

# Unsettling 'Education': What it means to know GMOs and the 'āina on the moku of Kaua'i

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## OBERSSEMINAR

### Abstract

Shifting technoscientific registers of agricultural land not only illustrate competing conceptions of land, but also of knowing itself. This is also the case on Kaua'i, where in the early 2010s debates on 'āina (that which feeds), or land, for the use of agricultural biotechnology research and development revealed competing and overlapping assertions of knowledgeability: The agro-biotechnology industry 'educates the public' with 'scientifically sound' information on genetically engineered seeds, while a heterogeneous social movement called on citizens to 'educate yourself' on GMOs, and to listen to one's na'au (guts; seat of knowledge). Kānaka Maoli (people Indigenous to Hawai'i) students, who learned at a Hawaiian-focused charter school to mālama 'āina (care for the land), challenged such articulations of educatedness in their own ways. They formed *learnsapes*, which are tacit ways of knowing defined by relationality to people and land, more specifically, their skilled navigation of double binds in adult, settler colonial epistemologies and realities of their homeland being used for researching and developing seeds to be used elsewhere. In times of proliferating science communication, technoscientific renderings of nature, and decolonization efforts, opening up 'education' as emergent form of life (Fischer 2003) offers important reflections on (adult) claims of knowledgeability and assertions to expertise on science, nature, and settler colonial terrains, like that of Hawai'i.



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