The cover photo was taken by MA student Olivia Marohnic during a department fieldtrip to a farm on the Wai‘anae side of Oahu.

Note from the Editor:
Becoming the editor for Hōʻike Honua is profoundly rewarding. Corresponding with UHM geographers past and present not only illuminates the legacy of previous graduates but also reveals the wide array of critical scholarship in our department today.

Perhaps more importantly, I became aware of the comradery, warmth and community that has characterized our UHM Geography Department for decades. Thanks to all the contributors. In particular, much thanks to Matt McGranaghan and Ben Schrager for helping with this.
Reece Jones is an Associate Professor in the department. His research on political borders, walls, and security has been featured in the media around the world including the New York Times, Time Magazine, and the Economist. He served as the President of the Political Geography Specialty Group of the AAG from 2013-2015 and he is on the editorial boards of the journals Geopolitics and Political Geography. He will also begin as the forum and review editor at Geopolitics in January 2016.

He has two single-authored and one edited volume, in addition to over twenty journal articles. His first book, Border Walls, analyzed the construction of walls and fences in the United States, India, and Israel and won the 2013 Julian Minghi Distinguished Book Award for best book in Political Geography from the AAG. His co-edited book with Corey Johnson, Placing the Border in Everyday Life, was published in 2014.

His third book, Violent Borders, will be out with Verso Press in October 2016 and contextualizes the global migration crisis within the context of the exclusionary history of the state. Forty thousand human beings died trying to cross international borders in the past decade, with the high profile deaths along the shores of Europe only accounting for half of the gristy total. These deaths are not exceptional, rather the result of state attempts to contain populations and control access to resources and opportunities. Drawing on field research in border regions around the world, Violent Borders documents the billions of dollars spent on border security projects and their dire consequences for the majority of the people in the world. While the poor are restricted by the lottery of birth to slums and the aftershocks of decolonization, the wealthy travel freely, exploiting pools of cheap labor and lax environmental regulations. With the growth of borders and resource enclosures, the deaths of migrants in search of a better life are intimately connected to climate change, the growth of slums, and the persistence of global wealth inequality.


The Israeli wall between Anata and Pisgat.
Lesley Iaukea is from the island of Maui (Hawai‘i). She has her Bachelor’s degree in Geography from the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa with a focus on Sea Level Rise/Climate Change in Oceania and GIS mapping. She went on to receive a Master’s degree in Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa. She specialized in educational platforms that incorporates Native knowledge into a curriculum that highlights the relationship between environment and the Native agency. She wrote about the dynamics in Tokelau and their two diasporic communities, New Zealand and Hawai‘i, as a way to show how a culture can be resilient in perpetuation by adding traditions and language into the educational platform.

Currently she is a PhD student in American Studies at the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa and writes about Native curriculum as an essential pathway to reclaim and reassert Native knowledge as a foundation. She is a crewmember on the voyaging canoe called Hokule‘a. She authored a curriculum for Hawai‘i schools k-12 that incorporates the tools of voyaging in the classroom as the students follow the canoe around the world via satellite on the Malama Honua: World Wide Voyage.

Lesley Iaukea is a guest lecturer at University of Hawai‘i campuses where she teaches on Native knowledge, Hawai‘i Politics, and Sea Level Rise/Climate Change in Oceania. She is also an active member on the US Indigenous Climate Change Taskforce specializing in relocation; Oceans and Islands Topic for the US Climate Resilience Toolkit Taskforce; and Nationwide Tribal Climate Education Taskforce.

At the end of November 2015, the United Nations will be sending her to Paris, France to give a presentation on her research in ‘Forced Migration Secondary to Sea Level Rise in Oceania’ for the Global Climate Change Summit called COP21 under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
Graduating with a Master’s degree in Geography from the University of Hawai’i Mānoa (UHM) in the summer of 1997, geography was and is still part of life for Craig Clouet. Measuring the accuracy of the US Geological Survey Digital Elevation Models using GPS was a fun thesis topic that has relevance for me today as I am often consulted on mapping accuracy and Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) issues. I have tested many GNSS units while struggling with datums and epochs here in Hawai‘i for twenty years now.

Working in the field of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) has allowed me to use geography in a large array of applications and use cases. Right out of UHM, I was glad to become the first full time GIS analyst for the Kamehameha Schools, Hawai‘i’s largest private land owner. That work allowed for much travel across the island chain, from helicopter mapping of goats and sheep on Mauna Loa, to land use and boundary issues in the commercial malls of Honolulu. Along with mapping history and culture, I was also put in charge of the historic map collection, which we later scanned and made available online.

After seven years with Kamehameha Schools, I joined up with Esri, the world leader in GIS technology. Working for a software development company is a good way to keep current, sometimes into the bleeding edge of technology. I have been tasked to work the annual GIS conference. My duty is to stand in the product area and answer any questions from any of the 15,000 attendees. This work allows me to travel beyond Hawai‘i and work in the Pacific Islands region. Consequently, I was able to see places like Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and Fiji. I also work here in Hawai‘i with a wide range of GIS users in all the federal, state, and counties agencies.

In addition to the full time work, I have had the opportunity to teach at Hawai‘i Pacific University as well as in several departments at UHM. I am also the current President of the Hawai‘i Geographic Information Coordinating Council (HIGICC), our state’s professional and community GIS organization. Geography is much more than maps, it is a fun career.
I never imagined myself a geographer, but I’m grateful to have landed in this department. It is a place where faculty and alumni took time to share stories and images of the department’s legacy. The posters lining the Saunders 4th floor hallway provide me a sense of continuity of where this department has been, even when it seems adrift at present. I appreciate the sense of community that many faculty seem to value and its diversity, even when we as students struggle to find holism and ways to integrate what feel like disciplinary silos.

In Geography, I’ve had the opportunity to dip my sciency toes in the social sciences. The department accepted me with my eclectic training (environmental engineering and botany) and broad interests in water, plants, and people. It seemed like a place where one might be encouraged to be transdisciplinary. Although I’ve learned that it’s not so simple, I have gained valuable training along the way on qualitative methods and political ecology frameworks. Water resource management may be a technical field, but resource governance sits in the realm of the social sciences. Similarly, while understanding the physical aspects of climate change requires training in the sciences, grasping the complex human systems aspects of the Anthropocene requires an understanding of development, economics, and cultural and political forces best gained through social sciences training. I doubt I would have developed such a perspective if I’d remained in the sciences.

This aside, one of the greatest resources in our department are its students. So let’s shine this spotlight on these geographers for their recognized and unrecognized accomplishments. Among us, we have a seasoned advocate for peace, justice, and demilitarization who many of us look up to. While I wish someone would give Kyle Kajihiro a full scholarship to continue his research and life’s work, he’d find a way to pursue social justice regardless. Another colleague is a mother and PhD student who is the sunniest and most resilient among us. Without her valuable time and feedback, I would not have had as strong an application to the Ford fellowship program. Kerrie Littlejohn, incredibly resourceful and helpful, is one of those people who, without saying anything, reminds you that however stressed you are, you have relatively little in the way of responsibility. Yet another colleague, Han Tseng, provides health and happiness for a number of grad students in our department since she regularly cooks breakfasts and dinners at Hale Mānoa! Many others contribute to the departmental sense of community, including the 2015 cohort of incoming graduate students who have raised culinary standards at recent department pau hana events.

Within our grad student body, we have not only scholars, but parents, partners, siblings and friends who regularly share food, advice, difficult stories, and fun times together. While this newsletter may serve to highlight professional successes, these relationships and systems of peer support help foster such success among us grad students. In an era where the academic rat-race seems to encourage individual achievement over group success, many individuals in our department are exceptional in their willingness to share and help each other, whether human or physical or spatial geographer. Spending a little time with each other is all it takes. Who knows, maybe that conversation will lead to a transdisciplinary collaboration and publication 5 years from now…
I entered the UHM Geography Department in the fall of 2011. At the time I was planning to research counter culture dorms in Kyoto. By the end of my first year, I was working on a very different topic, Hawai‘i’s seed corn industry. Unbeknownst to many, seed corn is the largest agricultural industry in Hawai‘i. I spent the final year of my MA program attending a Japanese language program at the Inter-University Center (IUC) for Japanese Language Studies in Yokohama.

Entering the PhD program in the fall of 2014, I knew I wanted to research agriculture in Japan. Eventually, I decided on an unlikely topic... chickens! Since the 1970s, chicken meat production relocated from around the urban core of Tokyo and Kansai towards Southern Kyushu. More than beef and pork, chicken consumption is trending upwards, concentrated in one region, and produced domestically.

This topic allows me to get at some of the questions that fascinate geographers. How do humans extract value from the environment and what are the consequences? What changes with the introduction of new technologies and profit-making strategies? As a cultural geographer, I am also examining how new cultural meanings are created alongside new material practices.

In the 1970s, there was a big chicken boom that was epitomized by the rise of Kentucky Fried Chicken – Japan. By the 1990s, concerns over industrial growing practices encouraged the creation of value-added certifications such as jidori (地鶏). More recently, Japan’s aging population intensifies the competition over the shrinking gut of Japanese consumers.

I received the Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship from the American-Japan Society Hawai‘i to support two years of field research. I began research in the fall of 2015 and am affiliated with Miyazaki University as a Foreign Researcher. I plan on returning to Hawai‘i in the fall of 2017 to write my dissertation.
Since I was young, I had a fascination with people and Earth. Upon starting my studies at the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa, I could not decide if I wanted to study Anthropology or Environmental Science. I was elated when I stumbled across the Geography Department, as the discipline seemed to encompass both of my interests. I declared my major the next week and have not looked back. Along the way, I took on German as a second major and am often asked, “What are you going to do with those degrees?” Good question. What better way to answer it than by gaining some study and work experience in Germany? I applied to the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals, a program jointly sponsored by the United States and German governments. This program includes attendance at a German university for a semester and a 5-month internship while fulfilling a role as a cultural ambassador.

I was accepted and am now halfway around the world from the tiny island on which I grew up. I departed from Washington DC with 74 other participants from all over the US. We are distributed throughout Deutschland and are almost 4 months into our year here. Soon I will begin my internship at a refugee camp. I am both excited and nervous about how this particular experience will change my perspective of the world.

I came here with the intention of learning everything I could about German culture. However, since my arrival, I find myself pondering what it is to be American. During my travels, I met people from all over the planet who have confirmed my belief that good, open-minded people exist everywhere. Contrary to my expectations however, I now consider the US with a certain fondness that I have never known.
Growing up in the Tong village in Northeast China, I never thought my life would be so connected to the nation and beyond. I used to dream about life beyond that village because of my strong curiosity about other lands. After Mao died and China re-opened universities, I was among the lucky top 4% of all the students attending the national exam to be admitted to college.

The rest of my life accelerated significantly – bachelors’ and master’s degrees in Geography in a prestigious university in Beijing, working at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and going to Clark University in the US to pursue my PhD. After a couple of university posts, I came to Hawai‘i.

Now, while living closer to my home village of Tong, I am unable to return. I took on the practice of Falun Gong in 2004, not knowing how it would change my life. Falun Gong, also called Falun Dafa, is an ancient Chinese practice of medication and self-discipline based on the principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance. Fearing its growing influence, the Chinese Communist government started a brutal persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in 1999. I am not able to visit China because the risk of persecution; seeking freedom of belief, I became an American citizen.

How is my life bound up with that of two nations? China gave me life and holds my fascination and intellectual interest, while the US, my new home, gives me the precious opportunity to freely practice my Chinese-based belief. Ironic.

Unable to continue empirical research in China, I turn to the traditional Chinese thought on nature, a topic of my longtime interest. One component of my current research is “tea and Chinese culture.” Facing a sea of knowledge in Chinese history, culture, and philosophy in my research as a professor at an American university, I feel I am learning to be a real Chinese scholar: Build knowledge as virtue and treat education as life. Isn’t it a joy to study quietly over a cup of tea, worry not about my lacking but take delight in the small progress I make day by day? Isn’t it an honor to follow Confucius, China’s first educator, to share with students the knowledge of the heart and of life?
Dr. Brian Szuster and Dr. Mark Needham of the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa (UHM) Department of Geography co-chaired the recent 8th International Congress on Coastal and Marine Tourism (CMT 2015) in Waikoloa, Hawaii. The congress, which was hosted by the UHM College of Social Sciences and the International Coastal and Marine Tourism Society, included researchers, educators, government and industry practitioners and students who presented research papers and posters under the general theme of "Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future." CMT 2015 was the largest and most successful gathering in the 25-year history of the congress, with over 120 research papers and poster presented during the four-day event.

Much thanks to Kyle Kajihiro and Marie McKenzie for serving as GSO reps. From Fall 2014-Fall 2015, they attended GSO meetings and secured funding for numerous students in our department.

We would also like to recognize graduate students Aurora Kagawa-Viviani and Emily Wright. They have dedicated time as unofficial liaisons for the UHM Geography faculty and graduate student body. Some goals include a) creating a more routine way for graduate students to engage with faculty, b) facilitating communication for department administrative and faculty decisions, c) giving graduate students an avenue for sharing feedback and make requests.

Congratulations to this semester’s graduates!

Graduate Student Fall 2015:
Alexandra Hedgpeth, MA, Beilman Geography BA Recipients:
Doug Curran
Christine Flauta
Shaun Hayasaka
Alistair Maclean
Sky Okimoto

For the 2016 Distinguished Lecture Series, Professor Julie Guthman of the University of California, Santa Cruz will present on Thursday, February 25, 6:00-8:00pm. She is the author of numerous influential publications in critical human geography, political ecology and agro-food studies.
UHM Geography MA Student Emily Wright conducted preliminary fieldwork in Lombok, Indonesia.

Tying seaweed "seed" on lines to be grown out in Serewe, Lombok.

Women who are involved in a cooperative that makes sweets and snack products out of seaweed, also in Serewe, Lombok.

UHM Geography PhD Student Kyle Kajihiro traveled to Okinawa last summer to research the protest movement against US military bases there.

Left photo: In Henoko, protesters maintain a sit-in tent where they block construction trucks and military vehicles each morning. Lower-left photo: Kyle met with former Okinawan governor Masahide Ota. Below photo: Protester faces off against Japanese coast guard at the site of a proposed US marine base in Henoko.
UHM Geographers went on a field trip, visiting different farms around Oahu.

Rainbow and Cows at the Naked Cow Dairy Farm and Creamery (from Olivia Marohnic).

Waianae (from Sayaka Sakuma).

Kahumana Farm (from Krisna Suryanata).

Geographers learning about GMO corn at Monsanto (from Mary Mostafanezhad).

A striking image taken at Monsanto Farm.

Crops at Kahumana Farm (from Olivia Marohnic).

Kahumana Farm (from Krisna Suryanata).
Continued, UHM geographers on a field trip to farms around Oahu

Left: Those Jersey Cows (photo Yu-fen Huang).
Below-left: A meteorologist resting.
Below: Memories of Ben Schrager manifest everywhere (photo Olivia Marohnic).

Above (photo Mary Mostafanezhad) and below (photo Krisna Suryanata): Undergraduates, graduates and faculty alike ride the yellow bus.


Naked Cow Dairy Farm and Creamery in Waianae (from Sayaka Sakuma).
Robert O’Conner, MA Student

Jaya Reinhalter, MA 2014
-Awarded the Center for Communal Studies Graduate Prize for best paper for “Intentional Communities: Place-Based Articulations of Social Critique,” 2015.
-Awarded the Communal Studies Association Research Fellowship for “Restorative Change in Intentional Communities,” 2015.

Mary Tardona, MA Student
-Awarded Best Graduate Poster Honorable Mention at Tester Symposium, 2015.

Emily Wright, MA Student
-Completed a 10-week United States-Indonesia Society language program.

Timothy Workman, MA Student
-Award East-West Center Student Affiliate Program 2015.

Undergraduate Students:
Tomas Herrera
-Awarded the FLAS Fellowship at UHM, 2015-2016.

Li Philips
-Awarded 1st Place Award for Social Sciences Oral Presentation at the UH-Manoa Spring Undergraduate Showcase of Research and Creative Work on her presentation on cultural-historical tourism in Bagan, Myanmar, 2015.

Alumni Hawaiian Geographies:
Carlos Andrade, PhD 2001
-Author 2014. “A Hawaiian Geography or a Geography of Hawai’i?” Hawai‘i inuiakea, 2: 4-22.

Kamanamaikalani Beamer, PhD 2008

Kali Fermantez, PhD 2007

Douglas Herman, PhD 1995
-Blogs about traditional Oceanic canoe building: http://blog.nmai.si.edu/main/hawaii/.

Renee Pualani Louis, PhD 2008

Katrina-Ann R. Kapा’anaokalāʻoe keola Nākoʻa Oliveira, PhD 2006
Tom Giambelluca appointed as the Acting Associate Director of the Social Science Research Institute at the College of Social Sciences, starting from Aug 2015.

Tom Giambelluca Lab:


The MoraLab continued the Carbon Neutrality Project by working with the community in Kailua. This project engages students and their parents in the planting of trees necessary to sequester their overall CO2 emissions. Photos left and above.

Above: Halloween 2015 pau hana. Faculty, graduate students and the new cohort celebrate!
We hope that this newsletter helps keep our Geography ‘ohana close.

Mahalo nui loa

Photo Credits:
Unless otherwise noted, photos are provided by the profiled individual, Dylan Beatty or Hong Jiang.
Cover Photo was submitted by Olivia Marohnic.
The above photo is for Sara.