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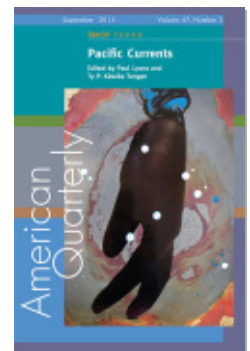
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“Strangers in Our Own Land”: John Kneubuhl, Modern Drama, and *Hawai'i Five-O*

Stanley Orr

In “The Night of the Two-Legged Buffalo” (1966), an episode of the “spy/western hybrid” TV series *The Wild Wild West* (1965–69),¹ Secret Service agents James West (Robert Conrad) and Artemus Gordon (Ross Martin) escort a Polynesian VIP, “the Prince of the South Sea Coral Islands” (Nick Adams), from San Francisco to Washington, DC, where he will sign a treaty on behalf of his royal father. The ceremony is critical to US relations with the island kingdom, which hosts a group of influential American missionaries. Against Gordon’s advice, the hedonistic Prince insists on stopping over at a desert spa known for its therapeutic mud baths. Much to the chagrin of Gordon and West, the Prince is kidnapped by criminals who wish to destabilize US power in the Pacific. It turns out, however, that the Prince himself has engineered the plot; he intends to embarrass the Americans, provoking his vengeful father to retaliate by wiping out the missionary colony. “All my life,” he complains, “my dear papa and his missionary friends have told me what to like and what not to like as if I didn’t have any mind whatsoever of my own.” With the meddling Americans out of the way, the Prince will be able to inherit his kingdom free and clear: “I shall be king to do whatever I want without influence from the outside!” In the midst of his scheme, the Prince indulges in a hunting expedition, with Jim and Artie standing in for the titular game. Although the intrepid agents come out ahead, they must overlook the Prince’s bad behavior in the interest of diplomacy. When the Prince casually dismisses his crimes as “doing what comes naturally to a half-naked savage from the South Seas,” West reflects, “I wonder which of you is real—the gourmet bon vivant or the jolly lancer on horseback.” Reflecting for a moment, the Prince replies, “I haven’t decided yet, but when I am king, as I soon shall be, we can decide then.”

Even this brief synopsis of “The Night of the Two-Legged Buffalo” tells us much about its author, John Kneubuhl, “one of the great pioneers of Samoan

and Pacific drama” (to borrow a phrase from Albert Wendt).² On the one hand, the teleplay reflects Kneubuhl’s ability to address the shifting currents of Pacific history, politics, and identity within a medium variously dismissed as a “vast wasteland” and “first cinema” imperialist propaganda.³ Such a gesture is rendered all the more remarkable in light of Kneubuhl’s gloss on “The Night of the Two-Legged Buffalo,” in which he confides that he derived the character of the Prince from a beloved Punahou School classmate:

I immediately thought of a Hawaiian friend of mine . . . very famous in the Hawaiian Islands. He was a great poseur, check forger, con man, federal prison. His name was Sam Amalu. And I thought to myself, wouldn’t it be funny if I spoofed that kind of tradition by characterizing . . . Sam Amalu in one of these shows.⁴

Whether writing for stage or screen, Kneubuhl often draws on his own experience to dramatize social, cultural, and ideological concerns as they relate to Hawai‘i and Oceania at large. The dynamics of geopolitical forces as they bear on the individual psyche persists as his central thematic—one generally encountered with more existential angst than witnessed in his cavalier Prince. Kneubuhl therefore also inscribes himself into his various characters, ranging from the chief villain of *The Wild Wild West*, Dr. Miguelito Loveless (Michael Dunn), to David Kreber, the youthful protagonist of his masterpiece *Think of a Garden* (1992). This also holds true for the wily Prince of the South Sea Coral Islands, a polysemic trickster by turns “savage” and hypercivilized, compliant and resistant. Though based on Hawai‘i’s most celebrated confidence man,⁵ the Prince also illuminates Kneubuhl’s own literary persona. To borrow Jim West’s query, we might wonder which John Kneubuhl is real—the father of Oceanic drama or the jolly freelancer of Hollywood’s television industry.

The former John Kneubuhl has been revered at the expense of his small-screen counterpart. Born in Leone Village, American Samoa, in 1920, Kneubuhl was in many ways groomed throughout his youth for a role as the unofficial dramatist laureate of Polynesia. His father, a retired American sailor, prospered in Pago Pago business, and his mother was descended from Samoan nobility and British missionaries. Throughout childhood, Kneubuhl enjoyed a rich and varied education: he studied Latin and read Shakespeare, imbibed traditional Samoan folktales from friends and relatives, and attended performances of the traveling “fale aitu” (house of the spirits) troupes whose satiric dramas might send up local leaders and wryly comment on community affairs.⁶

As Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl observes, the bicultural, bilingual Kneubuhl “felt both the delights and the pressures of being a child of two different worlds”:

“He naturally learned to form cultural bridges, but at the same time felt lonely and unable to ‘belong’ in any one place. Alienation would later become a major theme that he explored repeatedly through his work.”⁷ As with many Oceanians, Kneubuhl left home for education: sent to Honolulu’s prestigious Punahou School in 1933, he matriculated to study theater under Thornton Wilder and other modern dramatists at Yale University. His student play *The Sunset Crowd* (1942) tells the story of a group of Samoans who console themselves in a bar as the US military buys up their ancestral lands.⁸ After serving with naval intelligence in World War II, Kneubuhl was named associate art director for the Honolulu Community Theatre; it was during this time that he wrote several innovative stage-plays, including *The Harp in the Willows* (1946) and *This City Is Haunted* (1947)—the first literary work to foreground Hawai'i pidgin. In the wake of these accomplishments, Kneubuhl wrote and directed the biopic *Damien* (1950), an homage to the Moloka'i priest and a work thought to be the first feature film produced by a Polynesian artist (“JAK,” 29).

After living and working as a writer in Los Angeles for two decades, Kneubuhl returned to American Samoa and devoted himself to educational reform and to writing the stage dramas *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant* (1975), *A Play: A Play* (1990), and *Think of a Garden*. Regarded as his finest work, *Think of a Garden* is set amid the historical events surrounding the 1929 assassination of Tamasese III, the Mau leader who contested New Zealand’s claims to Samoa. The play weaves autobiographical elements with Samoan cultural lore and modern theatrical technique.⁹ First staged on the day of Kneubuhl’s passing in 1992, *Think of a Garden* won several honors at New Zealand’s Chapman Tripp Theatre Awards, including Production of the Year. These later plays have earned Kneubuhl a place of honor in the Oceanian literary canon. Even as Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard argues that Kneubuhl “effectively staked out the claim for an indigenous Pacific theater by incorporating local themes and languages,” Christopher Balme and Astrid Carstensen dub Kneubuhl “the spiritual father of Pacific island theatre.” For Jackie Pualani Johnson, Kneubuhl’s dramas foreground “the retelling of historical truths, a passionate belief in the majesty of Polynesian culture, and . . . themes of alienation, spirituality, and allegiance to family.”¹⁰

If the playwright John Kneubuhl is the subject of literary hagiography, then John Kneubuhl the TV writer has been consigned to a rather spectral afterlife. In 1949 Kneubuhl relocated to Los Angeles and carved a niche for himself as a freelance writer in the burgeoning television business. “His father had been subsidizing his artistic pursuits,” recalls Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, “but

finally told him if he wanted to be a writer he had to find a way to support himself.”¹¹ Beginning with anthology programs such as *TV Reader’s Digest* (1955–56) and *Lux Playhouse* (1958–59), Kneubuhl made the transition to writing for series dramas, among them *Have Gun Will Travel* (1957–63), *Gunsmoke* (1955–75), and *The Invaders* (1967–68). “Those of us who grew up in the TV world of the Fifties and Sixties were weaned on John Kneubuhl scripts,” writes Catherine Bratt. “They exist now only in the ethereal world of TV reruns.”¹² As Bratt’s language suggests, this John Kneubuhl shimmers on the margins of scholarship and between the lines of the TV industry for which he wrote some one hundred scripts. In his memoir *How I Escaped from Gilligan’s Island* (2005), for example, the producer William Froug praises Kneubuhl’s contributions to the series *Adventures in Paradise* (1959–62), but sets down the writer as “John Kneubuhle . . . the son of a shipwrecked American sailor who had been marooned on American Samoa and had married the island princess.”¹³ Though given to embellishment, Froug at least recognizes Kneubuhl’s distinctive authorship; but Kneubuhl often found his artistic vision absorbed into the corporate production processes of the television industry. Many of his scripts are collaborative endeavors that yield partial credit for story, teleplay, or adaptation. In one instance, Kneubuhl was not simply obscured but omitted entirely. After he conceived and developed the story for the *Star Trek* episode “Bread and Circuses” (1968), he was dropped from the credits in favor of Gene Roddenberry and Gene L. Coon, who revised the script late in the production process.¹⁴ There is also a sense in which Kneubuhl himself wished to do away with the liminal figure subordinate to the dictates of metropolitan culture industries. Proud of his craftsmanship, Kneubuhl yet lamented the fact that, given Hollywood’s machinations, “a film writer is as impermanent as the wind.”¹⁵ Upon returning to Samoa in 1968, Kneubuhl celebrated his freedom from mass culture by burning his TV scripts: “I had brought Hollywood and television home with me and this was the thing I was breaking away from. . . . I poured them all on the grass and threw kerosene on top, and set them all on fire. . . . they all burnt up beautifully, made a wonderful fire, and for the first time I was really free” (*OH*, 202).

In light of this dramatic gesture, scholars often elide Kneubuhl’s television writing. Sinavaiana-Gabbard, for example, deems Kneubuhl’s time in Hollywood “a twenty year hiatus from writing for the stage.”¹⁶ Johnson briefly surveys Kneubuhl’s film and television career, characterizing this period as a paradox of financial success marred by “years of disappointment” and alienation.¹⁷ Balme and Carstensen describe Kneubuhl’s “successful career as a television

scriptwriter in the 1950s and 1960s" as a prelude to his "conscious decision in 1968 to return to the Pacific."¹⁸ Stanley Fish's recent study of *The Fugitive*, on the other hand, glosses two of the episodes that Kneubuhl wrote for the series without ever alluding to the author himself.¹⁹ Like the phantoms in his own stage and screen dramas, Kneubuhl the TV writer haunts critical conversations on the dramatist's works, calling for recognition as an artist capable of bridging Polynesian and Western cultures as well as the divides that separate canonical literature from mass culture.²⁰

Kneubuhl's masterful orchestration of diverse cultural traditions is nowhere more evident than in "Strangers in Our Own Land" (1968), the third episode of *Hawaii Five-O* (directed by Herschel Daugherty). Sharing credit for the teleplay with Herman Groves, Kneubuhl is recognized as the sole author of the story for this episode. Moreover, it has been suggested that Groves simply revised Kneubuhl's original draft of the teleplay.²¹ In this pivotal small-screen drama, Kneubuhl looks to his past as a playwright-cum-screenwriter and anticipates his future as Oceania's foremost postcolonial dramatist. I argue that "Strangers in Our Own Land" emerges as an adaptation of *The Adding Machine* (1923), the famous expressionist play written by Elmer Rice, with whom Kneubuhl studied in Yale's Workshop 47. Prefacing the story with explicit allusions to *The Adding Machine*, Kneubuhl offers his own version of the drama in which the anomic Mr. Zero becomes Benny Kalua (Simon Oakland), a native Hawaiian nightclub owner driven to murder by his participation in Honolulu's exploitative tourist trade. Adapting *The Adding Machine*, "Strangers in Our Own Land" also evokes Kneubuhl's earlier stage and screen works as well as intertexts such as John Dominis Holt's "On Being Hawaiian" (1964).²² In this respect, "Strangers in Our Own Land" exemplifies the formal and thematic unity of Kneubuhl's literary oeuvre, closing the distance between the "two John Kneubuhls" of stage and screen.

The few critics who explicitly treat Kneubuhl's television dramas confine their observations to *The Wild Wild West*. As exemplified by "The Night of the Two-Legged Buffalo," Michael Garrison created a carnivalesque milieu receptive to Kneubuhl's oppositional TV writing.²³ The character of Dr. Loveless was born when Kneubuhl read a *Time* magazine piece about Michael Dunn, a little person who performed a nightclub act with his accompanist, Phoebe Dorin. While Kneubuhl drafted the first Loveless episode, "The Night the Wizard Shook the Earth" (1965), Garrison and the producer Fred Freiberger began to make arrangements with Dunn, who would go on to appear in ten episodes of *The Wild Wild West*, five of which were written by Kneubuhl. The author himself was perhaps the first to interpret this strange figure:

How I came to think of the name that would go with a dwarf, something less than three feet tall, was a kind of set of historical jokes on my part, partly on myself. I'm half Samoan and I thought it would be funny if I teased myself, a no-account half-caste, and made Michael Dunn half Mexican and half, what? European? White anyway. . . . That's why the first name Miguelito for . . . Michael Dunn . . . Loveless? If you're going to make as colossal a villain as I hoped to write, what better name than Loveless? Completely devoid of love. . . . His mother was a landed patrician lady, Californian . . . Spanish extraction; and his father, the exploiter, the plunderer, the colonialist, the imperialist . . . robbed him of all his lands, and his heritage and his culture. So therefore, he hates everybody. But the real joke about Miguelito Loveless is that his real enemy is himself and the target of his Miltonic wrath is God himself for having created him such a monstrosity.²⁴

Reminiscent of John Rollin Ridge / Yellow Bird, the first Native American novelist, Kneubuhl dramatizes his own sense of indigenous alienation and resistance vis-à-vis a Californio insurgent who defies the Gringos in the wake of the US–Mexican War. In his series debut, for example, Loveless threatens to blow up thousands of American citizens with an experimental bomb unless the governor of California returns his family estate (a huge tract of Southern California). What John Carlos Rowe suggests of Ridge's 1854 thriller *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta: The Celebrated California Bandit* may also be justly applied to Kneubuhl's Loveless episodes: these dramas read as “extraordinary example[s] of how literary texts condense the contradictory political, social, legal, cultural, and psychological effects of colonial conquest.”²⁵

Others have recognized the significance of Kneubuhl's distinctive contributions to *The Wild Wild West*. In her keynote address for the 2008 Conference of the Oceanic Popular Culture Association, Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl dubs *The Wild Wild West* episodes her favorite John Kneubuhl TV dramas: the popular “‘half-caste’ mad-genius villain . . . who planned to decolonize California . . . is a complex ‘existential villain’ who is as joyful and creative as he is nuts and evil.”²⁶ Citing Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, Chris Perridas comments on the Loveless episodes as well as “The Night of the Man-Eating House” (1966). With recourse to Kneubuhl's quotations of Edgar Allan Poe, Oscar Wilde, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, and H. P. Lovecraft, Perridas recommends that the TV writer “should be more celebrated for his fantastic fiction.”²⁷ More recently, Sarina Pearson, glossing the Loveless episodes, argues that Kneubuhl's diminutive villain resonates with the “borderlands writing” of artists such as Gloria Anzaldúa, as well as Samoan literary motifs apparent in the work of Albert Wendt and Tusi Tamasese. For Pearson, “Kneubuhl's sense that the taint of Hollywood and commercialism corrupted his work is perhaps justified, but . . . reappraisal of his writing in *The Wild Wild West* reminds us that postcolonial

critique in the Pacific is slippery, polymorphous, and sometimes comes from the unlikeliest places.”²⁸

Despite its Polynesian milieu, *Hawaii Five-O* would also seem an unlikely venue for Kneubuhl’s innovative television aesthetic, which integrates allusions to avant-garde theater with postcolonial critique. During its twelve-year run, *Hawaii Five-O* entrenched itself in the global cultural imagination. Its famous theme song, composed by Morton Stevens, remains instantly recognizable, as do the phrases “Book ’em, Danno” and “Five-O,” which has long since entered street argot as an appellation for the police. It was at one point estimated that interest in *Hawaii Five-O* accounted for 25 percent of Hawai‘i’s visitors.²⁹ In 1972—at the beginning of the program’s highest-rated season—Governor John A. Burns, who had envisioned a police unit on which the series is based, declared September 19 “Jack Lord—*Hawaii Five-O* Day,” an homage seconded later that year by an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Drama Series.³⁰ Throughout the years, *Hawaii Five-O* has established its own province of fandom, a subculture that perhaps reaches its most ardent expression in Karen Rhodes’s study *Booking Hawaii Five-O* (1997).

Along with these accolades, however, McGarrett (Jack Lord) and his men have also earned their share of controversy. In 1974 the National Association for Better Broadcasting condemned the show’s “graphic horror” as “very bad . . . for youngsters of all ages, strategically scheduled to lure a very large youth audience.”³¹ This sense of gratuitous sensationalism would persist, assimilated into an overall critical reception that deems *Hawaii Five-O* an exemplum of hackneyed literature dominated by retrograde politics. William V. Spanos argues that Enlightenment rationalism fosters “the kind of fiction and drama that achieves its absolute fulfillment in the utterly formularized clock-work certainties of plot in the innumerable detective drama series—*Perry Mason*, *The FBI*, *Hawaii 5-0*, *Mannix*, *Mission Impossible*, etc.—which use up, or rather, ‘kill,’ prime television time.” He adds that such expectations “also demand the kind of social and political organization that finds its fulfillment in the imposed certainties of the well-made world of the totalitarian state, where investigation or inquisition on behalf of the achievement of a total, that is, pre-ordained or teleologically determined structure—a ‘final solution’—is the defining activity.”³² Many other commentators decry the way in which *Hawaii Five-O* reifies racial stereotypes and hierarchies. Writing in 1971, Irvin Paik objects to Freeman’s consignment of Asian characters to flat roles as flunkies and villains, foils of the “blue eyed Yankee devils” McGarrett and Danny “Danno” Williams (James MacArthur).³³ Darrell Hamamoto similarly

observes that nonwhite Five-O team members Kono Kalakaua (Zulu), Chin Ho Kelly (Kam Fong), and Che Fong (Harry Endo) serve merely as a “Greek chorus” and a “sounding board” for haole superiors.³⁴ For Haunani-Kay Trask, *Hawaii Five-O* was simply “another violence-ridden Hollywood crime series,” one that “conveyed the worst caricature of Hawaii, of Hawaiians, as this kind of mysterious and dangerous place with beautiful women and strange pidgin-speaking locals”: “There was an underworld atmosphere that the haoles were trying to save us from.”³⁵

Though forceful, such wholesale condemnations of *Hawaii Five-O* cannot account for Kneubuhl’s “Strangers in Our Own Land,” which musters detective story conventions and allusions to modern drama toward a sophisticated critique of paternalist colonialism in Hawai‘i. Such a project is consistent with Kneubuhl’s contrapuntal aesthetics. In his 1989 interview with John Enright, Kneubuhl discusses how his education under Thornton Wilder at Yale instilled a sense of the tensions between artistic freedom and discipline:

Be free be free be free . . . he [Wilder] was constantly telling me to be free. So then when you sat down and wrote as freely as you could, he’d boil you out and say, “be disciplined be disciplined be disciplined,” so it was this almost schizophrenic jumping back and forth between freedom and discipline. And when you come to think of it, it’s two opposites of the dialectic that ends up with force and style, you know. (*OH*, 98)

This ability to balance freedom with discipline served Kneubuhl not only in the theater but also in the TV industry. Reflecting on his mid-1960s television writing, Kneubuhl avers, “I’ve always gone against the grain, simply because the grain is a cliché.” He further suggests that *The Wild Wild West* was “all grain” when he was recruited to breathe life into the program’s spy thriller conventions.

“Down the hallway,” Kneubuhl remembers, “was another series they’d been trying to start for four or five years, CBS had, which was dying, and that was a thing called Hawaii Five-O, and it was dead in the water, and the reason it was dead is that it was blatantly Sean Connery, James Bond in Oahu” (*OH*, 120). Kneubuhl is thinking here of the *Hawaii Five-O* pilot “Cocoon” (1968)—a rehash of *Dr. No* (dir. Terence Young, 1962), in which Jack Lord plays a CIA colleague of James Bond, and *The Manchurian Candidate* (dir. John Frankenheimer, 1962), which features Khigh Dhiegh as Red Chinese brainwashing expert Dr. Yen Lo. *Hawaii Five-O* consistently dramatizes Western strategies of containment (harking back to *Big Jim McLain* [dir. Edward Ludwig, 1952]) alongside the democratic narrative of integration that renders Hawai‘i a model of multicultural democracy. In “Strangers in Our Own Land,” Kneubuhl

goes against the grain of crime and espionage conventions, not to mention anticommunist narratives about Hawai'i, to project an island community simmering with rage and insurgency in the wake of conquest.

Albert Moran argues that "the crime series, like the Western, usually employs an act of violence to set its story in train."³⁶ Inflected with the "graphic horror" for which *Hawaii Five-O* would become notorious, the opening sequence of "Strangers in Our Own Land" establishes the crime that drives this episode. As native Hawaiian Land Commissioner Nathan Manu (Lord Kaulili) returns to Honolulu Airport from a mainland trip, he is greeted by a friendly Hawaiian-Chinese man who carries his bag to a waiting taxi and refuses a tip: "Us Hawaiians must stick together, you know," he intones (2).³⁷ Once he is in the cab, however, Commissioner Manu is given another parcel; he is barely able to ask the driver to return this item before it "EXPLODES, the powder and debris FILLING FRAME in a flash." This "tremendous explosion" (4), as the script has it, shatters the placid, touristic *mise-en-scène* that became a hallmark of *Hawaii Five-O*.

Beginning with *The House Without a Key* (1925), Hawai'i mystery fictions have tended to present Honolulu as a modern metropolis no more vexed with crime than any other big city. As exemplified in Earl Derr Biggers's controversial novel, the wrongdoing perpetrated in fictional Hawai'i must trespass neither into frontier lawlessness nor indigenous activism; to the contrary, narrative conflicts must derive from infractions that might be attributed to urbanization, on the one hand, or universal human depravity, on the other. As Rhodes reminds us, *Hawaii Five-O* creator Leonard Freeman considered "man's evil amid the beauty of paradise" a "unifying principle" for the series.³⁸ Inaugurating his story with a car-bomb blast, Kneubuhl foreshadows the political nature of "Strangers in Our Own Land." Mike Davis explains that the car bomb was first implemented by an anarchist as a way to "bring unprecedented terror to the inner sanctum of American capitalism."³⁹ Given headlines of the mid-1960s, the inciting incident of "Strangers in Our Own Land" reads not simply as a crime but as a sign of political unrest. The 1965 car bombing of the US embassy in Saigon killed twenty-three and injured dozens of others. Two months later, a car bomb almost killed local NAACP president George Metcalfe in Natchez, Mississippi. In 1967 Metcalfe's colleague Wharlest Jackson was murdered via car bomb in Natchez; it is believed that the assassination was carried out by the Silver Dollar Group, an ultramilitant terrorist cell within the area Ku Klux Klan.⁴⁰ Although the infamous Massie Affair of 1931 yields ample evidence that white supremacist terrorism could plague Hawai'i, which Kneubuhl at

one point characterizes as “a sanitized and highly decent south” (*OH*, 111), the bomb that introduces “Strangers in Our Own Land” comes across as an expression of a very different political agenda.

For Spanos, crime programs such as *Hawaii Five-O* revolve around investigation that leads to epistemological certainty and reaffirmation of the status quo. Kneubuhl structures much of “Strangers in Our Own Land” through this convention. Following Commissioner Manu’s assassination, McGarrett leads the Five-O team through preliminary investigation at the crime scene. It turns out that Grace Willis (Jeanne Bates), presumably a tourist, has filmed a suspect while making home movies. Upon seeing the handsome young suspect in a freeze-frame, McGarrett remarks, “Fairly smart boy—to make a bomb like that.” Kono replies, “Smart? I call that one dumb Hawaiian” (7); the rejoinder is very much in keeping with Hamamoto’s analysis of Five-O Hawaiians and local Asian-Americans as “Greek chorus” and “sounding board.” In this episode, however, Kneubuhl counters frame-narrative “grain” with his binary portrait of victim and murderer.

Throughout the ensuing sequences, Kneubuhl accomplishes this contrapuntal work by taking advantage of generic “grain” in order to embed dramatic dialogue that registers much of the episode’s thematics. “Try to create a forum for yourself where you can incorporate the ramblings,” Kneubuhl recommends—“the ramblings are the play” (*OH*, 99). As McGarrett conducts his investigation, he is treated to a series of “ramblings” that represent diverse interpretations of the late Commissioner Manu, who becomes a screen onto which each character projects a peculiar anxiety or ideology. This phase of the investigation begins with McGarrett’s charge from the governor (Richard Denning) to find Manu’s killer:

It just doesn’t make sense, Steve. There’s no reason on earth why anyone should want to murder Nathan Manu. . . . A warm, gentle human being. A man who devoted his life to the welfare of these islands and their people . . . when I appointed him Land Commissioner, he even refused his salary . . . worked for a dollar a year. . . . McGarrett, I want you to pull out all the stops on this one. . . . Not only was Nathan Manu one of Hawaii’s finest citizens, he was also a close personal friend. (10)

The sense of urgency engendered by Manu’s killing is so powerful that it was recorded in the *Hawaii Five-O* “Writer’s Guide” as an exemplum of “Five-O business.”⁴¹ The governor’s Nathan Manu represents a variation on a familiar figure throughout midcentury Hawai‘i crime narrative. Like Chief Dan Liu (played by himself) in *Big Jim McLain* or his fictional counterpart Chief

Dan (Keye Luke) in the Honolulu film noir *Hell's Half Acre* (dir. John H. Auer, 1954), Commissioner Manu stands for the Hawaiian diversity that was recruited for Cold War discourses of integration. As Christina Klein argues, James Michener led the narration of post-World War II Hawai'i as an ideal multiethnic society free from race prejudice—a corrective to the racism endemic to America's past and an alternative to the white supremacist campaigns raging through the continental South. Foregrounding Hawai'i through tactics ranging from statehood itself to institutions such as the East-West Center, the USA might refute Soviet charges of imperialism and persuade decolonizing nations (especially those of Asia and the Pacific) to side with the Western democracies.⁴² Asian American characters such as Chief Liu and Chief Dan affirm Hawai'i's opposition to communism and commitment to racial harmony and democracy.⁴³

The governor celebrates another figure that underscores Hawai'i's unique diversity. His language recalls "On Being Hawaiian," in which John Dominis Holt acknowledges "businessmen and political leaders of the State . . . men and women of the Hawaiian community, who have successfully made their peace with the present, and function as well as anyone else here, in their given roles."⁴⁴ Yet Manu would represent an even greater achievement for American democracy insofar as native Hawaiian civic leaders must make peace with the present only because they have cause for dispute. Within such a narrative, Paul Lyons suggests, "Hawai'i has not been colonized but incorporated and Hawaiians are not colonial subjects but part of a multicultural citizenry that shares full political rights."⁴⁵ By inscribing a native Hawaiian variation on the assimilable Chief Dan Liu (and one whose murder drives the mystery story), Kneubuhl inspires perplexity rather than reassurance. The governor cannot admit an interpretation of Manu as anything other than a model subaltern who tempers Enlightenment civic virtue with the human warmth and sympathy. Given Manu's standing in the community, his assassination threatens this monolithic worldview. And true to the "clock-work certainties" of detective series convention, the governor directs McGarrett to "pull out all the stops" in his efforts to solve the crime and reaffirm the incumbent social/political order.

If the governor's interpretation of Manu furnished the "verbal-ideological center" for "Strangers in Our Own Land,"⁴⁴ then we might concede this episode to left-Leavisite assessments of *Hawaii Five-O*. What McGarrett finds in his next set of interviews, however, is a declaration almost as shocking as the car bomb blast that kills the commissioner. Mrs. Manu (Ann Barton) remembers her husband in a way consistent with the governor's eulogy; upon seeing the

photo of the bombing suspect, she reflects, “How strange! It is the kind of pure Hawaiian face that Nate admired so much. . . . The kind of boy Nate would have done anything to help” (13). Following Mrs. Manu’s departure, Nathan’s best friend Benny Kalua confronts McGarrett with a charge very different than that of the governor: “You find whoever killed Nate, Mr. McGarrett. You find him. But when you do, don’t arrest him—don’t put him in jail. You pin a medal on him, Mr. McGarrett!” (15). A few moments later, Benny gestures toward Waikīkī and treats the stunned McGarrett to another illuminating speech:

Look McGarrett. Down there. Hotels, beaches, shops, tourists, glamour. Money. Nate and I were born right there in Waikīkī. . . . When we were kids, there were a lot of Hawaiians there. . . . Most of the places where the hotels are now was a big swampland, with ducks. Nate and I—we played there . . . chasing the ducks and laughing all over the place . . . kids. . . . That was the Nate I loved. He was like my brother. . . . There’s an old Hawaiian saying, McGarrett: “And one day we shall be strangers in our own land.” Nate loved the land until a few years ago. Then he changed. All of a sudden, he was all for those high-rise buildings, housing projects, . . . Never mind about Hawaiians and the land. Build your lousy cement and steel all the way up into the sky, block out the sky and the mountains. . . . Nate was all for that! He called that *progress!* And that side of Nate I hated!. . . . The funny thing is, I want to go to that place where he’s lying—I want go to my best friend, and I want to yell at him, “you turned against your people—against the land—like a traitor . . .” And at the same time, I want to grab him in my arms, and I want to say his name over and over. Nate . . . Nate . . . My friend, Nate.” (15–17)

Although Benny appears surprised at McGarrett’s suggestion that Manu was murdered by another native Hawaiian, his dramatic monologue leaves little doubt that he is somehow implicated in the crime. In one sense, Benny’s speech sublimates anticolonial critique into environmentalism—a gesture that would recur throughout many episodes of *Hawaii Five-O*.⁴⁷ That said, Kneubuhl also infuses this sequence with a recognition that overdevelopment is a form of colonialism that displaces native peoples and transforms the landscape after the fashion of the metropolis. Here again, the interpretation of Manu resonates with “On Being Hawaiian”—in this instance with Holt’s jeremiad against “rivers of concrete and steel ravaging the unspoiled wilderness of sacred valleys”: “Too many massive streams of concrete called ‘freeways’ have already destroyed valuable areas of the island environment. Too many buildings carelessly designed and situated and priced to accommodate the affluent stranger have sprouted all over our lands to blight the matchless beauty of our Hawaiian landscape” (9–10). Benny’s outrage at “the lousy cement and steel all the way up into the sky” brings to mind Holt’s revolutionary treatise, which acknowledges the politics of environmentalism and captures the spirit of resistance that would

animate the Hawaiian Renaissance and the Hawaiian cultural nationalism movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁴⁸

Kneubuhl inflects “Strangers in Our Own Land” with references to contemporary intertexts such as “On Being Hawaiian,” but he also repeatedly evokes pretexts from his own dramatic oeuvre. Benny’s quotation of “an old Hawaiian saying . . . ‘And one day we shall be strangers in our own land’” interestingly echoes the oft-quoted utterance of Governor Pio Pico in response to the “hordes of Yankee emigrants” descending on Alta California: “Shall we remain supine while these daring strangers are overrunning our fertile plains and gradually outnumbering and displacing us? Shall these incursions go on unchecked, until we shall become strangers in our own land?”⁴⁹ As we see in *The Wild Wild West*, Kneubuhl was quite sensitive to the parallels between Oceania and the continental Southwest as objects of Manifest Destiny. But the phrase “strangers in our own land” also recalls a line in Kneubuhl’s play *The Harp in the Willows*, written some two decades earlier. As he ponders Dr. Pelham’s traffic in Hawaiian remains, the missionary Lorenzo Lyons predicts, “It won’t always be robbing burial caves. They will find other precious and sacred things to steal and sell. And one day, they will have stolen so much that even the Hawaiian will become a stranger in his own country.”⁵⁰ In the 1968 story, however, Kneubuhl moves the native Hawaiian figures from margin to center, situating Nathan Manu and Benny Kalua as respective agents of assimilation and resistance. Kneubuhl’s quotation of his own play not only binds the stage and television dramas but also illuminates his evolving approach to indigenous characters. Unlike the Hawaiians of *The Harp in the Willows*, Nathan and Benny become the primary actants in the text. As in many of his teleplays, Kneubuhl marginalizes the recurring protagonist in favor of episodic characters—this during an era in which producer-driven frame narratives had eclipsed the writerly prerogatives afforded by 1950s anthology series.⁵¹ In “Strangers in Our Own Land,” McGarrett becomes the “sounding board” for those he questions throughout the investigation. As the episode proceeds, Kneubuhl further conscripts detective genre conventions for even more complex treatments of Benny.

After his interview with Benny, McGarrett is summoned back to the Five-O Iolani Palace headquarters for another conversation—this time with Lester Willighby (Milton Selzer), who has confessed to Manu’s murder. Fulfilling the generic mystery convention of the “MacGuffin” or “red herring,”⁵² Willighby’s statement reads as one of the most important textual elements of “Strangers in Our Own Land.” With McGarrett’s arrival, the “nebbish looking” (19) suspect

Willighby declares that he has killed Manu and is prepared to waive his rights in order to make a full confession. According to Willighby, the “mainland mob” hired him to kill Manu, who purportedly owed \$75,000 in gambling markers; fearing a “double cross,” Willighby offers his testimony in exchange for protection against his criminal employers. “Twenty to life is better than dead any day,” he reasons. After a few moments of cross-examination, McGarrett and Danno crack Willighby’s façade, prompting him to admit that he is not a hit man but rather a “bookkeeper for a department store” from Des Moines, Iowa:

Thirty years I worked for them. Thirty years doing the same thing, day in and day out. A machine, that’s what I was. Just a machine. Nobody noticing, nobody caring. Then I retired. . . . I thought I’d find a new kind of life out here. That things would somehow be different. More . . . more glamorous. . . . But they weren’t. They were just the same. . . . I was still a . . . bookkeeper. . . . It’s a terrible thing, Mr. McGarrett. A man’s life to end like mine. Dribbling off into nothing. A terrible thing. (19H–19I)

In the aired version of the speech, the conclusive lines of this monologue are replaced with the admission, “For once in my life, I wanted people to notice me. I wanted them to know who Lester Willighby was.” The name Lester Willighby perhaps recalls Rod Serling’s *Twilight Zone* episode “A Stop at Willoughby” (1960); and, to be sure, Kneubuhl here uses this MacGuffin as an opportunity to expose the way in which Hawai‘i has been mythologized as an exotic retreat from the workaday world. More importantly, however, Willighby must be recognized as an explicit allusion to Elmer Rice’s drama *The Adding Machine*, in which the tortured department store accountant Mr. Zero finds himself replaced by the titular device after “sittin’ for twenty five years on the same chair addin’ up figures”: “Twenty-five years in the store. Then the boss canned me and I knocked him cold.”⁵³ Enraged by his dismissal, Zero stabs his boss to death with a bill-file; he is tried, convicted, executed, and ultimately spends eternity operating adding machines. “How many machine-forced minds are there,” writes the director Philip Moeller in his foreword to the play, “who as the grind goes on and on are wishing to others these calamities of hate and for themselves these escapes in stumbling and half-articulate dreams?”⁵⁴ Contrary to such escapism, Willighby finds in Hawai‘i another version of his own quotidian existence. At odds with the staccato pace of *Hawaii Five-O*, this MacGuffin serves as an index into Kneubuhl’s unique integration of dramaturgy, modernism, and a postcolonial thematics.

As one of the few students admitted into Yale’s Workshop 47, Kneubuhl was able to work closely with Rice and other visiting dramatists; he recalls, “I’d show them things and they would read and critique, and they’d tell me

how they worked. Elmer Rice was a genius, he was really the good one” (*OH*, 145). These memories would have loomed large as Kneubuhl drafted “Strangers in Our Own Land.” Rice passed away in 1967; the March 1968 issue of *Educational Theatre Journal* features an interview with the dramatist, a piece that deals extensively with *The Adding Machine* and its relationship to expressionism. Moreover, the British director Jerome Epstein was also at work throughout this time on a film adaptation of *The Adding Machine*. As suggested by McGarrett’s interlude with Lester Willighby, “Strangers in Our Own Land” reads as another adaptation of *The Adding Machine*, though one mediated by Kneubuhl’s abiding postcolonial thematics. While Willighby, the character explicitly patterned after Mr. Zero, appears for only a moment before he is committed to the psychiatric ward of Queen’s Hospital, this figure alerts us to others inspired by Rice.

The prime suspect, Tommy Kapali, offers one candidate for a native Hawaiian “Mr. Zero.” Dispatched to Nanakuli, McGarrett questions Tommy’s mother Mrs. Kapali (Hilo Hattie); he learns that Tommy was a “good boy . . . good soldier” who now works in construction at a big development “Diamond Head side.” Mrs. Kapali intimates that her son suffered mental illness: “He’s been sick in the head a long time now. But he’s better now, honest” (20). McGarrett gets a different take on Kapali at “Hana Hou Village” construction site—“A David Milner Enterprise.” He learns that Construction Boss Chris Saunders (Milton Hibdon) has recently fired Kapali for being “a hot-head . . . a trouble maker” (61). Probing deeper, McGarrett interviews Kapali’s employer David Milner (Paul Kent), an entrepreneur who uses the Hawaiian youth as a pretext to eulogize Commissioner Manu:

You see, McGarrett, I knew Nathan Manu. He was a fine man, a man with *vision*. Then to be murdered by a boy like *that*. . . . Saunders told me he was always shooting off his mouth to the other workmen, telling them we were *destroying* the land, not building it. He even claimed the land *belonged* to them. I’ve run into his kind before. . . . What you’ve got to do is stop treating these Hawaiians like *children*. Use the land, make it work for them. Provide them with jobs. *Jobs* McGarrett. . . . I’ve never seen a race of people die out, anywhere, when they had good jobs and money in the bank. . . . Nathan Manu knew that. (31)

Like haole entrepreneurs such as William Hooper, who founded the Koloa sugar plantation in 1835,⁵⁵ Milner represents the colonizer’s ultimatum for native Hawaiians to accept assimilation and exploitation or face extinction. Kneubuhl had already dramatized this mind-set in *The Harp in the Willows*, as Brother Knapp pledges to “stress industry and diligence” among the Hawaiians: “People like Brother Lyons are sentimentalists and they’ve lived with the

heathen too long. . . . A man like that must be curbed; he represents a sinful weakness in dealing with these natives.”⁵⁶ Another iteration of Brother Knapp, Milner echoes the governor’s interpretation of Manu as an ideally assimilated native Hawaiian who has internalized the Western gospel of work and capital. Tommy Kapali, on the other hand, impresses Milner as a criminal rather than an activist, a “a hot-head . . . a trouble maker.”

Might we then accept Tommy Kapali as the Mr. Zero of Kneubuhl’s post-colonial revision of *The Adding Machine*? The analogy is tempting, insofar as Kapali has spent years under the colonizer’s disciplinary regimes of military service and proletarian labor, which may well turn man into machine.⁵⁷ After the fashion of Rice’s antihero, Kapali has exploded with rage against the forces that have robbed him of identity and despoiled his ancestral lands. However compelling, this suspect is also something of a MacGuffin that distracts the Five-O team from an even more dangerous and wrathful figure. McGarrett and his men eventually discover that Kapali was a Vietnam vet, a bomb disposal expert discharged via “Section Eight. Mentally disturbed” (38). He has stolen dynamite from Milner’s construction site and fashioned a crude bomb using a hand grenade as a trigger. Perhaps learning tactics from the Viet Cong, Kapali visits the catastrophic violence of the Southeast Asian war zone on a presumably “pacified” Pacific Island. We must conclude, however, that Kapali is not the chief culprit when McGarrett finds that he has hanged himself in his spartan Kalihi Valley residence. McGarrett comes to believe that Kapali was simply “a perfect patsy. An emotionally unstable ex-G.I.—a Hawaiian who hated everything Manu stood for” (42).

Not surprisingly, Benny Kalua surfaces as the criminal mastermind behind Manu’s killing and the ultimate “Mr. Zero” in Kneubuhl’s adaptation of *The Adding Machine*. When McGarrett interrogates Benny at his club, we are treated to a *mise en scène* that juxtaposes leisure with nightmarish imagery. The policeman is met by Kamaki (Danny Kaleikini), a young Hawaiian *mâitre d’* wearing a stereotypical islander costume of aloha shirt and clam diggers; though polite, Kamaki frowns as he watches McGarrett move toward Benny’s office—an affect explicitly mentioned in the script directions (47). Next him, a small moai figure (part of the club’s exotica decor) glowers in greenish under-lighting, as if revealing Kamaki’s true feelings of anger and bitterness against McGarrett. This “objective correlative” technique is very much in keeping with the expressionism that critics have attributed to *The Adding Machine*.⁵⁸ The nightmarish atmosphere persists into the club proper, where haole tourists sit in the dark watching Tahitian dancers gyrate to the rhythms of shirtless “na-

tive” percussionists. In accordance with the script directions, Benny’s office is festooned with “pictures and photographs of entertainers” (47). The directions hereby recall those for the scene in which McGarrett interviews Milner, insofar as this sequence was originally intended for the interior of Milner’s office, its “walls adorned with architectural sketches and photographs of housing units, high-rises . . . apartment buildings—all ‘Milner Enterprises’ projects” (29). As these sets suggest, Benny is a refraction of Milner; just as Rice’s Mr. Zero sees endless processions of numbers parading across his bedroom walls, Benny looks up to see images of his complicity with the culture industries that he characterizes as “Hotels, beaches, shops, tourists, glamour. Money.”

While Rice’s damned soul has been driven mad toting up sums, Benny suffers the psychic trauma of serving as an impresario for a tourist industry that he despises. Instead of simply murdering his boss, however, Benny first assassinates his best friend, whom he interprets as the colonizer’s stooge, and then plots to kill Milner, an advocate for rampant development. Kidnapping Milner, Benny takes the developer to his own construction site (“Hawaii Hou Village”) and treats him to a climactic monologue:

BENNY

Nathan died for what he believed in. Are you willing to die for it, too, *Mr. David Milner?*

MILNER

Killing me isn’t going to stop those bulldozers. Not anymore than killing Nathan Manu will stop them.

BENNY

I didn’t kill him! You did! You and all the others who are turning this island into a concrete jungle! . . . Oh, there’ll be a monument left for you! *Here—!* Four hundred little high-rent boxes! Crawl into your boxes, Hawaiians! Compliments of Mr. David Milner! And you’ll stay here buried beneath them! (56–57)

“Strangers in Our Own Land” culminates in a dramatic speech inflected with subtle resonances and reversals. In this scene, which parallels Mr. Zero’s extended courtroom testimony, Benny pours out his wrath against the colonizing forces embodied in Milner. On the one hand, Benny registers his sense that Nathan Manu was killed by the colonizer rather than the insurgent; for Benny, Nate’s accommodations represent a self-abnegation tantamount to living death. Indeed, during his second interview with Benny, McGarrett reveals that Nate had been diagnosed with terminal cancer: “Whoever pulled the switch on him killed a walking dead man” (49). Given this kind of imagery, Nathan Manu

perhaps anticipates Albert Wendt's suggestion that the privileged indigenous of a colonized society may become "élite vampires."⁵⁹ The notion of colonization as a form of "undeath" persists with Benny's image of the development as coffins that beckon Hawaiians. While the colonial adventurers of yore longed to rob native graves (as Kneubuhl dramatizes in *The Harp in the Willows* as well as his *Adventures in Paradise* episode "The Perils of Penrose" [1960]), Milner's generation profits from consigning Hawaiians to "little high-rent boxes." Unlike Mr. Zero, who impulsively murders his boss, Benny plans a more lyrical demise for Milner: this entrepreneur will himself be interred beneath the Hawaiians that he entombs in his housing project.

In the episode's climax, Benny pistol-whips Milner and then prepares to bury him alive with one of the nearby bulldozers. As Milner implies, these machines recur throughout the episode as a synecdoche for the development that devastates Hawaiian lands. When Milner interviews Saunders, for example, he finds the boss haranguing an inefficient bulldozer operator: "Skim it! Don't try to move the whole mountain!" The "pretty sight" (28), as Saunders has it, of Hawai'i literally "razed" by development here again brings to mind John Dominis Holt, who exhorts "all groups exerting rights as citizens to protect what is left in Hawaii from the angry, powerful thrusts of bulldozers and those who own them or who put them to work in areas where in the interest of the majority they should not be" (10). Kneubuhl's Benny Kalua takes this call to an extreme as he fires up a bulldozer and bears down on the prostrate Milner. But his plan is foiled by the arrival of McGarrett and his men—they fire on Benny, wounding him, and he grimly steers the bulldozer into an explosives shack. The "Final Draft" of the script concludes with a stunned Benny apprehended by McGarrett; we might imagine Benny, like Mr. Zero, subjected to trial and imprisonment, if not execution. In the aired version, however, Benny manages to blow himself up in "a tremendous earth-shattering explosion" (59A). Whether promise of insurgency or expressionistic symbol of outrage, the conclusive explosion brings "Strangers in Our Own Land" full circle, suggesting the return of repressed anger that cannot be exorcised by simply "making peace with the present."

The episode's denouement further erodes the binary opposition between model citizen and insurgent renegade. As the Five-O men survey a beautiful Hawaiian landscape marred by development, McGarrett reflects, "Milner calls it 'Hawaii Hou,' the 'New Hawaii.'" When Danny chimes in, "Next guy to come along will have his own ideas about what the New Hawaii will look like," Kono replies, "But he won't be Hawaiian." McGarrett agrees, "No Kono.

A stranger" (61). The aired version concludes with this exchange condensed into Kono's solemn pronouncement on the housing tracts that carpet central O'ahu: "Look at that. One day we will be strangers in our own land." In either version, this denouement sidesteps the "grain" of the mystery story (which would demand the detective's reconstruction of the investigative process or an elaboration of justice served) to introduce further doubt into the "imposed certainties" of the TV crime genre.⁶⁰ While McGarrett and his men foil Benny's scheme, in fulfillment of the governor's charge, the *Five-O* investigation has created a framework for Kneubuhl's "ramblings" about the complexities and contradictions of life in the contact zone of Oceania.⁶¹ Commissioner Manu and Benny Kalua represent warring impulses of assimilation and resistance that may vie even within a "model" native policeman such as Kono Kalakaua. Here again, Kneubuhl uses crime genre convention to subvert the evolving *Hawaii Five-O* frame narrative, in which Polynesian and Asian American characters serve as a mere "sounding board" for McGarrett and Danny. Kono's line also runs counter to the time-honored Hawai'i mystery story tradition of presenting local policemen as exempla of democratic pluralism: a seemingly adjusted figure such as Kono might harbor a postcolonial "Mr. Zero" poised to explode against his haole bosses.

Whether in terms of form or content, "Strangers in Our Own Land" occupies a central place within Kneubuhl's literary oeuvre. Written at the moment of Kneubuhl's return to Samoa from Hollywood, the *Hawaii Five-O* episode gathers motifs, allusions, and thematics drawn from throughout his life and work. Kneubuhl's impulse to dramatize his own sense of bicultural alienation pervades his TV oeuvre, from the inaugural adaptation "America's First Great Lady" (*TV Reader's Digest*, 1955)—a short piece on Pocahontas—through his scripts for *Adventures in Paradise*, *Thriller* (1960–62), *Wagon Train* (1957–65), *The Wild Wild West*, *Star Trek*, and *The Virginian* (1962–71). Kneubuhl's *Adventures in Paradise* episode "Prisoner in Paradise" (1960), for example, concerns a Polynesian "native medical practitioner," Mr. Levikau (Michael David); this self-loathing Oceanian traveler, in the words of Adam Troy (Gardner McKay), "belongs to two worlds; he was born into one and then educated into another. The trouble is he can't live in either one so it makes him a pain in the neck." Levikau's cultural duality is symbolized by his full-body tatau, which he scrupulously hides beneath a starched white suit. As in "Strangers in Our Own Land," the episode reaches a pyrotechnic climax (in this instance, volcanic eruption) that represents the psychic catastrophe brought on by colonialism. Although Kneubuhl polarized these assimilative and resistant impulses in "Strangers

in *Our Own Land*,” Benny Kalua himself reads as another elaboration of the Polynesian suspended between irreconcilable worlds. Kneubuhl would persist with this thematic in “Eden Is the Place We Leave,” a 1970 episode of *Ironside* (1967–75). Set in San Francisco, this small-screen drama focuses on a Samoan boxer, Loi Tala (Patrick Adarte), who longs to leave the ring for a career in photography. Like Mr. Levikau and Benny Kalua, Loi finds himself caught between worlds; in this instance, however, the boxer is pushed into metropolitan mass culture by the Matai (John Marley). The characters of Benny and Loi Tala integrate thematics of bicultural alienation with another concern that informs Kneubuhl’s work: the predicament of the artist in modern society. Given his own to desire leave Hollywood for a return to teaching and writing in Samoa, these characters dramatize the writer’s negotiations of exploitative culture industries that work in concert with colonialism.

Although he burned his scripts upon his return to Samoa, registering his desire for emancipation from Hollywood constraints, Kneubuhl drew from “Strangers in Our Own Land” in his 1975 play *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant*. This drama sees Benny Kalua further divided into the characters Carl Alama and Noa Napo’oanaakala. Like nightclub owner Benny, Carl works to stage a touristic revue that represents the commodification of Hawaiian culture. Kumu hula Noa, on the other hand, represents a kinder, gentler manifestation of Benny’s explosive resistance; Noa challenges Carl’s production in favor of a more traditional ethos centered on appropriate use of Hawaiian language. This “cultural crisis” of loss versus authenticity, as Michelle Johansson has it,⁶² also makes its way into Kneubuhl’s self-reflexive drama *A Play: A Play*. In this ludic text, the Hawaiian dramatist James Alama prepares to sell his family home in Volcano, on Hawai’i Island, and move to Europe; his plans are interrupted when he is visited by the goddess Pele. The autobiographical protagonist David Kreber, in *Think of a Garden*, likewise feels torn between the native Samoan world symbolized by the ghost Veni and his Euro-Polynesian household, which will ultimately send him away from the islands to live with his father in the continental United States. Various described as psychic wound and “South Sea Schizophrenia,”⁶³ the problem of metro-colonial duality spans Kneubuhl’s life and art, traversing his stage plays as well as his small-screen dramas. Yet it was this very “afakasi” subject position that, along with his extensive travels throughout the Pacific and beyond, enabled Kneubuhl to dramatize cultural, political, and psychic tensions in such diverse locales as Samoa, Hawai’i, California, and Texas. As Johansson points out, Kneubuhl considered himself a pan-Polynesian artist who at one point declared, “I am Hawaiian. I think of myself as a Hawaiian playwright.”⁶⁴

Basking in a “second Golden Age of television,” we are accustomed to small-screen productions written by such luminaries as Salman Rushdie; indeed, Rushdie himself has declared that TV drama now rivals prose fiction as a medium for serious artistic endeavor.⁶⁵ This television renaissance coheres against the “dark ages” of the 1960s, when American television became the watchword for bad art. Throughout this era, John Kneubuhl worked within and against the grain of convention, harnessing mass culture and avant-garde technique alike, to develop a singular aesthetic that challenged Hollywood representations of Oceania.

Notes

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1. Michael Kackman, *Citizen Spy: Television, Espionage, and Cold War Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xxi–xxii.
 2. Quoted in Michelle Johansson, “Cultural Crisis in Postcolonial Pacific Theatre: John Kneubuhl’s ‘Mele Kanikau: A Pageant,’” *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 10.2 (2014): 113.
 3. See Newton N. Minow and Craig L. LaMay, *Abandoned in the Wasteland: Children, Television, and the First Amendment* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 3–4; Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, “Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for the Development of a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World,” in *Theories, Practices, and Transcontinental Articulations*, ed. Michael T. Martin, in vol. 1 of *New Latin American Cinema* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 38.
 4. John Kneubuhl, “Audio Interview,” in disc 6 of *The Wild Wild West: The Complete First Season* (Warner Home Video, 2007), DVD.
 5. For an account of Amalu’s exploits, see Ted Kurrus, “Sammy Amalu: King of the Charismatic Con Men,” *Hawai‘i Chronicles*: 2, ed. Bob Dye (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997).
 6. See Johansson, “Cultural Crisis,” 116; Vilsoni Hereniko, “An Interview with John A. Kneubuhl: Comic Theatre of Samoa,” *Manoa* 5.1 (1993): 99–105; Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard, “Rev. of *Think of a Garden and Other Plays*, by John Kneubuhl,” *Pacific Studies* 22.2 (1999): 115–121.
 7. Victoria N. Kneubuhl, “John Alexander Kneubuhl and His Contribution to the Arts in the Pacific,” in *Damien: Teacher Resource Guide* (Honolulu: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, 1991), 29. Hereafter cited as “JAK.”
 8. See Jackie Pualani Johnson, “Afterword: A Portrait of John Kneubuhl,” in *Think of a Garden and Other Plays* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997), 253–54.
 9. For Johansson, Kneubuhl achieves a “transnational, syncretic, postcolonial, modernist, theatre” (“Cultural Crisis,” 115).
 10. Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard, “Modelling Community: A Response to ‘The Oceanic Imaginary,’” *The Contemporary Pacific* 13.1 (2001): 172; Christopher Balme and Astrid Carstensen, “Home Fires: Creating a Pacific Theatre in the Diaspora,” *Theatre Research International* 26.1 (2001): 38; Johnson, “Afterword,” 256.

11. Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, "Don't Call Us Cannibal: Two Generations of Pacific Family Writing" (keynote address, Oceanic Popular Culture Association, Chaminade University of Honolulu, May 24, 2008).
12. Catherine Bratt, "John Kneubuhl: A Sense of Loss," *Hawaii Observer*, February 24, 1977, 27–28.
13. William Froug, *How I Escaped from Gilligan's Island* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press / Popular Press, 2005), 110.
14. This assertion is based on research in the correspondence surrounding "Bread and Circuses"; these materials are held in the Gene Roddenberry Papers in the Performing Arts Special Collection at UCLA.
15. *Oral History Interview with John Alexander Kneubuhl, Samoan Playwright, Linguist, Historian* (American Samoa?: n.p., 2002), (175). Hereafter cited as *OH*.
16. Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard, "John Kneubuhl's 'Polynesian' Theater at the Crossroads: At Play in the Fields of Cultural Identity," *Amerasia Journal* 26 (2000): 217.
17. Johnson, "Afterword," 255.
18. Balme and Carstensen, "Home Fires," 38. See also Paul Lyons, *American Pacificism: Oceania in the U.S. Imagination* (London: Routledge, 2012), 225n1.
19. Stanley E. Fish, *The Fugitive in Flight: Faith, Liberalism, and Law in a Classic TV Show* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).
20. Kneubuhl often embeds motifs of ghosts and haunting in his dramas, from *The Sunset Crowd* through his film *The Screaming Skull* and TV episodes such as "The Night of the Man-Eating House" to *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant and Think of a Garden*. Indeed, it is tempting to read Kneubuhl the TV writer as what David Chappell terms a "double ghost." For Chappell, the great majority of these Oceanian voyagers are "ghostly" figures in that they have physically passed on and survive through the distorted, one-sided accounts of their white shipmates and others encountered throughout the limen. Another form of spectrality, however, arises from liminal travel itself: homing islanders returned as "prodigal 'ghosts,' changed beings" (David A. Chappell, *Double Ghosts: Oceanian Voyagers on Euroamerican Ships* [Armonk, NY: Sharpe, 1997], xv).
21. Stan Wedeking observes that Groves "rewrote" the script submitted by Kneubuhl ("Re: Jury of One," July 23, 1998, alt.fan.hawaii-five-o, groups.google.com/forum/#topic/alt.fan.hawaii-five-o/2Dp4XILb94A). See "Strangers In Our Own Land," in *Hawaii Five-O: The First Season* (Paramount Home Entertainment, 2007), DVD.
22. Like Kneubuhl, John Dominis Holt (1919–1993) engaged in literary explorations of bicultural (Polynesian and Euroamerican) identity. Albert Wendt has described his book *Waimea Summer* (1976) as Hawaii's first postcolonial novel.
23. For a discussion of the program's "wacky hybridity," see Sarina Pearson, "Hollywood Westerns and the Pacific: John Kneubuhl and The Wild Wild West," *Transformations*, www.transformationsjournal.org/journal/24/04.shtml (accessed June 15, 2014).
24. John Kneubuhl, "Audio Interview," in disc 3 of *The Wild Wild West: The Complete First Season* (Warner Home Video, 2007), DVD.
25. John Carlos Rowe, *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism: From the Revolution to World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98. The 1966 episode "The Night of the Man-Eating House" must also be included in this reading.
26. Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, "Keynote Address: Don't Call Us Cannibal: Two Generations of Pacific Family Writing." Oceanic Popular Culture Association Conference, Chaminade University of Honolulu, Honolulu, HI, 24 May 2008. Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl goes on to discuss how John Kneubuhl, her uncle, has influenced her own work—stage dramas such as *The Conversion of Ka'abumano* (1988) and *Ola Na Iwi (The Bones Live)* (1994) and the novels *Murder Casts a Shadow: A Hawai'i Mystery* (2008) and *Murder Leaves* (2011). See also Diana Looser, "'Our Ancestors That We Carry on Our Backs': Restaging Hawai'i's History in the Plays of Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl," *The Contemporary Pacific* 23.1 (2011): 76.
27. Chris Perridas, "Re: John Kneubuhl: Writer of the Fantastic." *Miskatonic Books Blog*, July 2, 2012, miskatonicbooks.wordpress.com/2012/06/.
28. Pearson, "Hollywood Westerns and the Pacific."
29. See Karen Rhodes, *Booking Hawaii Five-O: An Episode Guide and Critical History of the 1968–1980 Television Detective Series*, 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007), 25.
30. See Rhodes, *Booking Hawaii Five-O*, 108.

31. Quoted in Philip Moellinger, *The Adding Machine*, by Elmer Rice (New York: Samuel French, 1956), 218.
32. William V. Spanos, "The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Postmodern Literary Imagination," *Boundary 2* 1.1 (1972): 154.
33. Irvin Paik, "That Oriental Feeling," in *Roots: An Asian American Reader*, ed. Amy Tachiki, Eddie Wong, Franklin Odo with Buck Wong (Los Angeles: Regents of the University of California, 1971), 30.
34. Darrell Y. Hamamoto, *Monitored Peril: Asian Americans and the Politics of TV Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 18.
35. Quoted in Wayne Harada, "The Continuing Legacy of 'Hawaii Five-O,'" *Honolulu Advertiser*, January 26, 1998. While Rhodes explains *Hawaii Five-O*'s "Yellow Peril" characterization of Red Chinese agent Wo Fat (Khigb Dhiigh) as a sign of its times (*Booking Hawaii Five-O*, 261), the series persists for most scholars as a blatant celebration of the status quo. Patti Liyama and Harry H. L. Kitano contend that Freeman and his team "reinforce the familiar pattern that reduces Asians to a few work categories and to a simplified human existence" ("Asian Americans and the Media," in *Television and the Socialization of the Minority Child*, ed. Gordon L. Berry and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan [New York: Academic, 1982], 158). These divisions of labor within the *Hawaii Five-O* frame narrative, notes Rob Wilson, reproduce those of Hawai'i's sugar industry—a world in which haole plantation owners and managers used overseer "lunas" to deploy racially segregated laborers (*Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000], 240). Ed Rampell reminds us that this stratified police unit was often deployed against its arch-nemesis, Wo Fat, and other Asian and Latino revolutionaries, rendering the series what he terms "a case study in haole-Wood agitprop" ("Hawaii Five-O: A Case Study in Haole-Wood Agitprop," *Television Quarterly* 33.1 [2002]: 76–82). For Peter Britos, *Hawaii Five-O* and other "Hollywood conceived programs" about the Islands project "a fantasy and allegorical realm predicated on naturalizing continental hegemony and hierarchies, and rehearsing territorial containment and control" ("Symbols, Myth, and TV in Hawai'i, The First Cycle: An Overview," *Spectator* 23.1 [1999]: 112).
36. Albert Moran, *Images and Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia* (Sydney, Australia: Currency, 1985), 163.
37. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations of dialogue from "Strangers in Our Own Land" refer to the "Final Draft" of the script dated June 25, 1968, and titled "One Day We Shall Be Strangers in Our Own Land." Hereafter cited in the text.
38. Rhodes, *Booking Hawaii Five-O*, 12.
39. Mike Davis, *Buda's Wagon: A Brief History of the Car Bomb* (London: Verso, 2007), 3.
40. See Ted Ownby, *The Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 186.
41. "A Writer's Guide for HAWAII FIVE-O," Leonard Freeman Collection, 1967–80, Writer's Guild Foundation Archive, Los Angeles.
42. See Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), chap. 6; see also Giles Scott-Smith, "From Symbol of Division to Cold War Asset: Lyndon Johnson and the Achievement of Hawaiian Statehood in 1959," *History* 89.294 (2004): 256–73. For a discussion of Cold War narrations of Hawai'i and Oceania vis-à-vis literary production, see Lyons, *American Pacificism*, chap. 6.
43. See Jeff Smith, *Film Criticism, the Cold War, and the Blacklist: Reading the Hollywood Reds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 113.
44. John Dominis Holt, *On Being Hawaiian* (Honolulu: Topgallant, 1976), 20.
45. Lyons, *American Pacificism*, 6.
46. M. M. Bakhtin and Michael Holquist, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 48.
47. See, e.g., "The Last Eden" (1970), "Paniolo" (1970), and "Is This Any Way to Run a Paradise?" (1971).
48. Ty P. Kāwika Tengan describes "On Being Hawaiian" as "a treatise ahead of its time in its affirmation of pride and identity that had been debased in modern society" (*Native Men Remade: Gender and Nation in Contemporary Hawai'i* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008], 53).
49. Quoted in J. P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Marin County, California: Also an Historical Sketch of the State of California* (San Francisco: Alley, Bowen, 1880), 62. See also David F. Gomez, *Somos Chicanos: Strangers in Our Own Land* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001).

50. John Kneubuhl, *The Harp in the Willows* (Honolulu: Hawaii State Library, 1976?), 2.2.36.
51. Writing in a climate increasingly dominated by frame narrative, Kneubuhl sought to marginalize the series protagonist in favor of episodic characters. In this respect, Kneubuhl should be regarded as what Jon Kraszewski terms a “new entrepreneur” of the changing television industry. As with other anthology series writers of the 1950s, Kneubuhl sought to maintain his artistic autonomy amid a shift to programs based on recurring characters and situations—programs that situated writers as dependent employees supervised by producers (Kraszewski, *The New Entrepreneurs: An Institutional History of Television Anthology Writers* [Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2010], 2).
52. Smith, *Film Criticism, the Cold War, and the Blacklist*, 53.
53. Elmer Rice, *The Adding Machine: A Play in Seven Scenes* (New York: S. French, 1950), 5, 127.
54. Moeller, foreword, ix.
55. For an overview of Koloa Plantation, see Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii, 1835–1920* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1984).
56. Kneubuhl, *Harp in the Willows*, 3.5, 3.19.
57. See Michel Foucault’s discussion of the “machine man” created by disciplinary systems in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 242.
58. Richard Murphy, *Theorizing the Avant-Garde: Modernism, Expressionism, and the Problem of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 221.
59. Albert Wendt, “Towards a New Oceania,” *Mana* 1.1 (1976): 52.
60. John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 91. For a gloss on McGarrett’s response to this conclusion, see Barbara Moore, Marvin R. Bensman, and Dyke J. Van, *Prime-Time Television: A Concise History* (Westport, CT [u.a.]: Praeger, 2006), 150–51.
61. See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 8.
62. Johansson, “Cultural Crisis,” 118.
63. Johansson discusses Kneubuhl’s sense of cultural alienation as a psychic wound. In “South Sea Schizophrenia” (*Pacific Islands Monthly*, August 1995, 35), Rampell glosses *Think of a Garden* vis-à-vis the trauma of finding oneself suspended between cultures.
64. Quoted in Johansson, “Cultural Crisis,” 120.
65. See “Small Screen, Big Vision: Is British Television Drama Capable of a Second ‘Golden Age’? Or Can It Only Gaze with Envy at the Critical Success of US Imports such as ‘The Wire’? John Lloyd Reports,” *Financial Times* (London), June 5, 2010, LexisNexis Academic; and Vanessa Thorpe, “Salman Rushdie Says TV Drama Series Have Taken the Place of Novels,” *Observer*, June 12, 2011, Guardian.co.uk, www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011...write-tv-drama.