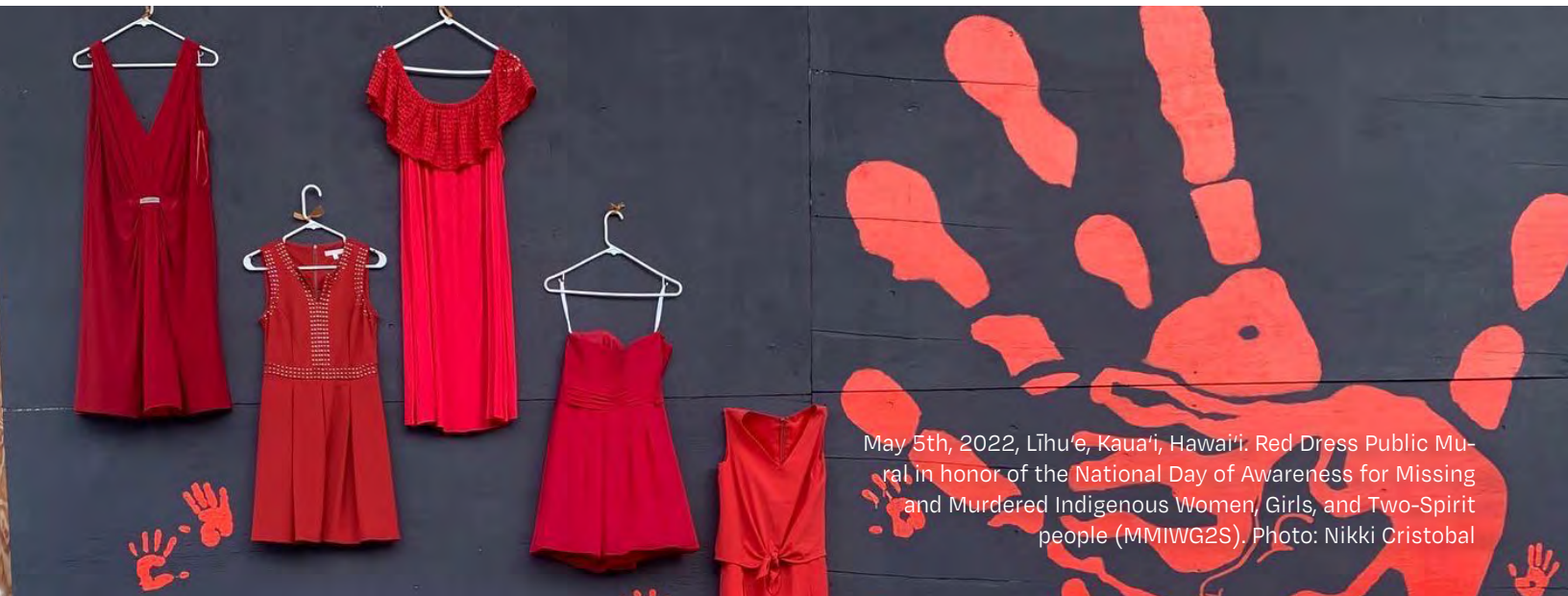
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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Native Hawaiian women and girls experience violence at rates disproportionate to their population size. Because of a lack of accessible data and a systemic disregard for the safety and wellbeing of Native Hawaiian women and girls on the part of government entities, the scope of the Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls (MMNHWG) crisis is incomplete. Statistics on MMNHWG are highly limited. Therefore, the statistics presented in this report must be interpreted with the understanding that the true scope of the problem of MMNHWG is much larger than the meager data available can demonstrate at this time.

The lack of data on MMNHWG and on Native Hawaiian women and girls in general may leave many with the perception that MMNHWG is not an issue that warrants further exploration and/or government resources. Such perceptions directly fuel the continued erasure of Native Hawaiian women and girls. The crisis of MMNHWG is often called “the invisible crisis” due to: 1) the lack of recognition that Native Hawaiians are the Indigenous peoples of Hawai’i and that they continue to experience systemic racism; 2) no concerted

effort on the part of the federal or state government to understand and prevent MMNHWG; and 3) the avenues by which Native Hawaiian women and girls go missing or are murdered is complex and intertwined with persistent historical inequities that many people with legislative power fail to recognize are continuing to affect the condition of Native Hawaiians today.

For this report, the term “Native Hawaiian Women and Girls Violence” or “NHWG violence,” includes the underlying social, economic, cultural, institutional, and historical causes that contribute to the ongoing violence and systemic erasure of Native Hawaiian women and girls.

“Missing” for this report is broadly defined as Native Hawaiian girls (persons under the age of 18) who are deemed as “runaways” by law enforcement, meaning they voluntarily or involuntarily fled from their parent/guardian and may or may not return. Missing also includes Native Hawaiian women and girls whose whereabouts are unknown, including women and girls who are missing as a result of being trafficked and/or trapped in the military-prostitution complex.

“Murdered” for this report is defined as Native Hawaiian women and girls who are killed through violent physical means. It also includes Native Hawaiian women and girls who died under suspicious and/or complex circumstances such as drug overdose and suicide. These definitions are aligned with how other Indigenous nations are defining violence within the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls movement. These definitions also allow for the accuracy of exploring and naming the specific mechanisms of the MMNHWG crisis such as sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, suicide, poverty, and disenfranchisement from the land. Expanding the frame of exploration of MMNHWG beyond governmental definitions of missing and murdered creates space to center the experiences of survivors and move toward community healing in a way that is accurate and respectful.

21% of Hawai‘i’s total population (N= 1,441,553) identifies as Native Hawaiian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). 10.2% of the total population of Hawai‘i identifies as a Native Hawaiian female, with 47.6% of this population identified as females under the age of 18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

- More than a quarter (1/4) of missing girls in Hawai‘i are Native Hawaiian (JJIS, 2001-2021).
- Hawai‘i has the eighth highest rate of missing persons per capita in the nation at 7.5 missing people per 100,000 residents (Kynston, 2019).
- The average profile of a missing child: 15 year old, female, Native Hawaiian, missing from O‘ahu (MCCH, 2022).
- The majority (43%) of sex trafficking cases are Kānaka Maoli girls trafficked in Waikīkī, O‘ahu (Amina, 2022).
- 38% (N= 74) of those arrested for soliciting sex from a thirteen-year-old online through Operation Keiki Shield are active-duty military personnel (Hawai‘i Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, 2022).
- In 2021, the Missing Child Center Hawai‘i (MCCH) assisted law enforcement with 376 recoveries of missing children. These cases are only 19% of the estimated 2,000 cases of missing children in Hawai‘i each year (MCCH, 2021).
- On Hawai‘i Island, Kānaka Maoli children ages 15-17, represent the highest number of missing children’s cases, with the most children reported missing in area code 96720, Hilo (Hawai‘i Island Police Department, 2022).
- From 2018-2021, there were 182 cases of missing Kānaka Maoli girls on Hawai‘i Island, higher than any other racial group (N= 1,175) (Hawai‘i Island Police Department, 2022).
- 57% of participants served through the Mana‘olana Program at Child & Family Services are Native Hawaiian females who have experienced human trafficking (Mana‘olana, CFS, 2021-2022).

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous women and girls, including Native Hawaiians, experience violence at much higher rates than other populations in the United States. Native communities across Turtle Island (The North American continent) have mobilized for governmental resources and systemized responses to prevent violence against Indigenous women and girls. The leading causes of death for Indigenous girls ages 1-19 are (in order) unintentional injuries, suicide, and homicide; whereas the leading causes of death for white girls ages 1-19 are unintentional injuries, suicide, and cancer (CDC, 2016). Indigenous women and girls are 10 times more likely to be murdered than women from other ethnic groups (UIHI, 2018), are 2.5 times as likely to be raped than white women, and are more likely to be raped by a perpetrator of a different race than other racial groups (Bachman et al., 2008). A shocking 84.3% of Indigenous women experience violence in their lifetime (Rosay, 2016),

Policymakers have developed initiatives in response to the crisis of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) including the White House proclamation of National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls in 2019 and Executive Order 13898 that creates task forces for missing and murdered Indigenous peoples to address concerns around data collection, policies, and investigative responses. Since these legislative milestones, more than 12 states have designated task forces to research MMIWG. This year (2022) marked the first year that Kānaka Maoli (the Indigenous, anachronous peoples of Hawai'i) were formally recognized by a United States President as belonging to the Indigenous populations disproportionately impacted by interpersonal and systemic violence that leads to Native women and girls being murdered and missing.

¹ The term “Kānaka Maoli” is used when referring to those of Native Hawaiian descent regardless of blood quantum. According to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, native Hawaiian (with a lowercase “n”) is the “legal” definition of a Kanaka Maoli as someone who is no less than half Hawaiian by blood. The use of Native Hawaiian (with a capital “N”) has become a common signifier for anyone of Kānaka Maoli heritage, regardless of blood quantum level. In this report, the term “Kānaka Maoli” is used to refer to all those from Kānaka Maoli heritage without regard to blood quantum. The use of “native Hawaiian” or “Native Hawaiian” is used in instances where this term was used in cited statistics. “Native Hawaiian” is also used in acronyms, including “MMNHWG TF” and “NHWG Violence.”

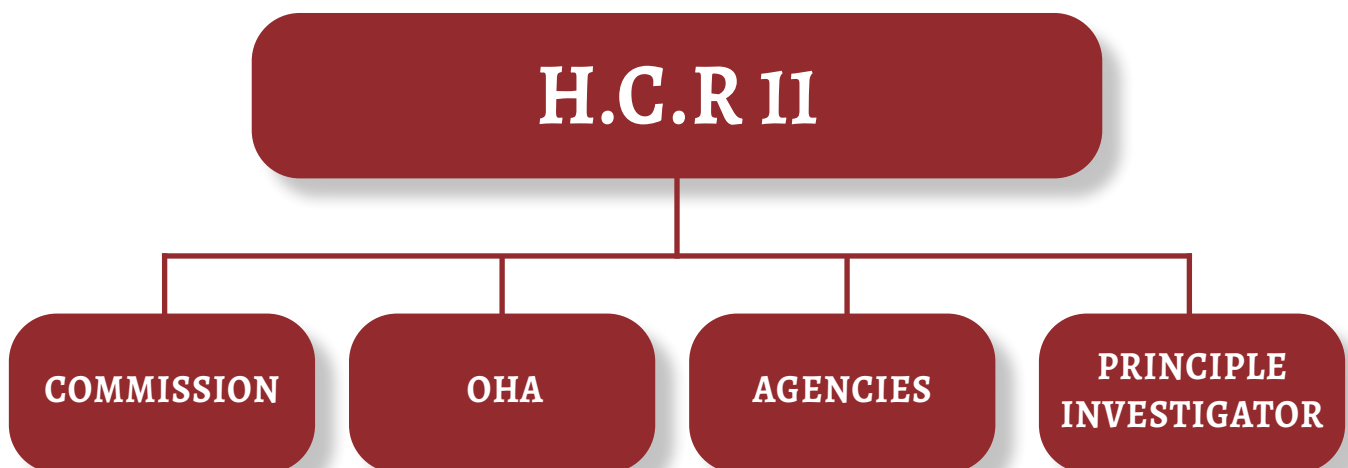
SCOPE OF THE REPORT

Pursuant to H.C.R. 11, the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) convened a Task Force to study Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls (MMNHWG). The Missing and Murdered Native Hawaiian Women and Girls Task Force (MMNHWG TF) is administered through the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and is comprised of individuals representing over 22 governmental and non-governmental organizations across Hawai'i that provide services to those who are impacted by violence against Kānaka Maoli. The MMNHWG TF has the kuleana of understanding the drivers that lead to Kānaka Maoli women and girls to be missing and murdered, to propose solutions, and to raise public awareness about violence against Kānaka Maoli. The findings and recommendations in this report were provided to members of the MMNHWG TF for review and their insights were included. Any disparate agreement with the findings and recommendations will be noted.

The MMNHWG TF chaired through CSW and OHA contracted with the principal investigator of this report to conduct research to prepare reports on

MMNHWG. Members of the MMNHWG TF were selected and named by the Hawai'i State Legislature. The MMNHWG TF is unique in that it is the only MMIWG Task Force nationally that is led by a government women's commission and native advocacy organizations rather than by law enforcement agencies. This is the first report to attempt to reliably indicate how many Kānaka Maoli women and girls are murdered and missing and measure the responses of various governmental and nongovernmental services.

The MMNHWG TF, held seven virtual meetings to discuss the process for program-level data collection and sharing and to engage in discourse about the disposition of MMNHWG in their respective fields, departments, and programs. In between full task force meetings, the principal investigator met with individual task force members to work on obtaining quantitative data from specific programs that provide direct service to those impacted by MMNHWG. The data presented about MMNHWG in this report were validated for accuracy by members of the MMNHWG TF.





METHODOLOGY (DATA SOURCES)

This preliminary report includes two main sources of information: 1) a comprehensive literature review; and 2) data obtained from state and community agencies. The purpose of the literature review is to holistically understand the scope of the problem of MMNHWG and to identify solutions informed by the pre-existing literature base.

The following research questions were addressed for this report:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of missing and murdered Kānaka Maoli women and girls?
2. What are the experiences of surviving Kānaka Maoli women and girls and their families as they are navigated through and/or navigate the process when recovered?

The full report will address additional research questions which can be found in Appendix A.

With the assistance of the MMNHWG TF, the principal investigator obtained preliminary data and statistics to help form a macro-level understanding of the scope and extent of NHWG violence.



ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The crisis of MMNHWG is a highly complex story with multiple, intersecting layers that make up the problem. Readers of this report can think of NHWG violence as a highly sophisticated 'eke lau hala or a basket woven using lau hala (pandanus leaves) and the traditional methods of Kānaka Maoli ulana or weaving. An 'eke lau hala has several overlapping leaves that are tightly woven to fashion a functional item made for carrying or protecting items. What this report seeks to carry and protect are the lives of Kānaka Maoli women and girls.

When weaving, we start at the center - the piko. The piko of NHWG violence is colonization. From the piko, the weaver must set pins in place to weave. These pins are where the lau hala are held

in place so the weaver can weave a pattern that reveals itself as one weaves. The reader must be cognizant of the fact that this preliminary report is one pin in the larger weaving project of this 'eke lau hala and the finished product requires far more material and time in order to weave.

This report is organized from the piko out. Current understandings of violence against NHWG are discussed through the lens of historical trauma and factors associated with NHWG violence including specific systemic inequities that fuel the crisis of MMNHWG.

BACKGROUND

Colonization and Kānaka Maoli Erasure

The piko (center) of NHWG violence is colonization. Colonization is a structure that originates from the history of Kānaka Maoli relationships with colonial powers, such as the United States, and is upheld through various colonial mechanisms. In Hawai'i, these colonial mechanisms are ideologies that justify the displacement and erasure of Kānaka Maoli through economic, social, and environmental laws and practices of the United States government.

In 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani, the last reigning monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i was illegally overthrown and falsely imprisoned by an oligarchy of U.S. businessmen. Hawai'i's legal annexation has yet to be ratified, meaning according to the laws of the United States, the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and the United Nations, Hawai'i is an independent nation heavily occupied by the United States. Through colonization, the laws of the United States that govern an illegally annexed Independent Native Hawaiian nation, is pretense for continued systemic violence via erasure and displacement of Kānaka Maoli.

Kānaka Maoli women are displaced by colonization in unique ways. For example, Kānaka Maoli women are victims of gender-based violence such as domestic violence and sexual assault more than any other population in Hawai'i (OHA et al., 2020). Prior to the arrival of the first colonizers from Britain in 1778, Kānaka Maoli practiced gender fluid beliefs. In one of the first acts of colonial displacement, U.S. missionaries replaced Kānaka Maoli women's 'ōlelo Hawai'i names with Christian first names and a patrilineal surname. Traditionally, names were passed down matrilineally, so erasing and replacing Kānaka Maoli names signified an ideological shift from a Hawai'i society that honored matrilineality to one that was congruent with western patriarchy. Additionally, when British colonizers first arrived

in Hawai'i, Kānaka Maoli women engaged in intercourse with these men. Their gender and sexuality was non-monogamous and non-heteronormative. Kānaka Maoli women then became spaces of colonial violence, through the rapid decline of the Kānaka Maoli population from sexually transmitted diseases to which they had no immunity. Furthermore, when businessmen from the U.S. and European nations established the whaling industry in Hawai'i in the 18th century, they came to expect that Kānaka Maoli women would be available to them for sex in exchange for material goods, thus, introducing the concept of prostitution parallel to the introduction of foreign capitalistic systems of currency and exchange. When a kapu (ban) was placed on prostitution, whalers and businessmen responded violently.



Historically, Kānaka Maoli women were the first to have their physical mana (spiritual power) controlled through violent, sexualized, patriarchal colonial processes of erasure, sterilization, and birthing. Today, Kānaka Maoli women continue to be sexually subjugated. For example, the iconic image of the scantily clothed, hip-shaking hula dancer is one that makes Kānaka Maoli women objects of sexual desire in the minds of foreign men. The commodifying and sexualizing of a sacred Kānaka Maoli art form (hula) is validated through ideologies of Kānaka Maoli women as uncivilized and needing salvation through relationships with white, western men.

Historical Trauma

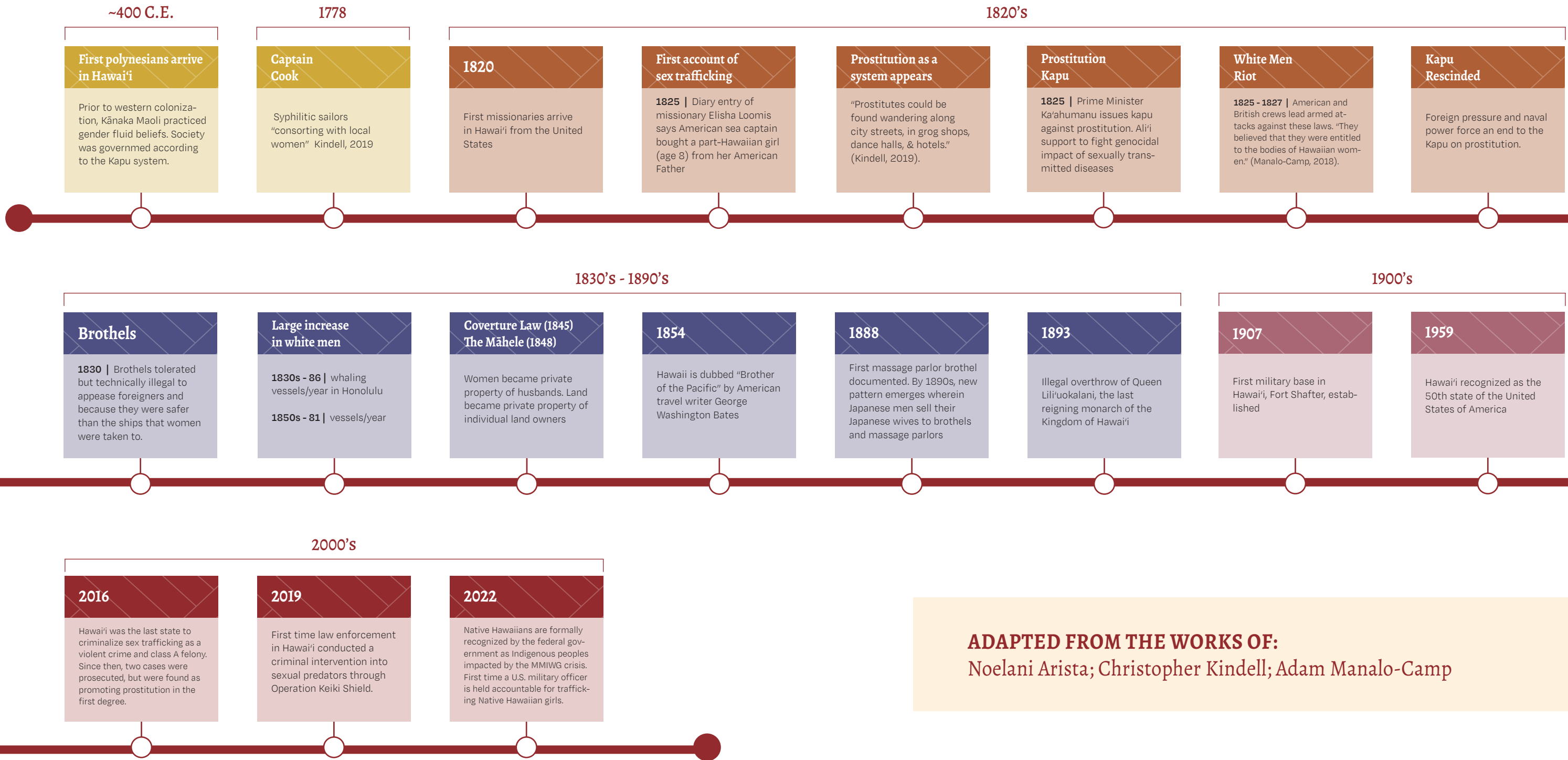
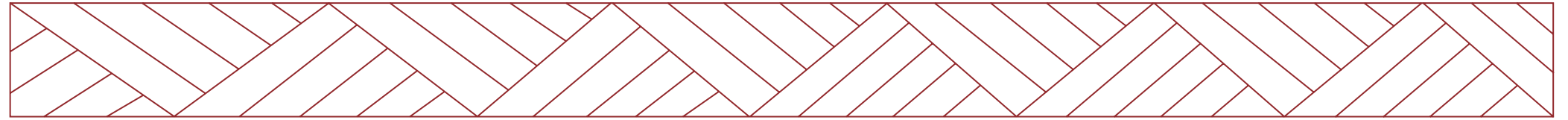
Colonization is not a one-off event of the past. Colonization continues in practices of the present. Today, colonization is maintained through imperialism via the heavy military presence and land holdings in Hawai'i and capitalism via the domination of the tourism industry. Both industries (military and tourism) are the most extractive industries in Hawai'i in terms of environmental and cultural resources. Militarism and tourism are justified through United States colonial law that is upheld through the misplacement of Kānaka Maoli within the United States constitution. The Kingdom of Hawai'i was not affiliated with the United States during the writing of the United States constitution. Given that the United States constitution and subsequent legislation were not created with Kānaka Maoli in mind, those who remain the most constitutionally protected by the power of the United States legal system are people who are U.S. citizens, white, male, upper class, and land-owning (i.e., the types of people who the law was written by and for). The State of Hawai'i's current legal system was built upon a foundation of Kānaka Maoli erasure that directly sustains the systemic inequities of today. An automatic acceptance of colonial jurisprudence that operates from a fallacy of equal treatment regardless of race/ethnicity, class, gender/sexuality, etc ensures that Kānaka Maoli women and girls continue to be lost within a web

of systemic social and economic inequities that kill and displace them.

The past has tangible impacts on the present and future. According to a study by Pokhrel & Herzog (2014), 81% of Kānaka Maoli college students reported thinking about the loss of their ancestral lands, 87% reported thinking about loss of 'ōlelo Hawai'i, 66% reported thinking about unfair treatment by the U.S. government, and 12-15% reported thinking several times a day about the lack of respect for elders and traditional Kānaka Maoli ways of being. These are factors that contribute to the prevalence of mental health issues in Kānaka Maoli. Speaking specifically to the ongoing effects of colonization on Kānaka Maoli health, Kānaka Maoli on average, experience a shorter lifespan (Aluli et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2004), a higher occurrence of heart attacks and obesity (Mau et al., 2009), and higher rates of psychological and emotional difficulties (Burrage et al., 2021) than other major racial/ethnic groups in Hawai'i. Additionally, Kānaka Maoli have the highest poverty, unemployment, and homelessness rates of all major ethnic groups in Hawai'i (Look et al., 2020). Within compulsory educational systems Kānaka Maoli students perform lower on standardized tests, experience lower graduation and college-going rates (Kana'iaupuni et al., 2021), are overrepresented in special education courses, and have lower math and reading proficiency rates than other racial/ethnic groups in Hawai'i (OHA, 2017).

These statistics should be understood as consequences of colonization, rather than as a learned or inherent deficiency of Kānaka Maoli individuals or communities. The harm caused by colonization is intergenerationally transmitted in what is commonly known across disciplines as historical trauma. Historical trauma is defined as "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma" (Brave Heart et al., 2011, p. 283).

TIMELINE OF SEX TRADE EXPANSION IN HAWAI'I



ADAPTED FROM THE WORKS OF:
Noelani Arista; Christopher Kindell; Adam Manalo-Camp

MMNHG SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES

Systemic inequities are closely woven to the prevalence of NHWG violence. Systemic inequities create material conditions that make everyday life a challenge. Some may refer to these systemic inequities as “risk factors” for being murdered and missing. Using the term “systemic inequities” is a way to be more deliberate with naming the mechanisms of violence against Kānaka Maoli women and girls as a social epidemic needing systemic responses

POVERTY

In 2021, 9.8% of Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander families were living in poverty compared to 8.0% of the total population. General poverty rates show that 13.3% of Native Hawaiians live in poverty compared to 11.2% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Kānaka Maoli women are impacted adversely by race and also by gender. The gender wage gap is the disparity between what men are paid and what women are paid on average. In Hawai‘i, Kānaka Maoli women are paid 29% less than white men and 18% less than Kānaka Maoli

men (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2017; OHA, 2018). The largest disparities in terms of poverty status for Kānaka Maoli women and girls is at age 15 (5% higher than non-Native Hawaiian females) and at ages 25-34 (over 10% higher than non-Native Hawaiian males and 4.1% higher than Native Hawaiian males of the same age) (OHA, 2018). These ages are vital to healthy human development since adolescence is a time of critical growth.

SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCE

Substance abuse, such as binge drinking and illicit drug use, are spiritual disconnectors that can lead to Kānaka Maoli erasure through death. Kānaka Maoli, for example, are two times more likely to die of alcohol-induced cirrhosis than the overall average for all ethnic groups

in Hawai‘i (HHDW, BRFSS, 2020). 52.9% of Kānaka Maoli high school girls have tried illicit drugs, which is 15.8% higher than non-Kānaka Maoli girls and 17% higher than for Kānaka Maoli boys (HHDW, YRBS, 2019).

FOSTER CARE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT

Kānaka Maoli children are overrepresented in placement in the Hawai‘i Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare Services (CWS) foster care system. In 2019, 45% of children in foster care in Hawai‘i (N= 1,238) were Kānaka Maoli (DHS, CWS 2021).

44.4% (N= 151) of “street youth,” including those who are homeless and runaways, are Kānaka Maoli, the largest percentage of any racial/ethnic group in Hawai‘i (Yuan et al., 2018). More than one in 10 homeless youth on O‘ahu reported selling sex to survive on the streets, with two-thirds (65%) of these youth reporting that they were forced by a third party (Yuan et al., 2018).

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

BARRIERS

Kānaka Maoli have been left out of dominant discourse and federal resource allocation to address violence against Indigenous communities in the U.S. The highly marginalized nature of Kānaka Maoli within the already sparse data on MMIWG contributes to public and legislative sentiment that MMNHWG is not a problem.

There is no uniform and streamlined way that data is collected on Kānaka Maoli by various agencies across Hawai'i. Governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations that work closely with lived experience survivors of NHWG violence either do not collect data that is disaggregated by race or collect data in a way that is not easily extractable for use in research. Using an intersectional approach to inquiry, sex/gender data is also either not collected or is not disaggregated by race. For instance, many governmental agencies collect sex data using the categories of male, female and Native Hawaiian, but do not specifically collect data on Kānaka Maoli females.

The lack of disaggregated data is further complicated by the inconsistencies in racial definitions when race data is collected. There are four main counties in Hawai'i: Kaua'i, Maui, Honolulu, and Hawai'i. The police departments in each county are responsible for responding to crimes and recording data for their entire jurisdiction using their own methods. Therefore, data are handled differently by county. All police department representatives stated that a barrier to understanding the problem of MMNHWG is because the data is only as good as what is reported at the time of the incident. Often times this means that race data are not collected at all.

A common barrier to deeply understanding NHWG violence is that Kānaka Maoli are often misclassified as belonging to other racial categories. In the high-profile case of missing six-year-old Isabella Kalua, mainstream news outlets failed to identify her as Kanaka Maoli. Isabella Kalua was reported as Caucasian.

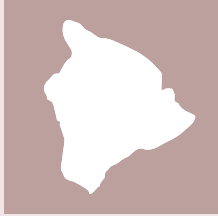
Because of the siloed nature of response to community concerns in Hawai'i by island and by governmental department, data sharing between islands and agencies to holistically understand the problem of MMNHWG and collaboratively enact solutions is not streamlined in a way that makes data requests timely and feasible for community awareness and research.

In addition to inconsistent and absent data collection processes, sexual and physical violence are highly underreported crimes because of fear of retribution and the shame associated with victim-blaming.



May 5th, National MMIWG2S Day, Waikīkī, O'ahu. Photo: Jason Lees

MURDERED AND MISSING



HAWAII ISLAND: Marlo Moku, a Kanaka Maoli woman, went missing at age 33 in Hilo, Hawaii in September 2008. Marlo Moku's crashed vehicle was found at the bottom of a cliff

at Hakalau Mill Landing and evidence suggests there did not appear to be a person inside the vehicle when it was rolled off the cliff. Searches for Marlo Moku have been unsuccessful. Marlo Moku's case remains open and unsolved.



O'AHU: Lisa Au, a 19 year old Kanaka Maoli University of Hawaii'i Mānoa college student and hair stylist, went missing on January 20, 1982, on O'ahu. She was last seen getting food

on her way to Makiki. Her naked body was discovered in a ravine near Tantalus. Her now 40-year-old case remains cold and her murderer has yet to be identified and brought to justice.

The average profile of a missing child report processed through the Missing Children's Center Hawaii'i (MCCH): 15-year-old, female, Native Hawaiian, missing from O'ahu (MCCH, 2022).

Of the 37 cases publicly reported by MCCH between 2020-2022, the average age of a missing child is 15-years-old, 77% are female, 84% are Native Hawaiian, and 71% went missing on O'ahu. Of the 71% of cases tied to O'ahu the only district information available located missing children from South O'ahu (one from Ewa Beach, two from Kalihi, and two from Waikīkī) (MCCH, 2022).

From 2011-2021, 26% of all missing females age 17 and below were Hawaiian/part-Hawaiian girls (n= 254) and represented 13% (N= 504) of all missing children's cases in Hawaii'i (JJIS, 2022).



May 5th, National MMIWG2S Day, Waikīkī, O'ahu. The Red Dress is an international symbol of MMIWG2S started by Métis artist Jaime Black. The red symbolizes the blood of those missing and murdered and the empty dress represents the spirits of those stolen from violence.

VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence

37.6% of adults who experience physical violence by an intimate partner in Hawai'i are Indigenous (including Native American/ American Indian and Native Hawaiian), higher than any other racial group (HHDW, BRFSS, 2013).

In 2017, of the 29.9% of high school students who report being emotionally abused by an intimate partner in the past 12 months, 38% are Kānaka Maoli females, which is higher than Kānaka Maoli males or females of other ethnicities (HHDW, YRBS, 2017).

Untangling the web of inequities that maintain NHWG violence, domestic violence (DV) is the leading cause of homelessness for women and children (NNEDV, 2017). 22% of O'ahu's homeless Kānaka Maoli population report experiencing intimate partner violence compared to 18% of non-Kānaka Maoli. Of the 22%, 14% are unsheltered compared to 11% of non-Kānaka Maoli. 22% of DV survivors filing a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) are Kānaka Maoli (OHA et al., 2020).

Sexual Assault

Of the 10.8% of high school students who reported being sexually abused by anyone in the last 12 months, 16.5% were Kānaka Maoli females; higher than females of all other racial groups (HHDW, YRBS, 2019).

Of the 6.1% of middle school students who reported being sexually abused by anyone in the last 12 months, 7.8% were Kānaka Maoli females; higher than females of other racial groups and Kānaka Maoli males (HHDW, YRBS, 2019).

In 2019, majority of arrested adult sex offenders were white males (DAG, 2019).

Out of all those arrested through Operation Keiki Shield, 38% (N= 74) were active-duty military personnel. These military personnel were arrested both off and on military bases as part of non-military covert operations that targeted civilians off-base and "military ops" between the U.S. military and local law enforcement to arrest on-base offenders who commit internet-facilitated sexual crimes against children (HICAC Task Force, 2022). For example, 25% of the offenders arrested in a March 2019 operation, which was not a "military op" and which was the only documented non-military Operation Keiki Shield operation on O'ahu since 2019, were military men. The majority of non-military, civilian operations have been conducted on Kaua'i and Maui, which have a significantly smaller military population than O'ahu. None of the offenders arrested have been women.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

There are at least 85 known sex traffickers in Hawai'i. Majority of known sex traffickers in Hawai'i are male (83%) and the most common relationship a trafficker has with a victim is a pimp (36%) (Amina, 2022).

59% of clients (N= 147; n= 86) served through Susannah Wesley Community Center between October 2021-May 2022 are trafficking victims. 37% of cases are sex trafficking cases, the majority (86%) are female and (45%) are Native Hawaiian/part-Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (Amina, 2022).

71% of trafficking victims are below the age of 19 and 46.8% of all cases are Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) cases and Child Sex Trafficking cases (Amina, 2022).

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

This report should be contextualized as a stepping stone to continuing this work. It will take many more years of targeted efforts in research, policy, and practice to gain the data necessary to understand the full scope of violence against NHWG and implement recommendations that can prevent this violence from continuing.

UNIVERSAL, SYSTEMIZED DATA COLLECTION

Although the lack of data about MMNHWG is evident, the data that is available, and the experiences of survivors of NHWG violence, demonstrates a critical need for more structured, systematic, and streamlined data collection between governmental agencies.

Colonization, as embedded in every inch and corner of every system, means that quantitative data is not neutral. Indigenous erasure happens not only via the murder and displacing of NHWG, but also the erasure of NHWG in the data itself. The conflating of “Native Hawaiian” with “Other Pacific Islander” and “Native Hawaiian” with “Asian” leaves the statistical story of violence against NHWG incomplete.

Survivors of violence, family members of survivors, and service providers are keen to the realities of this crisis in Hawai‘i and data collection efforts by governmental agencies need to better reflect these realities.

Given the sensitive and complex nature of NHWG violence, the current state of incomplete and inconsistent data collection on NHWG violence across law enforcement and other governmental agencies, it is highly likely that the true depth of the problem of NHWG violence is underestimated.

Data collection is specifically hindered by:

1. A lack of disaggregated racial data;
2. A lack of data collection regarding race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, and other demographic indicators in general;
3. A lack of a uniform and clear process for sharing data publicly and between agencies;
4. Underreporting of crimes that lead to MMNHWG such as sex trafficking; and
5. Racial misidentification.

Although data aggregation is often used as an approach to increase sample size and statistical power when analyzing data from smaller population groups, it can limit the understanding of disparities among diverse subpopulations such as Kānaka Maoli. The data that does exist regarding the systemic inequities that lead to MMNHWG is typically not disaggregated by race/ethnicity and is not stored by the DOH or other entities in a way that allows for multivariate analyses or analyses that can look at multiple variables (i.e., Race AND sex AND age) at once. The scarcity of reliable, disaggregated data that can be analyzed with the complexity that understanding the crisis of MMNHWG requires is a huge barrier to understanding problems and solutions.

LESSONS LEARNED

Representatives from critical entities are uninvolved in responding to the MMNHWG crisis. Namely, representatives from the United States military and the tourism sector are absent from this process and are not encouraged by the legislature to participate in this report. Lack of representation on the MMNHWG Task Force is problematic given that the military and tourism are two of the biggest industries in Hawai'i and are also the most extractive in terms of natural resources and land holdings.

During the process of discussing the various data points identified as important to understanding the extent of missing and murdered NHWG, law

enforcement representatives shared that suspicious deaths and suicides are determined by the coroner. Most Task Force members were unaware of the role of the coroner's office in understanding the problem of MMNHWG.

This preliminary report demonstrated that while there is data on contextual factors such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and commercial sex exploitation, there is less data available on characteristics, such as race, for data directly related to murdered and missing NHWG. This preliminary report exemplified that even among service providers reporting of data is limited.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Enriching the data collection process by engaging in a qualitative research design allows for the centering of the experiences of key experts in the field. Key experts in the field include lived experience survivors or those who have or are currently experiencing NHWG violence and their families. Key experts also include social workers, therapists, law enforcement officers, military personnel, hospitality and tourism administrators, coroners, activists, etc. The creation of MMNHWG Task Force focus groups is a proposed way to strengthen data collection and strengthen our understanding of MMNHWG.



May 5, 2022 National MMIWG2S Day, Maui.

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