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Olelo Noeau: Hawaiian Proverbs And Poetical Sayings

MARY KAWENA PUKUI



‘ŌLELO NO‘EAU

HAWAIIAN PROVERBS & POETICAL SAYINGS



Synopsis

This extraordinary collection of Hawaiian sayings--collected, translated, and annotated by Mary Kawena Pukui--offers a unique opportunity to savor the wisdom, poetic beauty, and earthy humor of these finely crafted expressions. The sayings may be appreciated individually and collectively for their aesthetic, historic, and educational values. They reveal even deeper layers of meaning, giving understanding not only of Hawaii and its people but all of humanity. Since the sayings carry the immediacy of the spoken word, considered to be the highest form of cultural expression in old Hawaii, they bring us closer to the everyday thoughts and lives of the Hawaiians who created them. Taken together, the sayings offer a basis for an understanding of the essence and origins of traditional Hawaiian values. This book is the product of a collecting effort that was begun by Mrs. Pukui at about the age of fifteen, around 1910, and continued throughout her long and honored career as a translator and collector of historic Hawaiian materials and as a teacher and lecturer on the language, music, and dance of traditional Hawaii.

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Customer Reviews

For anyone interested in learning about the poetry and eloquence that is the Hawaiian language,

you have to buy this book. The book "Olelo No'eau (which means wise sayings) illustrates the ways in which Hawaiians used examples of what they observed in their everyday surroundings to express themselves. Each of the wise sayings covers a wide variety of topics including family, relationships, battle, life, and honor. Mary Kawena Puku'i has long been an avid perpetuator of the Hawaiian culture and I am very pleased to have this publication to share with others.

I write a newsletter for our local NAWIC chapter. Our current President is a niece of Mary Kawena Pukui and quotes her from time to time. So, I decided to each month run a column using Hawaiian phrases with their English translation and explanation. The newsletter has copies that go all over the country, not just in Hawaii. It was a way of sharing our culture with those readers and it was very well received. The phrases are available online at several websites, but many more are available in the book and it is really easy to use as a reference since I don't have to spend all that time online looking for just the right phrase. I also found myself getting caught up in the book and reading way beyond the phrase chosen for each month and enjoying it very much. Hawaiian wasn't a written language initially, making this reference material so much more valuable. Because of "Auntie Mary's" work, these sayings are preserved and passed on to the masses. As with all Proverbs, their wisdom should be shared for the rest of the world.

This is a great book for both the study of the Hawaiian language and the Hawaiian culture. I recommend this book to everyone who wants to study about Hawai`i (language, people, customs and traditions). E ola mau ka `olelo Hawai`i. Mahalo

This book has been an excellent resource for my research/studies on my free time. This book is a collection of Hawaiian Proverbs and sayings, and each proverb is listed in its traditional Hawaiian followed by the literal translation, then a short summary of the significance of the proverb. Some proverbs make no sense until that short summary where the context of the proverb is explained. I've been saving up to buy this book for some time. It was never a necessity, but it was something I wanted to enrich my life and help me get in touch with my heritage. So far it has succeeded and also given me more information on life in ancient Hawaii. I'm pretty happy with my purchase. I would recommend this book to others who are interested in a less straightforward look at learning about Hawaiiana. The book is organized alphabetically by the first word of the proverb and not topically or by themes, which may not be as helpful for a research subject.

There exists no better introduction to the beauty and poetry of the Hawaiian language. Mary Kawena Pukui is the soul of old Hawai'i and possessed the intellect and ear to capture it. Certainly an informative read, this book also gives you the chance to turn your cliché ridden speech to exotic rhythms and poetry. A hui ho

This well-worn book is in Hawaiian Hall at Bishop Museum. After reading some the proverbs, it occurred to me that I MUST HAVE this compendium of common sense. In my view, because Hawaiians did not originally have palapala, there is more wisdom contained from the oral traditions. This is a real treasure of Hawaiian lore which accurately captures human nature.

This is a most informative book that explains why Hawaiian language is so tricky to learn. Very insightful. A must resource for those who want to really understand the nuances of a language that didn't develop a written aspect until long after the language was being used.

Everything and anything is excellent that comes from Mary Kawena Pukui...a major keeper of the culture and this book belongs in all libraries of those who study Hawaiian culture and society.

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