

Colonial Regimes of Mental Health, Substance Use, Drug Treatment, and Recovery: A Locally Contextualized, Anticolonial Response

Documented in this article is the anticolonial treatment modality developed by a community-based behavioral health center on the island of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i—situated in a predominately Native Hawaiian community reacting to and affected by American colonial control of the Hawaiian Islands since 1893. We tie Haraway’s concept of “situated knowledge” to the methodology of Clarke’s “situational analysis” as a conceptual framing and a methodological approach in engaging the work of decolonizing health concepts and treatment regimens commonly taken for granted. Enfolding within that process the conceptual mapping for an indigenously informed way of thinking that emphasizes the relationship between colonizing “systems of care”—which emerge out of a sociocultural context of cultural domination that has broken down communally embedded Indigenous identities through individualism and exclusion or othering (i.e., hereafter abbreviated DIE)—and the need for decolonizing social processes that are in greater harmony with the rise of Hawaiian national consciousness (‘Olu‘olu) through communalistic notions of care (Lokahi) and nurturing cultural identities in balance with secular and non-secular relations anchored in historical and contemporary contexts (Aloha; i.e., hereafter abbreviated OLA). By increasing the convergence of OLA with the cultural mainstream of DIE as a unifying reference point applied to other Hawaiian and indigenous groups in both theory and praxis, this article is both a contribution to the social science of treatment and to the literature on decolonizing drugs and alcohol.

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