

MBS - I remember participating in a women's conference in Hilo and I was asked if as a woman, ^{and a Hawaiian,} I had ever experienced an identity crises. I told them no because my family had been so involved with the culture and the arts. I was three years old ~~at~~ when I was wearing a kikepa. The hula really expresses the self-determination of the Hawaiian people to survive. In my grandmother's, mother's, my own era the culture has been experiencing a tremendous transition. There was a tremendous outside pressure to be Western, to be American. There was pressure from the Oriental immigration to change as well. ~~The hula that~~ It was the hula that kept the sanity because you could be expressive, & Art forms are always acceptable by dominating cultures. Hawaiian music & dance really has been an identity for the Hawaiian people. It was an outlet where we were allowed to be Hawaiian. In this area it was socially acceptable. But I feel the hula that we see today is an exaggeration. I feel saddened by the present situation of the hula. It has become tremendously commercialized and an exaggeration of the Hawaiian culture. My mother when she danced used one ti leaf skirt for a 45-minute performance. Before ~~you could~~ the emphasis was on the art form not the costuming. When you saw a hula you could tell it was Henry Pa, or Beamer, or Kamaeole because the differences were so tremendous, and that was the strength & power of the community. But now what I see is a total loss of identity.

LB - Mother Beamer was my first teacher. She taught me everything. Mother asked me if I wanted to learn hula kapa and I told her I wasn't sure. She told me that I had to be sure because if I went into the hula kapa and didn't abide by the kapa system either myself or my parents would suffer. So I went through the process of learning the hula kapa but I choose never to teach it.) My grandmother Mother Beamer always taught at Eighth Avenue in Kaimuki at grandma's home. All the young ladies visit from Hilo & there would be 25-30 young women dancing in the living room. Now Maki's mother and I, the two daughters-in-law would stand in the backline. ~~The others would be in the front~~ and that's how I really got started, and the others would be in the front.