

Song Title: ALOHA 'OE

Rating: YES: Caution

REVIEWERS' NOTE

Reevaluation: Dec 19, 2023 : Rating has *not* changed, but additional caution requirement added re: choreography.

This is a song celebrating Hawaiian indigenous culture:

Queen Lili'uokalani wrote the song as a love song, but 20 years later, she used the song as a farewell to Hawai'i after losing its independence in an illegal overthrow by the United States ([excellent reference](#) on this song and facts about Hawai'i, its people, and its history).

We ask that you be sensitive to how and where this song is performed. It is important for all performers to understand and respect the origin of this song that is deeply meaningful to the Hawaiian indigenous community.

Please consider carefully how this music can be presented with *context* and *respect* for those who created it, before you decide to include this music in your repertoire--especially if no members of the performance group are of indigenous Hawaiian heritage.

Caution must be used in selecting this song for those who do not have a connection to or understanding of Hawaiian indigenous culture. Without this connection or understanding, your performance may be seen as cultural appropriation: [The Cultural Appropriation Primer](#) | [When Does Appreciation Become Appropriation \(video\)](#).

- **LANGUAGE:** If non-English lyrics are performed, please take great care to pronounce correctly.
- **COSTUME/PROPS:** Non-indigenous performers must not use Hawaiian costuming or props. (Leis are ok.)
- **CHOREOGRAPHY:** As hula is not merely a dance but also a significant cultural practice for native Hawaiians, performers must be respectful of its history and importance to the Hawaiian people. (See "The Hula" section of [this document](#).) Therefore, movements that evoke the hula must not be included unless it is by performers who have formally learned the dance. Performers should never add hula-like movements in a stereotypical manner because it reflects a lack of respect for Hawaiian history and culture.

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What year was this song written? 1878

Who wrote the lyrics? Queen Lili'uokalani

What did your research tell you about the lyricist?

Lili'uokalani was the last monarch of the Kingdom of Hawai'i. The queen wrote over 160 songs, mostly about Hawaiian life and culture. This is her most famous song and is a common cultural symbol for Hawaii.

What other material has been written by this lyricist?

She wrote "The Queen's Prayer" while she was under house arrest during the illegal overthrow of the monarchy.

Who is the composer of this song? Same as lyricist

Who and what is this song about, as originally intended by the composer and earlier performers?

The queen was inspired to write this song when, on a horseback trip, she witnessed Colonel James Boyd give a notable affectionate farewell embrace to a young lady from Maunawili. So, it was originally intended to be a love song, but twenty years later, when Hawaii lost its independence to the U.S., it became a farewell song.

Share a link to the earliest performance of this song that you can find.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONFMei_PpNQ

What historical or social events were happening at the time this song was written?

The immigration of Portuguese from Madeira and the Azores began in 1878. They were recruited as laborers for the sugarcane plantations. Native Hawaiians comprised about 75% of the population.

Does any illustration or other characteristic of the original sheet music reflect an inappropriate theme? No

Did this song, originally or subsequently, demean a marginalized racial/ethnic group (a group considered at a social disadvantage) through idiomatic expressions, metaphors, jargon, or message? And/or does the song present a sanitized/idyllic or false narrative regarding the American South and the life of the enslaved or newly freed OR of other marginalized racial/ethnic groups and their history? No

Please supply the links to any additional sources you used for this section of research.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloha_'Oe
huapala.org/Aloha/Aloha_Oe.html

www.songfacts.com/facts/queen-liliuokalani/aloha-oe

Additional Questions to Consider (do not pertain to Admissibility)

The remaining questions pertain to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion issues other than those of race. As such, **THESE QUESTIONS DO NOT AFFECT A SONG'S ADMISSIBILITY**. They are provided to encourage your group to consider factors that may affect members of your audience and/or your performers with regard to religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and more. ***Please refer to the Music Choices section of [Chapter Choices to Address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (in the [Chorus Toolkit](#)) for details and strategies related to these factors.***

Could the message/lyrics of the song, original or subsequent, limit any singer or audience member's ability to engage related to the following? A YES answer does not imply that the song is demeaning or exclusionary. [Please see instructions here.](#)

Age: No

Disability: No

Gender: No

Religion: No

Sexual Orientation: No

Visible Physical Differences: No

Other? No

Are there any adjustments to the lyric that would make it more inclusive or current to our chorus culture or societal norms?

I did not identify any lyrics that might be addressed.

[Music Cover](#)

[Music Cover 2](#)