

Delving into the Science of Settler Colonial Whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania: A Comprehensive Exploration

The colonization of Hawai'i and Oceania by European powers has left an indelible mark on the region, shaping its social, political, economic, and cultural landscapes. One of the most enduring legacies of this colonial encounter is the concept of "whiteness," a social construct that has been used to justify the domination and exploitation of Indigenous peoples.

In this article, we will explore the science of settler colonial whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania. We will examine how whiteness has been constructed and maintained in these regions, and how it has impacted the lives of Indigenous peoples. We will also discuss the ongoing resistance to settler colonial whiteness, and the efforts to decolonize these regions.

The Construction of Whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania

The concept of whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania is rooted in the ideologies of European colonialism. European colonizers viewed themselves as superior to Indigenous peoples, and they used this belief to justify their conquest and occupation of these lands. Whiteness was constructed as a marker of this superiority, and it was used to create a racial hierarchy in which Europeans were at the top and Indigenous peoples were at the bottom.

Possessing Polynesians: The Science of Settler Colonial Whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania

by Robert G. Wetzel



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This racial hierarchy was maintained through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- **Legal discrimination:** Indigenous peoples were denied basic rights and freedoms, such as the right to vote, own land, and receive an education.
- **Economic exploitation:** Indigenous peoples were forced to work in low-paying jobs and were denied access to economic opportunities.
- **Social segregation:** Indigenous peoples were segregated from white settlers in schools, hospitals, and other public spaces.
- **Cultural assimilation:** Indigenous peoples were forced to adopt European values and customs, and their own cultures were suppressed.

These mechanisms worked together to create a system of white supremacy that benefited European settlers at the expense of Indigenous peoples.

The Impact of Whiteness on Indigenous Peoples

The construction and maintenance of whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania has had a devastating impact on Indigenous peoples. This impact has been felt in all areas of life, including:

- **Health:** Indigenous peoples have higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and disease than white settlers.
- **Education:** Indigenous peoples have lower levels of educational attainment than white settlers.
- **Housing:** Indigenous peoples are more likely to live in substandard housing than white settlers.
- **Employment:** Indigenous peoples are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than white settlers.
- **Criminal justice:** Indigenous peoples are more likely to be arrested, convicted, and imprisoned than white settlers.

These disparities are a direct result of the systemic racism that has been built into the fabric of society in Hawai'i and Oceania. Whiteness has created a system of privilege for white settlers, while simultaneously disadvantaging Indigenous peoples.

Ongoing Resistance to Settler Colonial Whiteness

Despite the centuries of oppression they have faced, Indigenous peoples in Hawai'i and Oceania have never given up their fight for justice. They have resisted settler colonial whiteness through a variety of means, including:

- **Political activism:** Indigenous peoples have organized political movements to fight for their rights and to challenge the status quo.

- **Cultural revitalization:** Indigenous peoples have worked to revive their own cultures and languages, which had been suppressed by colonizers.
- **Economic development:** Indigenous peoples have developed their own businesses and cooperatives to create economic opportunities for themselves and their communities.
- **Education:** Indigenous peoples have founded their own schools and universities to provide their children with an education that is rooted in their own cultures and values.

These efforts have had a significant impact on the fight against settler colonial whiteness. Indigenous peoples have made great strides in achieving self-determination and in challenging the racist systems that have oppressed them for so long. However, much work remains to be done.

Decolonizing Hawai'i and Oceania

The ultimate goal of the struggle against settler colonial whiteness is to decolonize Hawai'i and Oceania. Decolonization is a process of dismantling the structures of colonialism and restoring power to Indigenous peoples. It is a complex and challenging process, but it is essential for creating a just and equitable future for all.

Decolonization can take many different forms, but some of the key principles include:

- **Recognition of Indigenous sovereignty:** Indigenous peoples must have the right to self-determination and to govern their own lands and

resources.

- **Reparations for past injustices:** Indigenous peoples must be compensated for the centuries of oppression they have endured.
- **Cultural revitalization:** Indigenous peoples must be able to revive their own cultures and languages, which are essential to their identities and well-being.
- **Economic self-determination:** Indigenous peoples must have the opportunity to create their own economic systems and to develop their own economies.

Decolonization is a long-term process, but it is one that is necessary for creating a just and equitable future for all.

The science of settler colonial whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania is a complex and ever-evolving field. Whiteness is a social construct that has been used to justify the domination and exploitation of Indigenous peoples, and it has had a devastating impact on their lives. However, Indigenous peoples have never given up their fight for justice, and they have made great strides in challenging settler colonial whiteness and decolonizing their lands.



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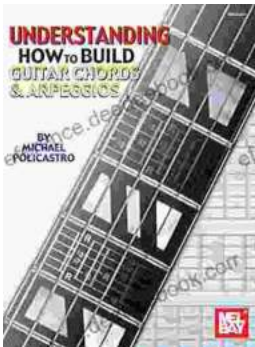
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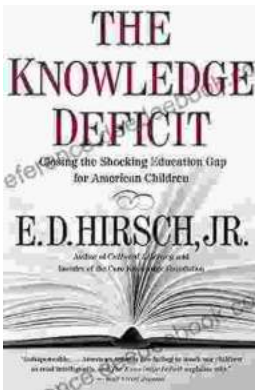
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