

Interconnectedness in a "Sea of Islands"

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What does Pacific Island/Oceanic wisdom mean to you?

Reflecting on a sense of place in Hawai'i in relation to ecological ethics has led me to realize the centrality of interconnectedness. This interconnectedness is all-encompassing and, further, extends beyond one's *mokupuni* (island) to include *Moana Nui* (the greater Pacific Polynesian root culture). This notion of interconnectedness is echoed by the Tongan anthropologist, Epeli Hau'ofa, who emphasized it through his description that Oceania has a "sea of islands" (Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands"). This insight is an important corrective and refutation of the individualized conception of self that is the vestige of modernity.

How/why do you bring island wisdom into your scholarship?

This insight into our interconnectedness informs my research in ecological ethics as I seek to identify and unfold the convergences between the indigenous place-based ecological knowledge (IPEK), and conservation science and natural resource management. This line of inquiry relates to the ethical aspects of the human relation to and use of the natural environment to contemporary practices of sustainability in a way that allows us to examine and reflect on the mutually beneficial relationship between the two convergent worldviews of IPEK and modern science.