



PACIFIC HEARTBEAT

STORIES FROM THE PACIFIC

SEASON 7

Discussion Guide



SEASON 7 Discussion Guide

Pacific Heartbeat, now in its seventh season, is an anthology series that provides viewers a glimpse of the real Pacific—its people, cultures, languages, music, and contemporary issues. From revealing exposés to rousing musical performances, the series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

Pacific Heartbeat comes to Public Television through a partnership between Pacific Islanders in Communications and PBS Hawai'i, and is presented and distributed by Boston-based American Public Television; find it on your local PBS station. **Pacific Heartbeat** is also broadcast nationally on WORLD Channel.

How to Use this Guide:

This brief toolkit is your guide to watching, thinking more deeply about, and even taking action related to the three full length documentaries in this season's Pacific Heartbeat.

For each film, there are questions for thought or discussion, background information on characters and locations, and activities you can do on your own or share with friends, family, colleagues, and community.

Because we want everyone to share and connect around these wonderful films, please post your thoughts, questions, answers, and more to social media. Always tag your posts with **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB** so that others interested in these films can share in the fun!

You can also do a hashtag search on **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB** to see what others are up to in this space!

2018 Season of Pacific Heartbeat Films



POI E: THE STORY OF OUR SONG

Tearepa Kahi & Alexander Behse

A film about the unofficial national waiata (anthem) of Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the community spirit of Pātea and Dalvanus Prime.



MAKING GOOD MEN

Fiona Apanui-Kupenga

Making Good Men is an honest and moving story about high school bullying and the pathway to redemption.



BEING BRUNO BANANI

Susann Wentzlaff & Jörg Junge

Being Bruno Banani tells the unique story of the first and only Tongan luger who qualified for the 2014 Winter Olympics.

For a list of films from previous seasons, [click here](#).



POI E: THE STORY OF OUR SONG

Synopsis

POI E: the Story of our Song is a film about the New Zealand entertainer Dalvanus Prime, who returns home to Pātea from the cabaret stage of Australia to nurse his dying mother. Upon his return, he discovers that his community is suffering from the closure of the township's main industry, the Freezing Works. Dalvanus Prime teams up with the Māori language expert Ngoi Pēwhairangi and his family of ex-freezing workers, the Pātea Māori Club. Together they bring a song to life, which affects the spirit and cultural pride of Māori and New Zealand forever.

Topics and Issues Addressed in the Film:

- Cultural Empowerment
- Māori Identity
- Language Preservation + Revitalization
- Power of Music
- The Artist's Journey
- Tradition vs. Modernity
- Local Economy + Labor

Profiles

Dalvanus Prime

Dalvanus Prime was a New Zealand entertainer and songwriter. His career spanned 30 years. He mentored many of New Zealand's Māori performers, and was an outspoken supporter of Māori culture.

Te Kumeroa "Ngoingoi" Pēwhairangi

Te Kumeroa "Ngoingoi" Pēwhairangi was a teacher and advocate for Māori language and culture, and the composer of many songs. She spearheaded the Māori Renaissance in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Pātea Māori Club

Pātea Māori Club has performed internationally and on television. Famous for their song POI E, which topped the charts in 1984, the group continues to receive recognition for their contribution to New Zealand music.

Pātea

A rural Māori community on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

Freezing Works

Freezing Works was a meat-processing plant that employed approximately 800 workers, one-third of which were Māori. The town of Pātea was devastated by its closure.

Māori Language

Māori is an Eastern Polynesian language spoken by the Māori people, the indigenous population of New Zealand. Since 1987, with the passage of the Māori Language Act, it has been one of New Zealand's official languages. The number of speakers of the language has been in decline since the end of World War II, despite ongoing efforts to revive the language.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Language + Culture

- The last words Dalvanus' mother speaks to him are in Māori, prompting him to take classes to learn the language. What is the impact on an individual when a language is lost? Between generations? For an ethnic and cultural community?
- Poi E was number one in sales and topped the charts in New Zealand in 1984, garnering awards and industry recognition. It was the only song in Māori to do so. Make a list of the songs you hear on the radio that are in a language other than English. Is the list long or short? How many different languages does it represent? What are the implications when the music industry and pop culture features only one dominant language?
- What effect does it have to see yourself reflected back in popular culture? What about the opposite, not seeing your language, culture or people who look like you reflected in popular culture?

Tradition Vs. Modernity

- When Dalvanus layers modern instrumentation on a traditional song, he is told he will be met with detractors. He responds that Māori youth are struggling to define their identity, and should be given tools to shape their culture in a context that is meaningful to them. What do you think is the right mix of respect for tradition, while embracing the current times?
- Is there a traditional form of music, dance or art that elders in your community or family have taught you? How would you remix it with a contemporary spin to be relevant for these times?



Activities

- 30 years later **Poi E** is still popular with old and young generations alike. Organize an intergenerational concert featuring traditional and modern songs. Invite elders and youth to share songs that are meaningful to them. Or use the format to share stories, poetry, or other forms of art that encourage the young and old to come together over a shared form of expression. You can do this in a park, community center, or your own living room! Go LIVE on Facebook with some of the performances! Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.
- Learn about the threat of dying languages by visiting UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger at <http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/>. Post something that you find special to social media. Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.
- Also, volunteer with organizations that help document and revitalize languages such as Living Tongues <https://livingtongues.org/> and Cultural Survival <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/>. And share their sites online! Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.

Additional Resources for Exploration

- <http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/>
Learn more about efforts to preserve the Māori language through the Māori Language Commission.
- http://www.folksong.org.nz/poi_e/index.html Learn about the origins of Poi E and download the official lyrics written by Ngoi Pēwhairangi, with music written by Dalvanus Prime.
- <https://www.maoriart.org.nz/>
Support Māori arts and culture through Toi Māori.



MAKING GOOD MEN

Synopsis

Two high profile New Zealanders, a former All Black and Hollywood actor reveal their unforgettable account of bullying with unprecedented honesty.

Making Good Men is not a story of blame or humiliation. It's a path to redemption, reconciliation and ultimately to restoration.

Topics and Issues Addressed in the Film:

- Masculinity
- Bullying
- Alcoholism
- Breaking the cycle of violence
- Intergenerational trauma
- Healing
- Mentorship

Profiles

Norm Hewitt

Norm Hewitt is a former New Zealand All Black rugby union player. He made a dramatic public apology after a drunken incident in 1998, appeared in the first season of New Zealand's *Dancing With the Stars*, and transforms his past of alcohol and abuse to be a mentor for youth.

Manu Bennett

Manu Bennett is an actor whose film and television credits include *Spartacus*, Allanor in *The Shannara Chronicles*, Slade Wilson / Deathstroke in *Arrow*, and Azog the Defiler in the *Hobbit* film trilogy.

Te Aute College

Founded in 1854, Te Aute College a boarding school for boys with an emphasis on cultivating the next generation of Māori leaders.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Manhood + Masculinity

- What role do different parts of our community play in shaping positive male culture? How can institutions like schools play a part? Government? Who else needs to be at the table and why?
- Where do we learn what it means to be a good father, brother, husband or son? What are the loudest messages? Do you agree with them? How would you change these messages?
- How has mentorship played a role in your life? Have you ever mentored someone, or been a mentee? How did the experience affect you?

Violence + Healing

- Healing is a critical part of Norm and Manu's story. What is required to put closure and begin to heal from individual acts of violence?
- Restorative justice is an approach to justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by an individual's behavior through dialogue and mutual understanding, rather than punitive measures. In what ways did you see restorative justice principles in action through the story of Norm and Manu? How do you see their reconciliation having impact beyond the two of them?
- What are five things in the moment that individuals can do when they witness someone being bullied?



Activities

- Survey what “masculinity” has meant over the decades by researching old newspaper articles, books, and magazines. Look at photos and popular media of the time such as television, film, and commercials. What did it mean to be a man 50 years ago? 20 years ago? A decade ago? What does it mean today? How are the messages different, and how have they stayed the same? Why do you think the everlasting messages have stayed?
- Create a marketing campaign with the messages you want boys and men to hear today. The campaign can take the shape of posters, slogans, public service announcements, poems, songs, or through the acting of skits. Post the results to social media. Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.
- Sign up to mentor in your community! Research opportunities through the school district, after-school programs, or through your professional network.

Additional Resources for Exploration:

- <http://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/mentor-resources-and-publications/mentoring-boys-and-young-men-of-color/> Learn more about building positive male culture and download the guide created by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) and My Brother’s Keeper Alliance (MBKA).
- <http://restorativejustice.org/> Learn more about restorative justice principles and explore the database of articles, research, and tools compiled by the Centre for Justice and Reconciliation.
- <https://www.stopbullying.gov> Learn about concrete steps adults and youth can take to stop bullying.



BEING BRUNO BANANI

Synopsis

Being Bruno Banani tells the unique story of the first and only Tongan luger who managed to qualify in an amazingly short amount of time for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. Through his name he also acted as the first “living brand” using a completely new and disputed way to get around the strict IOC’s Olympic advertising regulations.

Topics and Issues Addressed in the Film:

- Elite Sports
- Athleticism
- Tongan/Polynesian Representation on a National Stage
- Mental and Physical Training
- Coaching + Mentoring
- Individual Sacrifice
- National Pride
- Marketing + Public Relations

Profiles

Bruno Banani

Bruno Banani (formerly Fuahea Semi) is Tonga's first ever winter olympian in the Sochi 2014 Olympics. The 21-year-old student, from the island of Eua was selected after a national search and advances through the Winter Olympic trials in a short amount of time.

Mathias Ihle

Mathias Ihle is the CEO & Event Manager for Makai Europe. He devised a unique plan to bring Bruno Banani to the Olympics.

Isabel Barschinski

Isabel Barschinski is a former luger and serves as Bruno Banani's luge coach for the five years it takes him to qualify for the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics.

Tonga

Tonga, officially the Kingdom of Tonga, is a Polynesian sovereign state and archipelago comprising 169 islands. It has a population of 107,122 people, of whom 70% reside on the main island of Tongatapu.

Luge

Invented in Germany in the 1870's, a luge is a small sled on which one sleds feet first and face up. Racing sleds can weigh up to 55 pounds and lugers can reach speeds of up to 87 mph. Luge first became a Winter Olympic sport in 1964.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

Becoming an Olympic Athlete

- The newspaper headlines accuse Bruno of being a “German marketing hoax” and a “scam” for taking on the namesake of a private company. In your opinion, does the name change diminish the hard work and dedication he put in? Do you agree with the approach Bruno took? Why or why not?
- Small countries need professional and financial resources to compete on an international stage. Do you think it was a clever marketing scheme that made Bruno’s participation possible, or an act that circumvented the rules to tarnish the integrity of the sport? Should he go back to his family-given name?
- Have you ever trained for a physical sport or academic endeavor that took several months or even years to complete? What did the experience teach you? Did the experience change you? If so, how?

Representing Tonga

- The Princess Salote Mafile’o Pilolevu Tuita decided her country needed a representative in the Winter Olympics in an effort to inspire her people and make history. Do you think it’s important for smaller countries to compete on the international stage? Why?
- Leafa M. Wawryk, the spokeswoman for the Royal Family of the Kingdom of Tonga says Bruno is “giving hope to every Polynesian.” What does Bruno represent for his community, for his country of Tonga, and for other Pacific Islanders?
- Describe the training and discipline Bruno went through, including the personal sacrifice of leaving his family and home. In your opinion, what was driving his ambition and perseverance?



Activities

- The slogans “coconut powered” and “flying coconut” are nods to where Bruno comes from. Make a list of different aspects of your culture and how they might be phrased into slogans that describe you. Then post your favorites to social media. Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.
- Bruno is the first Tongan to compete in the Winter Olympics, but represents a growing wave of elite Pacific Islander athletes making records. Find three media articles related to new or unexpected sports or activities for Polynesian athletes. Write a newspaper headline and article for new sports and activities that Polynesians will break into in the future. Share the articles on social media and tag them with **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.

Additional Resources for Exploration:

- <http://www.tonga-broadcasting.net/>
Stay up to date with news and current events in Tonga, including the Olympic hopefuls for winter and summer games.
- To learn more about Pacific Islanders in sports and the relationship to economic opportunity read the following articles: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-05-28/an-polynesian-men-sport/4717290> and <https://story.californiasunday.com/samoan-football-pipeline>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Tonga Learn about Tongan history and culture.

SEASON 7

Themes and Questions

Pacific Heartbeat is a national public television series of critically acclaimed documentaries that provides an authentic glimpse into the Pacific Islander experience. Creative and beautifully told stories about arts, culture and intimate human stories, the series features a diverse array of programs intended to draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture.

As you think about the issues raised across the three films in season seven, as well as other films we have presented in the past, consider the following themes and questions...

- The theme of the journey is woven throughout **Poi E: The Story of Our Song, Making Good Men**, and **Being Bruno Banani**. Whether it be the artist's journey, the athlete's journey from beginner to expert, or the journey from boyhood to manhood; each story arc represents challenges that must be overcome. What are the internal obstacles faced by the protagonists in each film? What are societal, or external forces, that the protagonists push up against? How are the journeys similar or different?
- Select a character from **Poi E: The Story of Our Song, Making Good Men**, or **Being Bruno Banani**. Imagine you will sit down with them for an interview. What questions would you ask? What more do you want to know and why?
- All three films look at resistance to a dominant culture. In what ways did the individuals featured in the films react to a dominant culture, and create their own culture in response?
- What role does cultural pride and embracing of Pacific Islander/Polynesian identity play in building bridges and bringing communities together in each of the three films?

Series Activities

As an alternative to activities based on a single film, consider these activities

- Organize a community screening, or mini-film festival of all three films and invite participants to discuss the themes of the films. Use the suggested questions in the guide, or create your own. You can plan a screening around the broadcast, access the film on PBS.org after the broadcast, or contact PIC to request access to a DVD for your event [info@piccom.org]
- Pick your favorite line from **Poi E: The Story of Our Song, Making Good Men**, or **Being Bruno Banani** that exemplifies leadership, or that exemplifies cultural pride. Transform those words creatively by writing a poem or haiku, song or rap. Or represent the words visually through a drawing or poster art. Post your creation to social media and share with friends! Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.
- Research your own ancestral heritage and language. Talk to older relatives and others who share your ethnic and cultural background to find out where they came from, what traditions they observed and what language(s) they spoke. Create a living archive for your family's future generations by collecting photos, articles, and recording oral histories. Post some of the results to social media. Always tag **#MyAPALife** and **#PacHB**.



Pacific Heartbeat is produced by Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC)

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