



2010-04-01

Saving the Surfer Identity: The Paddle-out Ceremony

Charles R. Thomas
kingsuperphly@yahoo.com

John Hawkins

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/fhssconference_studentpub

 Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#)

The Annual Mary Lou Fulton Mentored Research Conference showcases some of the best student research from the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences. The mentored learning program encourages undergraduate students to participate in hands-on and practical research under the direction of a faculty member. Students create these posters as an aide in presenting the results of their research to the public, faculty, and their peers.

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Thomas, Charles R. and Hawkins, John, "Saving the Surfer Identity: The Paddle-out Ceremony" (2010). *FHSS Mentored Research Conference*. 121.

https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/fhssconference_studentpub/121

This is brought to you for free and open access by the Family, Home, and Social Sciences at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in FHSS Mentored Research Conference by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Saving the Surfer Identity: The Paddle-out Ceremony



The circle has many forms within Surf Culture, including the *lei*. The Circle in the Paddle-out is known as the *Symbol of Eternity*.

Death Rite

- Promotes the idea of an afterlife; appearance of the *'Aumakua*
- Removes polluting emotions; reduces grief
- Reproduces culture; intensifies relevance of surf culture to the living



After releasing the ashes, splashing and flower tossing ensues to celebrate the deceased's incorporation into the ocean.

Rite of Passage

- Purification Ritual, separating the sacred from the profane
- Dangerous transport over open water, waves
- Incorporated into the sea, rejoining the circle



Charles R. Thomas
Mentor: Dr. John P. Hawkins
Dept. of Anthropology
Brigham Young University

The widow wears the backpack that carried the ashes of her deceased husband into the circle. As the participants return to shore, many of them place a flower upon the deceased's surfboard.

