

On Being Late: Cruising Mauna Kea and Unsettling Technoscientific Conquest in Hawai‘i

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Conquest of new frontiers in the universe requires the colonization of old ones. This article interrogates technoscience desires to explore outer space, and how time and territory for discovering extraterrestrials and habitable planets are organized through settler colonialism on our own. Examining modern astronomy at Mauna Kea, I argue the technoscientific promise of the Thirty Meter Telescope hinges on a temporality of lateness—late to show up and late in time—that contributes to the dehumanization, elimination, and dispossession of Kanaka Maoli, the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i. I demonstrate further that kia‘i—mountain protectors—unsettle technoscientific conquest by cruising Mauna Kea as an alternative tempo that disrupts the pace of building the observatory.