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PIDGIN IN THE CLASSROOM: HAWAI'I'S ENGLISH STANDARD
SCHOOLS, AMERICANIZATION, AND HAWAIIAN IDENTITY, 1920-1960

by

Katherine J.E. Fox

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Major: History

The University of Memphis

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my Aunt Fone, who established a college fund for me when I was very young. I would also like to dedicate this work to the memory of Dr. Garth Alford. He saw potential in me when I found my way into his Western Civilization class at Seattle Central Community College so many years ago, and he encouraged me to play with ideas and think in new ways. His love of history was palpable, and I will always be grateful to him for his kindness, for believing in me, and, most importantly, for pushing me. Without these two individuals, I may have found myself on a very different path. My gratitude is boundless.

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I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the chair of my committee, Dr. Janann Sherman, for the patient guidance and mentorship she has provided to me throughout the years. Time and time again, she has helped me to improve my work with her helpful feedback, insightful criticisms, and endless encouraging words. I am fairly certain that I would have floundered year ago had it not been for her kindness and dedication to seeing me through. She has not only given me insight into the process of historical writing, she has also given me a wonderful example of how a truly effective educator can nurture and motivate students. I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with her, and can only hope that, through her example, my own students will benefit similarly from their interaction with me in the future.

Likewise, I want to thank my other committee members, Dr. Joseph Hawes, Dr. Margaret Caffrey, and Dr. Sarah Potter, for the friendly guidance, and thought-provoking suggestions that each of them has offered to me over the years. Their support and feedback was invaluable. I am truly grateful to have had them on my committee as their expertise in their respective fields has greatly enriched and informed this dissertation.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I did not acknowledge my loving, supportive husband. With an endless stream of pep talks, goofy YouTube videos, and compassionate nudges, he routinely lifted my spirits and encouraged me to continue on. Derek, this bit is over--we can go out and play now!

Abstract

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From 1924 to 1960 some of Hawai'i's public schools were segregated institutions. Unlike the segregated schools of the mainland, the main goal of the English Standard schools, as they were known, was to ensure that English-speaking children be taught in environments free from Pidgin and other native languages spoken by the majority of Hawai'i's school children. Because this segregation was linguistically-based, it was possible for children of all races and ethnicities to attend English Standard schools, but there can be no doubt that they were heavily dominated by white students in the early years of the program, much to the satisfaction of many whites throughout the Islands. Over time, though, this would change as more non-white students gained admission. Even though this was true, it was clear that Hawaiians were not entirely comfortable with the process of segregating students, and this was increasingly the case as the Territory of Hawai'i inched closer and closer to Statehood.

This study is particularly concerned with the collective identity that developed in the period between the various groups of peoples on the Islands including: Chinese, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, Korean, Puerto Rican, and Portuguese, among others. Further, this work offers insight into the process undergone by these people as they moved from their own separate identities to a collective Hawaiian one, whose cornerstone was and continues to be the language of Pidgin. A myriad of primary and secondary sources were consulted concerning the protests, support, and ambivalence the segregated

schools were met with by administrators, parents, and students. The result is a window into the process whereby Hawaiians made clear what they were willing to accept from the mainland, and what was simply too foreign and too at odds with the collective Hawaiian identity that had developed in the period. Indeed, Hawaiians, by phasing out the tracking of students into separate schools and classrooms based on their mastery of proper English by 1960, would highlight the fact that separation was unacceptable in the new state of Hawai'i. Ultimately, the practice stood in sharp contrast to what they envisioned for themselves as both Hawaiians and Americans.

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Chapter One

Introduction

For most Americans, discussions of school segregation center around racial intolerance, belligerent Southerners, and brave students being escorted by National Guardsmen as they made their way through angry, often violent masses on to school grounds. Few, though, would conjure up images of smiling children of various racial and ethnic backgrounds gathered in front of the iconic Diamond Head on the equally iconic and wildly idyllic Waikiki Beach. But an inclusive discussion of American segregation should include Hawai`i because a system of segregating students did exist there between 1924 and 1960.¹ The segregation that existed there, though, was technically not racially based, but linguistically. In these years, children who spoke Pidgin, the homegrown language that resulted from the mixing of so many different peoples there, and children who spoke their native languages were separated from children who spoke “proper” English.

In its early years, this was a de-facto system of racial segregation as the children who spoke Pidgin-free English were generally Caucasian, commonly referred to as “haoles,” and, indeed, it was initially at the urging of

¹ The parameters of this study are set by the fact that the first English Standard classrooms open to students in 1924 were the direct result of the urgings of a federal survey of Hawai`i’s schools, which was undertaken in 1920. By 1947, it was agreed that the process of testing students for admission into the segregated program would cease. Two years later, in 1949, it was decided that enrolled students would be allowed to attend until the class of 1960 graduated. At that point, the program was phased out entirely.

Also, it should be noted that the modern spelling of Hawai`i will be employed throughout this study. This spelling, with the use of the `okina, a diacritical marking that indicates a glottal stop between syllables, has been widely adopted since the 1990’s and is a better approximation of the correct Hawaiian pronunciation.

haole parents that these schools were established.² But over time, this was less the case; partially because many haole students left after Pearl Harbor, but also (and mainly) because more and more students of all backgrounds were able to gain admission into these schools by passing the required oral examination that was designed to weed out Pidgin-speaking children. This study of the education of Hawai`i's children will not only offer the reader a unique angle from which to understand Hawaiian history, including its widely held values and concerns in the period leading up to Statehood, it will also highlight the complexities of American race relations in its newest, farthest-flung corner.

This study began its life as something very different. It was meant to look at another example of the dual disease of prejudice and inequality within American schools. It was going to reveal how Native Hawaiian and other children were subjugated and starved of opportunities within their schools. While some of this was true to a certain extent, it became very clear early on that the story was actually a much deeper, far more nuanced one. Instead of a straightforward history of a segregated school system between the period of 1924-1960, what is offered here is an analysis of Hawai`i, and its collective, hybrid culture that had developed and been nurtured in the period on the eve of Statehood, through the less familiar lens of the experiences of school children. This is a particularly telling angle, of course, as societies tend to be at their most vulnerable, their desires and fears at their most raw and palpable

² This commonly used term refers to a person of foreign origin, though it is generally reserved for those of Caucasian backgrounds. While it can, and often is, simply descriptive in nature, the term can also be used as a slur. Generally speaking, however, it is an innocuous term that rarely raises eyebrows or otherwise offends. For a detailed account of life on the Islands as experienced by Caucasians, see Judy Rohrer, *Haoles in Hawai`i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2010).

where its children are concerned. This was, of course, especially true in Hawai`i in this period as it moved from Territory to 50th American state.³

The segregated school system was one of the results of the 1920 *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, which was conducted by the U.S. Department of Education at the urging of local parents.⁴ The *Survey* put a spotlight on the biggest problems with the schools on the Islands, and, as a result, changed almost every aspect of education in Hawai`i. Among the changes proposed, the *Survey* called for: the construction of more junior and senior high schools;⁵ more opportunities for vocational education;⁶ free public kindergartens;⁷ the requirement that all teachers complete two years at normal school beyond the high school diploma;⁸ that the normal school's library be expanded;⁹ that teachers in rural areas be given better living conditions so as to encourage them to stay longer than the average of one or two years in their positions;¹⁰ that the lighting in almost every school in Hawai`i be improved;¹¹ and monitoring and regulating the curriculum in foreign language schools (namely

³ For a careful, detailed recounting of this process, see Roger Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1984).

⁴ United States Department of Interior, United States Office of Education, *Survey of Education in Hawaii* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920).

⁵ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 63-65.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 205-207.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 70-72.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 152-154.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 294.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 156-159.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 251.

the various Japanese language schools that children often attended after the regular school day).¹² The most important suggestion, in this context, though, was the suggestion of segregating students who spoke Standard English from those who did not.¹³

For some, this educational system was very unwelcome. To some in the Territory, it signaled a backwardness and further distance from the mainland in the period before statehood. For others, the existence of a segregated school system represented the codification of the plantation system, and highlighted fears about the kind of inequality and separation that could exist once Hawai`i was made a state (which, by that time, the vast majority supported, and became a reality in 1959). In either case, by examining the English Standard School system and its eventual demise we can begin to understand a very important part of the process whereby the multi-racial, multi-ethnic residents of the Hawaiian Islands decided what kind of American state they would become. Moreover, what this particular study highlights is just how complicated notions of collective belonging, whether under the labels of Hawaiian, American, or any number of represented ethnicities, or some hybrid of all of the above, had become between 1924-1960. Indeed, there developed in this period a collective sense of identity among Hawai`i's residents that, in this study, will be encapsulated by the use of the term "Hawaiianness." While the Hawaiian language term "kama`aina," which translates literally to "child of the land," is applied to longtime residents, Hawaiianness is what resulted not just from living on the Islands, but from the

¹² Ibid., 134-144.

¹³ Ibid., 246-247.

dynamic cultural interplay that occurred there. Few places on earth have experienced the kind of diversity that has been the hallmark of the Hawaiian Islands since Contact in 1778, and fewer still can match the dynamic rate of cultural melding that occurred there, a melding, that, of course, resulted in something entirely new and unique in the world.¹⁴

By analyzing these segregated schools and their demise, and considering the experiences of the children who were affected by them, we can come to understand this pivotal period in Hawaiian history--the period on the verge of Statehood where the demands, dreams, and desires of Hawaiians would coalesce and be made known in some very concrete ways, ways that made it clear how they expected their experience within the United States to play out, and ways in which all of these things would be obscured and made oblique in the period. In short, it is by looking at Hawai'i's English Standard schools that we can come to understand how this disparate group of people came to be both Hawaiian and American.

Settling on a convenient end-point for the phenomenon of the English Standard school and the language discrimination that went along with it is not

¹⁴ The question of just who should be identified as Hawaiian is a subject of great contention. The issue is still the subject of bitter debate and controversy, and it is not just identity that is at stake. With the establishment of Hawaiian Homesteads in 1921, the issue of blood quantum (the requirement of 50 percent Native Hawaiian blood to qualify for the lands), and just who counts and who does not, has caused deep divisions and fissures among friends, families, and even within individuals, as there has been a collective effort to decide exactly who is Native and who is not in a period marked by dwindling numbers and watered down blood lines. Throughout this study, the term "Hawaiian" is used in a different way. The term "Hawaiian" will apply to those inhabitants of the Islands who, as a result of the mass immigration that brought such a disparate group of people to the Islands, would then create a shared culture, a shared language, and develop a collective identity in the period preceding the establishment of the English Standard schools. This usage is in no way meant to take away from the Native Hawaiian experience--it is simply the case that something new emerged in this period.

an easy task. While the last senior class of the English Standard school system graduated in 1960, it is certainly true that the bias against the use of Pidgin in the classroom, which simply masked deeper feelings of prejudice and fear on the part of European Americans and the usurpation of those fears and prejudices by other Hawaiians, has persisted well beyond the 1960s. The fact that Hawai'i has one of the highest percentages of students attending private schools is an indicator that education there is still, on many levels, a segregated affair.

Really, though, the ending of the school system is only part of what is of concern here. The period between the early 1920s and 1960s was marked by the growth of a sort of Hawaiian nationalism.¹⁵ After this period, any reference to nationalism would, rightfully, be associated with the growing Native Hawaiian movement for recognition and rights that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but before this period, there was something unique--the development of the collective identity referred to here as Hawaiianness. This collective identity, unfortunately, has its roots in the aftermath of tragedy. In a despicable pattern replicated throughout the world, the Native population of the various Hawaiian Islands were ravaged by disease and foul play to such a degree that plantation owners and various business interests callously concurred that they would simply have to import labor to man their

¹⁵ This starting point is, at least in part, evidenced by the increasingly specific use of the term "local" to include only longtime Asian and Native residents, which was due, at least in part, to the highly sensational Massie Trial. While there certainly were haoles who were disgusted by the virulent, world-wide racism exposed and encouraged by the Massie Trial in Honolulu in 1932, most were sympathetic to what was being touted as the noble struggle to maintain the sanctity of white womanhood in the face of a "mongrel" threat of non-whites on the Islands. This trial, its implications and the complexities of island life that it revealed will be discussed in later chapters. Another key factor was the rapid codification of Pidgin, which also served to bind Hawaiians together in a common identity, regardless of background.

increasingly large and numerous plantations.¹⁶ Hawaiianness, then, owes its existence to an amalgamation of the influences and traditions of the Native Hawaiians who remained and those of the various peoples who were brought to the Islands to work. The first to come in large numbers were the Chinese, who began to arrive in the 1850s. They were followed by the Japanese beginning in 1868 (though they did not arrive in large numbers until 1885), and the Portuguese in 1877. Puerto Rican workers were brought in after two hurricanes devastated the sugar plantations in 1899. As experienced harvesters of sugar cane, they were seen as being particularly valuable workers at this point, along with Filipinos who also began arriving to work in the cane fields. Koreans followed after the turn of the century, and Samoans, Tongans, and other Pacific peoples arrived in relatively small numbers in the mid-1920s. And, of course, haoles contributed to the new identity of Hawai`i, as well. And so, in this very, very short period, there grew something specific and new on the Islands.

However, as in other colonized regions throughout the world, the white minority constantly worked to keep each group of people from one another, from relating too closely or commiserating too deeply. Any kind of meaningful collaboration between these people, of course, could be calamitous to the existing power structure, which was, not surprisingly, keenly aware of and cautious to ensure that the differences between the various groups be highlighted and magnified. As a result, whereas the years immediately following the various immigrant groups' arrivals saw only a few labor strikes,

¹⁶ For a masterful account of the Native Hawaiian population on the eve of Contact and beyond, see David Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai`i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1989).

for example, those that did take place were always significant in both how homogeneous they were as the various groups generally did not band together, and in how quickly and ruthlessly they were put down.¹⁷ However disheartening these strikes must have been, interaction did occur in the fields, in the slums of Honolulu, and in the towns, and feelings of unity and collective belonging soon resulted.

The most significant development in the new sense of unity was the Pidgin that resulted from years of contact between speakers of different languages. Though largely based in English, Pidgin is also made up of influences from Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese, for example, and it is still widely spoken. Hawaiian Pidgin is the result of the interactions that took place in the fields and on plantations. So all of these languages, combined with English, came together to form not only the *lingua franca* of the fields, but what has since come to be recognized as an entirely new language; indeed, it is one of the nearly 200 pidgins and Creole languages spoken in the world. Though the language is commonly referred to as “Pidgin” (or as being a pidgin language) it is actually a Creole, or a language that develops among people who speak different languages from one another, but soon becomes the dominant language for all of them, as was the case in Hawai`i. So while technically a pidgin is a language that people learn and use as a second language, Hawaiian Creole English (more commonly referred to simply as,

¹⁷ Detailed information about labor relations on the Islands can be found in the following works: Gerald Horne, *Fighting in Paradise: Labor Unions, Racism, and Communists in the Making of Modern Hawai`i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2011), Moon-Kie Jung, *Reworking Race: The Making of Hawai`i's Interracial Labor Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), and Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawai`i, 1835-1920* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1983).

“Pidgin”) eventually became the primary language used by many Hawaiians, and even those who did not use it exclusively could speak it when necessary. Indeed, even now, most Hawaiians can turn Pidgin on or off as their situation necessitates.¹⁸

Though English has since won out, Pidgin is still commonly spoken, unfortunately, often not without a sense of shame and trepidation owing to its roots on the plantations. The most dramatic manifestation of these feelings, of course, was not the attempt to keep Pidgin out of the schools, but the attempts made to sequester children who spoke it so that their influence would not infest children who did not. The English Standard schools and the implicit message of ethnic, cultural, and certainly linguistic superiority that they espoused succeeded wildly in alienating Hawaiian children who did not speak “proper” English. But more confusing for the Hawaiian psyche was the reality that some Hawaiians, despite the collective sense of Hawaiianness that marked the period, supported the existence of these schools which often separated families and neighbors, and worked hard to ensure that their children could attend them. Other Hawaiians, of course, found the schools to be offensive in nature, and argued that Hawai`i, with its polyglot population, should not be segregated in such a manner. From start to finish, the English Standard schools were a test to the collective identity that was created in the period, but the results of the test were never very clear. Ultimately, what their

¹⁸ For more information on the development, widespread adoption of, and current status of Pidgin, see Suzanne Romaine, “Changing Attitudes to Hawai`i Creole English: Fo’ Find One Good Job, You Gotta Know How fo’ Talk Like One Haole,” in *Creole Genesis, Attitude, and Discourse*, Ed. John Rickford and Suzanne Romaine (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999), 285-301 and Charlene J. Sato, “Linguistic Inequality in Hawaii: The Post-Creole Dilemma,” in *Language of Inequality*, ed. Nessa Wolfson and Joan Manes (Berlin: Mouton, 1985), 255-272.

existence and eventual dismantling showed was that Hawaiians were deeply conflicted about Pidgin and what its use should mean for their children.

After living and teaching for years on the Big Island of Hawai`i, linguist John Reinecke¹⁹ observed in his 1934 dissertation, later reprinted and called *Language and Dialect in Hawai`i: a Sociolinguistic History to 1935*, that the various pidgins that had existed on plantations throughout the islands since the 1800s had come together to form one, widely understood and commonly agreed upon system of speech in the period between 1930-1934.²⁰ This, of course, is a very profound and telling development--a strong sense of nationalism depends, at least in part, on a shared language. Another common characteristic in the development of a strong sense of national identity is the notion and/or reality of being engaged in some kind of struggle with another group of people. Of course, it is not hard to see how this was the case in Hawai`i. It was very clear that haole planters, industrialists, and, increasingly, members of the U.S. military held privileged positions in society. Previous to the 1920s, however, there wasn't much sense of cohesion between Native Hawaiians and the various immigrant populations.²¹ Once the immigrant numbers increased (while the Native populations continued to

¹⁹ It is worthy of note that Dr Reinecke and his wife would later be dismissed years later from their public school teaching positions in Hawai`i during the Red Scare that, like the rest of the U.S. and its territories, marked the period.

²⁰ John E. Reinecke, *Language and Dialect in Hawai`i: a Sociolinguistic History to 1935* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1969). Equally useful was his article, "Pidgin English in Hawaii: A Local Study in the Sociology of Language.," *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. XLIII, No. 5 (March 1938).

²¹ For more information about the impact of these immigrant populations on the Native Hawaiian community, please see the collection of essays distributed by the Asian American Studies Center at UCLA, "Whose Vision?: Asia Settler Colonialism in Hawai`i," *Amerasian Journal* 26, no. 2 (2000): 1-261.

decrease at an alarming rate, due earlier to the Western diseases that decimated them, and then later the intermarriage between them and either haoles and/or various immigrant populations), and more and more people of color were living in the slums of Honolulu, which became hotbeds of intermingling and collaboration, there grew a deeper understanding and recognition of not only the fact that Hawaiian society was deeply stratified (they, of course, had been keenly aware of that from the start), but that they were all in the struggle together.²²

And while the adoption and widespread use of Pidgin would be the most outward and obvious indicator of the creation of a collective, Hawaiian identity, it would be the English Standard schools, the system by which the speakers of this language were meant to be sequestered from those who spoke English “properly,” that the collective identity would be tested and strained. Instead of being the indicator that made it clear that Hawaiians would only accept a completely egalitarian society, what the segregated schools showed instead was that Hawaiians were deeply conflicted about them; though the schools were originally dominated by white students, children of other races and ethnicities would soon be admitted, especially after thousands of haole children were evacuated after the attack on Pearl

²² It should be noted, though, that one unfortunate outcome of the rise of Pidgin was the further peripheralization of the Native Hawaiian language. So while Pidgin became the common language of non-whites in Hawai'i and English was the language of instruction and government, the Native Hawaiian language suffered a double blow. Unfortunately, not unlike Native children on the mainland, Native Hawaiian children would often suffer corporal punishment in the schools for speaking Hawaiian. For more information about this, see Albert J. Schutz, *The Voices of Eden: A History of Hawaiian Language Studies*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 350-353.

Harbor in 1941.²³ While some Hawaiians saw nothing offensive about the schools (often because they were placated by the fact that their children had made it in), others sought to have them dismantled. But even the call for the dismantling of the segregated system was generally anemic; so much so that it was decided in 1949 that the students admitted that year would be allowed, in most cases, to continue in the English Standard program until they graduated in 1960, a year after Statehood.

What this illustrates is that the general consensus was that segregation was not something that Hawaiians wanted on their land, but it also shows that they experienced a certain level of ambivalence on the topic, and that their resistance to the existence of the schools was fairly anticlimactic. This, of course, is no big surprise given the relatively new sense of Hawaiianness that had developed in the period---it still was not clear what being Hawaiian in a U.S. Territory was going to mean. And, of course, this lack of clarity was further exacerbated by the presence of the U.S. and the desire on the part of many Hawaiians to be even more closely tied to it through statehood. So while many Hawaiians wanted to become full-fledged Americans, it was unclear in the period just which typically “American” traits would be adopted and which simply could not be reconciled with Hawaiianness, whose cornerstones were, by default, multi-cultural influence, tolerance, and acceptance, all of which were nurtured by the shared language of Pidgin and the collective experience of having been psychologically grouped together as “Other” by the white ruling class. Given the reality of life on the mainland,

²³ For more information on Hawaiian children’s reactions to the attack on Pearl Harbor, please see William Tuttle, *Daddy’s Gone to War: The Second World War in the Lives of America’s Children* (New York: Oxford University Press: 1995).

though, what in the period could have been more American than segregated schools and a lack of tolerance for different languages and cultures? But this was a bitter pill for many Hawaiians to swallow, if only because their own, increasingly complicated, family trees made it clear that they should, at least in theory, take a more inclusive approach.

For many, whether Hawaiian or haole, there was a nagging feeling that the system was not fair and that it advocated exclusionary practices that just could not be the basis for the kind of Hawai`i that the inhabitants sought to create. Still, the practice of orally testing children for admission and putting them into certain schools based on whether they said “tree” instead of “three” or “dis one boy wen trow da ball” instead of “he threw the ball,” for example, continued from 1924 until 1947. But the children who were tested in 1947, the children who pronounced “three” in Standard English, for example, would remain in the segregated English Standard program until they graduated in 1960. The fact that the system was only sort of abolished, and that it finally went away in 1960 with relatively little fanfare shows us that Hawaiians were rather conflicted about it. Part of this conflict was that even though haole children initially dominated the schools, more and more immigrant and second-generation children passed the test and were admitted as the years went by. Again, this was seen by many as the ticket to the American Dream, and because it was their children’s educations and futures that were on the line, having a child pass the oral exam and make it into one of the English Standard schools was often enough to appease parents, especially since, for most Hawaiians, the possibility of going to school beyond the eighth grade was a very new one. So while it is clear that some parents were very vocal in

their opposition to the existence of this segregated school system on the grounds that it encouraged distinction and separation of the races, these arguments generally only came from the parents of children who were not able to pass the test.²⁴

But because there were relatively few English Standard schools initially established (they existed in areas with large haole populations, though the Department of Education clearly planned for more over the years), for most parents and children, their existence and whether or not one saw them as being offensive or the road to a brighter future was irrelevant. Most children in Hawai`i were never tested, and many never even knew about the schools.²⁵ Still, for those parents and children who knew very well about the system, there was some question about what it might mean for their new sense of Hawaiianness, a sense that would come to dictate what kind of Americans they would want to be, and what kind of training and advantages they imagined would be necessary in preparation. Oftentimes, parents and children in areas significantly “haolified” so as to warrant an English Standard school found that the prestige associated with the schools was simply too much to resist. And it was not just parents and students who craved the prestige of the English Standard schools; teachers sought them out as well. Positions at these schools were often awarded to teachers from the continental U.S. These teachers, so steeped in the culture of the mainland,

²⁴ The example of Me`ema`e Elementary in Honolulu is the most dramatic example of this, and will be discussed in chapter four.

²⁵ This became obvious in various correspondences with people who had attended non-Standard schools. Children were largely unaware of them at the time unless they had neighbors, family members, or more distant relatives who attended them. For children who lived in rural areas, in particular, it is very likely that they had no contact with these schools or anyone who went to them.

were expected to bring with them a sense of what it meant to be true Americans. They were meant to embody all the virtues associated with America, and to serve as examples, as shining beacons for these children of the tropics. Not surprisingly, many of these teachers felt as though they were in a foreign country, which, in many ways, they were. They tended to concentrate on American history, and stressed, from their segregated classrooms, that American politics was noteworthy in its egalitarianism--that hard work and loyalty would be rewarded with opportunity and all the riches capitalism had to offer its most dedicated adherents.

While there are a number of works that discuss the creation and existence of the English Standard system, very little attention has been paid to how these segregated schools played out in the lives of the students who attended them, and even less has been paid to the children who were excluded. This study, in part, aims to remedy that--to show that the struggle of how to deal with the existence of the segregated English Standard system was emblematic of a larger struggle--the struggle to decide how Hawaiianness was going to play out in the period; that is, just how much American-style segregation was going to be acceptable in a place as deeply multi-cultural as the Hawaiian Islands. Additionally, this study will explore the ways this school system followed a number of well established patterns--basic patterns developed and perfected in any number of corners of the globe where a colonizing power has sought to break the will of local people, train them to be of service to the imposed state structure, and learn to view their own languages, customs, and traditions as being incompatible with the modern world. Of course, these patterns have not been set without a fight

across the globe, but in Hawai`i the fight was particularly interesting. It has long been held that Hawai`i is paradisiacal, not only due to its obviously and almost audaciously splendid location and weather, but because of the relative ease with which its people, who since the mid-to-late 1800s have had roots in such far-flung regions as China, Polynesia, Portugal, the Philippines, Russia, Puerto Rico, Japan, the mainland United States, just for starters, have come together to create an entirely new culture. And so while it is true that European-Americans, since the arrival of the first missionaries in 1820 straight through to the eve of Statehood in 1959, actively sought to impose their will and values on Native Hawaiians and immigrant (largely Asian) workers, what happened over time was that the cultural dynamism that marks the Islands ensured the European-American agenda was an impossible one.

It is, in a sense, ironic that the moves made to keep Hawai`i (and its plantations and, later, tourist industries) profitable and accessible for the United States, necessitated that Hawaiians be granted with the power (namely the vote) that they would need to insure, over time, a Hawai`i that was sensitive to homegrown values, desires, and needs. In the case of the English Standard school system, this power shift, this reclaiming of a Hawai`i for Hawaiians would simultaneously result in the increasingly common admission of non-white children to these schools and the call for their abolishment. While it seemed clear to some parents and children that the English Standard schools better prepared students for academic and, later, professional success, others saw this segregated program as being in irreconcilable opposition to the promises of the American Dream.

Of course, only the most naïve could have possibly expected the Dream to play out easily for anyone outside of white upper-and-middle class America. Native Hawaiians and newly arrived immigrants (to say nothing of those who had been in Hawai`i for a generation or two) only had to witness the vicious labor disputes on the islands (or even the notable absence of unions in many places), discriminatory hiring practices both on the Islands and on the mainland, and the startling chasm between rich and poor to know that the myth of the American Dream--the notion that if one just worked hard, he or she could achieve the good life--would be more true for some than others. What happened after this obvious realization was the creation of a Hawai`i, a melding of the customs, traditions, and languages of its people, that allowed Hawaiians to thrive on their haole-dominated islands--to the extent that they would eventually turn the tables. The shift from the English Standard schools being simply places where white children could be educated without having to mix with the rabble of Pidgin-speaking, local children to the increasing admission of children of all shades and backgrounds, and the eventual dismantling of the system on the grounds that it was discriminatory and generally unpopular among Hawaiians, shows us that while the majority of Hawaiians were keen to join the U.S. as a state, they had little desire to do so with such a system in place, even while much of America was still deeply segregated.

This study is also concerned with stereotypes and how language dictates the nature of interactions between groups of people and how they view one another. It is primarily concerned with the post-colonial period and the ways in which the formerly dominant powers must come to reshape their

views of indigenous and local peoples, and the processes undergone by indigenous and local peoples in reconsidering how they view themselves. While these dynamics are applicable in former colonies throughout the world, what makes the Hawaiian Islands particularly interesting is that unlike much of Africa or South-East Asia, for example, the Hawaiian Islands are now popularly perceived as being veritable playgrounds by the descendants of colonizers. Not surprisingly, the reality of mass-tourism, and the stereotypes that are manufactured and generated in order to keep it functioning smoothly, has made accurate self-identity particularly complicated, in addition to making relationships between different ethnic and cultural groups understandably strained. Again, all of these factors have come together to make the sense of Hawaiianness that appeared in the period particularly complicated and layered with meaning.

Beyond the development of a collective sense of Hawaiianness that is such a hallmark of the period, chapter one entitled, “From the Least Savage of the Savage to the Segregated English Standard School System: How Stereotypes Would Come to Shape Educational Policy” will also analyze the ways in which language dictated how Hawaiian children and their capacity for learning were viewed within the segregated school system. While it was true, in the nineteenth century, that Native Hawaiians were popularly conceived as being more capable of learning and intellectual thought than other colonized peoples, this privileged position in the Eurocentric worldview would shift once Asian immigrants flooded onto the Hawaiian Islands. Even more important than the increasingly multi-cultural nature of the Islands, though, was the fact that it was clear that the Islands were incredibly profitable and strategically

placed; in order to exploit them fully so as to reap the benefits, the local population would have to be demoted in order to justify the subjugation that they would be made to endure.

Similarly, it would be equally clear that because Hawai`i had incredible potential both economically and militarily for the mainland, it would have to be streamlined and controlled if it was going to function to its greatest potential as a Territory and, eventually, as a state. The clearest way to go about this was to start in the schools, which was precisely what the missionaries had done from the moment of their arrival in 1820. How that effort played out, whether in public or private schools, is discussed in chapter two, which is entitled, “Standard English and The Push for Americanization in the Period before Statehood.” The chapter explores the history of the effort to Americanize the students of Hawai`i, whether in the classrooms of the elite academy, Punahou (which in its early days was reserved for the Anglo children of missionaries and merchants, and sought to acclimate and train these children for their eventual return to the mainland), or the equally exclusive Kamehameha Schools (which were reserved for Native Hawaiian children), for example. Further, the Americanization projects undertaken within the English Standard schools will be investigated and compared to practices in other, non-Standard classrooms. Not surprisingly, because students in English Standard schools had all but mastered the most obvious indicator of Americanization, as indicated by their spoken English language skills, there was far less focus on deliberate instruction in the American way of life.

The third chapter, “The English Standard Schools: From the Vision to Implementation” explores the various factors that worked together to ensure that the segregated system was officially established in 1924, and how it developed over time. In this chapter, the relatively schizophrenic nature of the relationship with Americanization that developed in Hawai`i in the period will be elucidated. While the goal was for the polyglot population to be streamlined into a manageable mass that shared the ideals and values of the mainland, by segregating students instead of fully steeping them in American language and culture, the English Standard system saw to it that children who spoke Standard English had limited contact with children who did not. Though it is true that this satisfied the urge in the early days of the school system to offer haole children access to public school classrooms largely free from Asian classmates, it also worked to ensure that, oftentimes, fluent English-speaking teachers and peers would not be available to help improve their classmates’ spoken English.

Through the use of personal recollections and various school publications, the ways that the realities of the English Standard system were internalized by Hawaiian children and their parents, both within the segregated classrooms and outside of them, in the period will be revealed in a chapter called, “Opportunity or Imposition?: the Various Ways Children, Parents, Educators, and Administrators Reacted to Hawai`i’s English Standard School System.” While there are no full-length studies dedicated to exploring these themes directly, many have discussed attempts to Americanize Hawaiian children, both Native and immigrant. It is clear that language became one of the most powerful tools in this effort. With the

suppression of not only native languages, but also the Pidgin forms that resulted from increasing contact between language groups, Hawaiian children received a strong message that insinuated the inferiority of their ways and traditions. There has been no lack of research dedicated to recounting how these kinds of prejudices against languages other than Standard English played out for other marginalized groups of children within American classrooms; this chapter will focus attention to what these patterns meant for the children of Hawai`i.

Chapter five, “Segregated Education in the Pacific’s Microcosm of America,” is concerned with Hawai`i’s special place in not only U.S. history, but also the larger narrative of the post-colonial world and the formation of identity for its inhabitants. Throughout the course of the chapter, Hawai`i’s role as a microcosm of the United States, where the change and evolution of the mainland is mirrored but in a much smaller location and period of time, is closely examined. The various ways that educational practices influenced and molded how minorities, including African Americans and Native Americans, were educated on the mainland will be examined. Likewise, the ways that the values and ideals influenced Hawaiian classrooms will be discussed. Most importantly, this chapter explores the ways that the English Standard schools epitomized the struggles that many felt in Hawai`i concerning just how much influence the mainland would be allowed to hold over the Islands. The sense of Hawaiianness that had developed in the period under examination ensured that there would be a collective sense of belonging on the Islands. Still, there was widespread hope throughout the Islands that Hawai`i would become a U.S. state. The English Standard

schools, then, offer an example of what Hawaiians would be willing to adopt from the mainland and what they would simply find too antithetical to their way of life. Interestingly, though, their reaction to the segregated schools would not be unified and emphatic, but often ambivalent and conflicted.

Though this is the first study to systematically address the English Standard school system and its role in illuminating the transformation of Hawai`i and Hawaiians in the period (a period whose hallmarks include both the creation of a collective sense of Hawaiianness among locals and the reality of becoming citizens of the 50th of the United States), there have been a number of works that helped to lay the groundwork for this study, its presuppositions, and claims.²⁶ Indeed, this study is the result of the careful examination of a variety of sources. An important first step was establishing a

²⁶ In an effort to understand the English Standard schools in their milieu, one must turn attention to several classic, general works concerning the evolution of educational practices in American history. This is an important area to explore for a variety of reasons. First, it is necessary to have a firm understanding of the ever-changing philosophical framework that guided American education in order to understand how and why the English Standard school system was such a departure from the stated goals of public education in the period. Also, it is important to understand that the racism that underlay the creation of the English Standard schools, although often at odds with what experts had hoped for in public education, was not dissimilar to the racism in the public schools of the mainland, nor were the outcomes.

The following sources are recommended starting points: Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in Education* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964); _____, *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783* (New York: Harper Collins, 1972); _____, *American Education: the National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982); _____, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York: Harper and Row 1988); _____, *Public Education* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976); _____, *American Education: the Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1988); David Nasaw, *Schooled to Order: A Social History of Public School in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963); Robert A. Carlson, *The Quest for Conformity: Americanization Through Education* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1975); and Paula Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

solid framework for the understanding of the formation of Pidgin and its social, political, and cultural implications, in an effort to fully appreciate what was happening in Hawai`i in the period under examination. This framework was provided, at least in part, by Morris Young in his article “Standard English and Student Bodies: Institutionalizing Race and Literacy in Hawai`i, which appeared in *College English*.²⁷ Also, the work of Charlene Sato was equally illuminating.²⁸ Her article, “Linguistic Inequality in Hawaii: The Post-Creole Dilemma”, which appeared in *Language of Inequality*, in particular, helps to underscore the prejudice that plagues both Pidgin speakers and those Hawaiians who have deeply conflicted feelings about the language.²⁹

Another worthwhile study is *Da Kine Talk: From Pidgin to Standard English in Hawai`i*, by Elizabeth Ball Carr.³⁰ A fervent defender of Hawaiian Pidgin English, Carr very explicitly states that it is her aim in the study to help to legitimize Pidgin, to drain it of its stigma as it is, for her, nothing more or less than the result of dynamic and exciting cultural and ethnic diversity-- a diversity that she asserts should be embraced and nurtured. According to Carr, it is the purpose of her work to “take a careful look at the kinds of English to be found in Hawai`i today and to study these diverse dialects in the

²⁷ Morris Young, “Standard English and Student Bodies: Institutionalizing Race and Literacy in Hawai`i,” *College English* vol. 64, no 4 (March 2002), 405-431.

²⁸ The Charlene Sato Center for Pidgin, Creole & Dialect Studies at the University of Hawai`i, Manoa, established in her honor, continually publishes works that elucidate the various issues surrounding Pidgin and its continued use.

²⁹ Charlene Sato, “Linguistic Inequality in Hawai`i: The Post-Creole Dilemma,” in Nessa Wolfson and Joan Manes, ed. *Language of Inequality* (Berlin: Mouton Press, 1985), 255-272.

³⁰ Elizabeth Ball Carr, *Da Kine Talk: From Pidgin to Standard English in Hawai`i* (Honolulu, University of Hawai`i Press, 1972).

light of the influences brought to bear upon them.”³¹ The legacy of linguistic difference in Hawai`i is clearly illustrated by Carr in her recounting of the fact that at the turn of the twentieth century, “only about five percent of the people of the Islands...were *native* speakers of English. Therefore, probably less than five percent of the population could have spoken a type of English well enough developed to have been called standard.”³² As previously noted, this incredible linguistic diversity was the result of the influx of labor recruits from China, Portugal, Japan, Puerto Rico, Spain, Korea, and the Philippines, all of whom had their hand in creating Hawaiian Pidgin.

Cecil K. Dotts and Mildred Sikkema’s study, *Challenging the Status Quo: Public Education in Hawai`i, 1840-1980*, serves as a good introduction to the events and key players in the evolution of public education in Hawai`i.³³ Another worthwhile study is Maenette K.P. Benham and Ronald H. Heck’s *Culture and Educational Policy in Hawai`i: the Silencing of Native Voices*.³⁴ In the study, the authors give an overview of public education as it has existed in Hawai`i from the arrival of the missionaries in the 1820s through to the 1990s. In both cases, though, the authors fail to make clear when they are focusing on the experiences of Native Hawaiians, immigrants in Hawai`i, or both, not to mention the lack of any sense of how these groups interacted and influenced one another’s educational experiences. The present study, however, aims to

³¹ Ibid., 7.

³² Ibid.

³³ Cecil K. Dotts and Mildred Sikkema, *Challenging the Status Quo: Public Education in Hawai`i, 1840-1980* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association, 1994).

³⁴ Maenette K.P. Benham and Ronald H. Heck, *Culture and Educational Policy in Hawai`i: the Silencing of Native Voices* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 1988).

illustrate how the evolution of education in Hawai`i affected children personally.

Among the canon of Hawaiian history is Gavan Daws' *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*.³⁵ This study, which takes the reader from the arrival of Capitan Cook in 1778 to Statehood in 1959, has been an obvious starting point for generations. Perhaps even more useful for the purposes of this study was Lawrence H. Fuchs' *Hawaii Pono. Hawaii the Excellent: An Ethnic and Political History*.³⁶ Fuchs' study is primarily concerned with how the various ethnic groups of the Hawaiian Islands would come to demand a more democratic society, which would reach its culmination with the 1954 ouster of what had come to be known as the "Big Five." The Big Five, which was comprised of the following business interests: Castle & Cooke, Alexander & Baldwin, C. Brewer & Co., American Factors (later Amfac), Theo H. Davies & Co., essentially dominated the Hawaiian economy, and formed an oligarchy in the Territory of Hawai`i. Fuchs argues, however, that the various peoples of Hawai`i would come together to demand change, change that would materialize in the complete ouster of the Republicans by the Democrats in the election of 1954. It should come as no surprise that Hawai`i's classrooms would, at least in part, be battlegrounds in this very clear shift.

Also of great use in establishing the necessary background for this examination was Bernhard Hormann and Lawrence Kasdon's article entitled, "Integration in Hawaii's Schools," which appeared in *Educational Leadership*

³⁵ Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1978).

³⁶ Lawrence H. Fuchs, *Hawaii Pono. Hawaii the Excellent: An Ethnic and Political History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1961).

in April 1959.³⁷ In it, the authors succinctly outline the realities of education in Hawai`i in the moments before the last class of the English Standard School system graduated. Likewise, Benjamin O. Wist's study, *A Century of Public Education in Hawaii, 1840- 1940* offered a very comprehensive view of the whole of public education in the period under examination.³⁸ This work's focus on public schooling during such a dynamic period was very illuminating, and like the Hormann and Kasdon article, it brought up as many questions as it answered, which, of course, made it invaluable. So, too, was Ralph Stueber's meticulously researched dissertation, "Hawaii: A Case Study in Development Education, 1778-1960."³⁹ Similarly, the work of Eileen Tamura has also been of great interest. Though much of her work is concerned specifically with the experiences of Japanese-American (both Issei, or first generation, and Nisei, who were second generation) in Hawai`i, she consistently sets her keen eye on the larger picture of Hawai`i in the period. For the purposes of this study, her work *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawai`i* was especially useful in understanding the process of Americanization that the children of Hawai`i endured.⁴⁰ Likewise, the work of Judith Hughes, particularly her article, "The Demise of the English Standard School System in Hawai`i" which appeared in *The Hawaiian Journal of*

³⁷ Bernhard Hormann and Lawrence Kasdon, "Integration in Hawaii's Schools," *Educational Leadership*, (April 1959): 403-408.

³⁸ Benjamin O. Wist, *A Century of Public Education in Hawaii, 1840-1940* (Honolulu: Hawaii Educational Review, 1940).

³⁹ Ralph K. Stueber, "Hawaii: A Case Study in Development Education, 1778-1960" (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1964).

⁴⁰ Eileen H. Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawai`i* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

History, has informed this work.⁴¹ A small smattering of other works that helped to capture not only particular flash points in Hawaiian history, but a deeper understanding of its milieu include: Noenoe K. Silva's *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*,⁴² *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawai'i, 1865-1945* by Gary Y. Okihiro,⁴³ the essays collected by Haunani-Kay Trask in *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*,⁴⁴ and, finally, David E. Stannard's retelling of the infamous Massie Trial, *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow's Spectacular Last Case* offered a very clear view into not only the darker side of paradise, but just how complicated race and identity would become in Hawai'i in the period.⁴⁵

The most illuminating sources examined in the preparation of this study, though, included the multitude of government documents, school board publications, and materials published by territorial governors and Superintendants of Public Instruction throughout the period under examination. More specifically, source material such as United States Department of Interior publications, including the various federal surveys of the educational system in Hawai'i undertaken under the supervision of the

⁴¹ Judith Hughes, "The Demise of the English Standard School System in Hawai'i," *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 27 (1993): 65-87.

⁴² Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

⁴³ Gary Y. Okihiro, *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawai'i, 1865-1945* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

⁴⁴ Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

⁴⁵ David Stannard, *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow's Spectacular Last Case* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006).

Bureau of Education (of which, the 1920 *Survey of Education in Hawaii* was, not surprisingly, the most useful), and United States Department of Immigration publications concerning immigrants and education also proved to be incredibly worthwhile. Likewise, U.S. Census data during the period was very valuable in pinpointing relevant patterns and trends concerning student populations throughout the Islands and within the English Standard schools.

Also, less conventional source material such as school year and memory books, personal recollections, and personal photos and memorabilia proved to offer invaluable insights into the period. The personal recollections, in the form of oral histories, email correspondence with former students, and short stories lend authenticity to the study and add depth to our understanding of this school system and its impact. Among them were recollections shared by subjects who offered in-depth accounts of their experiences within Hawai'i's public schools, both as students and as educators. Of course it is true that these kinds of sources have certain drawbacks and limitations (both of which will be discussed at length in later chapters), but despite the possible problems associated with making assumptions based on people's childhood memories, there should be no doubt that these kinds of contributions add a very human element to what might otherwise be a very one-dimensional retelling of past events. It was by scouring the stacks of school board documents, most of which were obtained from the Special Collections division of the Hamilton Library on the University of Hawai'i's main campus at Manoa, the State of Hawai'i Archives in Honolulu, and the Hawaiian Historical Society in Honolulu, and by meeting with dozens upon dozens of former students that the conclusions drawn in this study became evident.

Although theoretically concerned with an unrelated topic and time, Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* provides an example of an approach that is replicated in this work.⁴⁶ Although White is ultimately concerned with a time period well over a hundred years before the establishment of the English Standard system, and while his study does not deal with Hawaiians, the phenomenon that he outlines is quite applicable. According to White, what was significant about the relationship between European and American colonial powers and the various Indian tribes they were in contact with between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was that neither side was ever able to actually dominate the other. It was on White's "middle ground" that the various groups would manipulate and work to influence the other. More importantly, within this dichotomy, it was not whole groups that functioned to control the other. Rather, it was individuals and small groups that worked to set the local policies, customs, and norms that dictated the nature of the interactions between whites and Native Americans.

White, in offering such a fresh, new way to look at the interactions between native and colonizing peoples, regardless of time or place, encourages the abandonment of the traditional winner/loser, oppressor/oppressed approach traditionally taken in addressing such complex relationships. Instead, White argues that a more sophisticated approach should be taken when he writes:

The history of Indian-white relations has not usually produced complex stories. Indians are the rock, European peoples are the sea, and history seems a constant storm. There have been

⁴⁶ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

but two outcomes: The sea wears down and dissolves the rock; or the sea erodes the rock but cannot finally absorb its battered remnant, which endures. The first outcome produces stories of conquest and assimilation; the second produces stories of cultural persistence. The tellers of such stories do not lie. Some Indian groups did disappear; others did persist. But the tellers of such stories miss a larger process and a larger truth. The meeting of sea and continent, like the meeting of whites and Indians, creates as well as destroys. Contact was not a battle of primal forces in which only one could survive. Something new could appear.⁴⁷

There can be no question that something new appeared on the Hawaiian Islands in the period under examination here. There can also be no question that in addition to ensuring a less patronizing presentation of the history of Native Americans, who clearly exercised agency and some measure of control over their day-to-day lives in the face of oftentimes brutal suppression, the “middle ground” approach also offers a more accurate view of the colonial powers, few of whom ever functioned as total, omnipotent powers without opposition.⁴⁸ While White certainly is not an apologist, his study marks an important move away from the tendency to make the oppression they endured the hallmark of Native American people. His model is of great use when considering the experiences of Hawaiian children within

⁴⁷ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁸ A careful examination of the scholarship concerning the education of Native American children is of great use in fully understanding the motivations behind the implementation of the linguistically segregated English Standard school system in Hawai'i. Three books, in particular, should be consulted: David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Margaret Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: the Road to Self-Determination, 1928-1973* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1974); and Patricia Riley (ed.), *Growing up Native American: an Anthology* (New York: Harper Collins Books, 1993). All three masterfully chart the implications of the actions undertaken by the reformers of the period who sought to of the period who sought to pick and choose which elements of Native American culture they found to be useful, and their various processes of highlighting those whilst attempting to mitigate the influence of the aspects of Native American culture they found to be anathema and wholly incompatible with the version of America they sought to impose on all inhabitants. This impulse, of course, was also felt on the Hawaiian Islands.

their segregated school system. Throughout this work, the reader is encouraged to view Hawaiian history in time-lapse. It would be difficult to overstate just how rapid the rate of change there was and continues to be. From the arrival of the Polynesians via longboats between 300-800 CE, the point of Contact with Europeans in 1778, the arrival of missionaries in 1820, the massive influx of immigrants from Asia, Europe, and the mainland starting in 1852 with the arrival of the first group of indentured Chinese plantation workers, to the arrival of the U.S. military bases shortly after the turn of the century, and, finally, the influx of droves of tourists, it is difficult to comprehend just how much Hawai`i was forced to change, meld, and continually recreate itself on those little specks in the vast ocean. There can be no doubt that something very unique and special was created there, and the chapters that follow attempt to tell their story as accurately and sympathetically as possible.

Chapter Two

From the Least Savage of the Savage to the Segregated English Standard School System: How Stereotypes Would Come to Shape Educational Policy

From contact with Captain Cook and his men in 1778 to the missionaries and business interests that followed well into the 19th century, Hawaiian history was marked by staggering change on all levels of society. By the mid-19th century, the story of Hawai`i was one primarily of domination by white business interests. This domination would ultimately culminate in the overthrowing of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. Because of the growth of various agricultural industries there, sugar and pineapple chief among them, there would be an increased demand for workers on the many plantations throughout the Islands. This would result in the influx of immigrants, particularly from Asia, whose cultures and traditions would come together to join the Native Hawaiian and haole influences that already permeated the Islands, and, together, they would all create something very new---a distinct culture of Hawaiianness, and the language of Pidgin to go along with it. Despite this distinct, increasingly shared culture, stereotypes about each group would dictate how they would be treated within society, to some degree. Native Hawaiians, for example, very early on would enjoy a relatively elevated position in the minds of haole missionaries, though this would change over time as economic realities shifted and the Island's plantations grew and became more profitable. The various immigrant groups, too, would come with their own preconceived notions about the various peoples they would find on the Islands, and, indeed, their stereotypes about one another would shift and evolve with the changing realities of Hawai`i in the period.

It was generally accepted as fact in the 19th century that Native Hawaiians were uniquely equipped intellectually and spiritually when compared to other native peoples.¹ The notion of Hawaiian superiority over other colonized peoples was the result of, among other things, the popular “science” of phrenology, which dictated that Hawaiian’s cranial shape placed them nearer to Caucasians than other Polynesian and Asian groups. Indeed, the period was marked by what could best be described as an “ethnographic craze.” Alexander Winchell, professor of paleontology at the University of Michigan, made the case for Hawaiian superiority when he argued that, based on the science of the day, among Pacific peoples, Kanaks (Hawaiians) were near the top of the hierarchy, easily surpassing the Fijians and New Guineans, while keeping up with the likes of the Maoris and Tahitians. As evidence, he asserted that, “some full-blooded Kanaks express a truly Aryan intelligence.”²

And Winchell was certainly not alone in his views. Three years after the publication of Winchell’s study, phrenologist Samuel R. Wells concluded in his study, *New Physiognomy*, that Hawaiians, based on their head shape were only behind the Tahitians in terms of mental capabilities. Indeed, to Wells, the Hawaiian was much closer physiologically to the Caucasian than the category of the Malay, which was the category for most Pacific peoples.³

¹ One notable work that made this case in 1880 was Alexander Winchell, *Preadamites; or a Demonstration of the Existence of Men before Adam* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Co., 1880).

² *Ibid.*, 317.

³ As quoted in Jane C. Desmond, “Picturing Hawai`i: the “Ideal” Native and the Origins of Tourism, 1880-1915,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, 7.2 (1999), 485-486.

This kind of scientific racism marked the period. Likewise, with the widespread adoption of the sentiments associated with Social Darwinism and the rabid imperialism in the years after the Spanish-American War, Americans became increasingly interested in other cultures, the concept of race, and ways of explaining one group's relative success over that of another.

Because they were seen as having special potential, more effort was put into bringing education and religion to them (via missionaries) than many other groups in colonized areas.⁴ On this point, Ralph Stueber argued that, "In the course of the decade [from 1820-1830, right after the missionaries had established a written form of Hawaiian] most Hawaiian adults became literate at a simple level, a remarkable educational achievement by any standard."⁵ So it was paradoxical, then, that children of Hawaiian ancestry, who were seen as being among the least savage of native peoples, and, as a result, one of the easiest to educate, should, along with other non-haole children, often suffer legal segregation within their own public school system.

The notion that Hawaiians were more intelligent and, thus, more civilized than other non-white peoples served a very utilitarian purpose for Caucasians. Hawaiians as ideal natives helped ensure the success of the growing agricultural industry, and military and tourism interests there. To this end, efforts were made to further encourage this notion through the aggressive marketing of Hawaiians as noble, and welcoming natives. Most importantly in this context, it was stressed that Hawaiians were a new people,

⁴ Ralph Stueber, "An Informal History of Schooling in Hawai'i," in *To Teach the Children: Historical Aspects of Education In Hawai'i*, ed. The College of Education at the University of Hawai'i (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1982), 16-17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

a people with whom Americans did not have a legacy of slavery or genocide. Thus, although they were not Caucasian, it seemed that Hawaiians could be brought into the fold of American life relatively easily.⁶

But this general sense of respect and kinship with Hawaiians would shift with the growth of a plantation economy there. In the simplest terms possible, it was with the wild success of the sugar, pineapple, and military industries, for example, that dictated that in order to maintain firm control, Hawaiians could no longer enjoy an elevated status by haoles. The growth of the plantation economy, not surprisingly, resulted in the massive influx of people from various Asian countries, in particular, at the end of the 19th century and beyond. Likewise, the expansion of agricultural industry also resulted in an increasing number of white American families moving to the Islands. And when they came, they made it clear that they did not want their children schooled with Pidgin-speaking Hawaiian children. Because this was generally the case, when the recommendation was made in the 1920 investigation of the school system that children should be separated in accordance to their language skills, white parents were quite vocal in their support.⁷

Increasingly, the presence of these children was seen as being a potential threat to the education of haole and other non-Pidgin speaking children, who would later be sequestered within the English Standard classrooms throughout the Islands. This was indicative of both just how willing the Territory would be to appease haole parents, and also of the larger

⁶ Desmond, 459.

⁷ Fuchs, 276. This point will be explored in depth in later chapters.

fears and xenophobia that marked the period. As Hawai`i made its way from territory to state, it was not obvious how the burgeoning polyglot society would function. On one hand, haole leaders and business owners wanted to maintain the level of control that they had previously enjoyed. It was equally clear, though, that the non-haole population, who formed the majority, desired to be both American and Hawaiian in their new homes, on their own terms.

The flood of immigration ensured that haoles, whether missionaries or involved in business, no longer needed to idealize Hawaiians and their attributes. Indeed, with the flood of workers ready to man the increasing number (and size) of plantations, whites no longer needed to justify their own presence and domination of the Islands. The aforementioned growth of sugar and pineapple industries there, followed by the military interests and potential of a strong tourist industry, necessitated the existence of more open racism and a more passionate vilification of the Other. Of course, mid-19th century America was more than equipped to offer both in copious amounts, and, as on the mainland, these tendencies would be further encouraged by the massive wave of immigration to the Islands. An interesting manifestation on the Islands, though, would be that language became the target for discrimination. With the arrival of each new ethnic group, it would be increasingly difficult to lump immigrants together. Even if haoles might have been tempted to lump all non-Caucasians into the “Oriental” category, for example, those “Orientals” were far too aware of their differences from one another (rivalries and playful differences that will be discussed later in this chapter) to allow this. The fact that they comprised the majority on the

Islands, made non-haoles even more dangerous and necessitated the taming of their influence.

In her article, "Picturing Hawai'i: the "Ideal" Native and the Origins of Tourism, 1880-1915," Jane C. Desmond asserts that Native Hawaiians were popularly conceived as being an "ideal" native population in that period.⁸

According to Desmond, Native Hawaiians were welcoming, open, and giving hosts. Further, she asserts that:

Euro Americans perceived them as "brown," not "black," "red," or "yellow," in the colorist terminologies of the day...Hawaiians seemed to offer an alluring encounter with paradisiacal exoticism, a nonthreatening soft primitivism- primitive, yes, but delightfully so.⁹

But while Hawaiians were seen as being primitive, the relationship colonists would have with them was, at least at the time, less complicated than relations with other, similarly marginalized peoples. On that point, Desmond maintains that:

Unlike Cuba and Puerto Rico, however, where legacies of slavery yielded populations of mixed European and African genealogies, Hawai'i was not part of this black/white dichotomy and its...troubling mixtures. This was extremely important in figuring the Hawaiian "native" as an ideal type. Hawaiians were neither black nor white nor mulatto. As one photo caption for an image of "lei sellers" declared, "their complexion is neither yellow like the Malay nor red like the American Indian, but a kind of olive and sometimes reddish brown...They belong to a branch of the Polynesian race, which was undoubtedly of Aryan stock."¹⁰

Ultimately, then, part of what was so seductive about Native Hawaiians was that, at least according to the thinking of the day, they were not only much

⁸ Desmond, 459-460.

⁹ Ibid., 460-461.

¹⁰ Desmond, 482.

closer to the ranks of Caucasians, they were a virgin people with whom Caucasians did not yet have a sordid history.

While Native Hawaiians were seen as being more primitive than European Americans, their primitive nature was commonly perceived as being a chosen one. So while mainlanders toiled in overcrowded cities, Native Hawaiians avoided such a lifestyle and, instead, “represented a pre-urban, preindustrial, pastoral vision of harmony with nature,”¹¹ at a point in American history when, with the frontiers long-since closed, people were questioning the health and value of their stressful, city-based lifestyles. Hawaiians, then, were seen as being wisely, even willfully primitive, in response to the modern world. Also lending to this characterization of Native Hawaiians, according to Desmond, was that “they were highly literate,¹² and often part Caucasian, and most were Christian.”¹³ Again, this further illustrates the notion on the part of missionaries and colonizers that Native Hawaiians, with an education focused on Americanization, could be brought into the fold rather easily.

The process of linguistic and cultural Americanization endured by Native Hawaiian children was rather different from what was experienced by other children, such as Native Americans or immigrants, whose intellectual capacities were not viewed as favorably.¹⁴ This is not to suggest that Native Hawaiian children enjoyed a privileged situation; regardless of the motivations guiding it, linguistic and cultural Americanization was routinely a degrading

¹¹ Desmond, 465.

¹² Desmond maintains that Hawaiians “boasted a literacy rate higher than the mainland’s...,” 492.

¹³ Desmond, 466.

¹⁴ This point will be discussed in much further detail in later chapters.

and dehumanizing process on at least some level. Still, the motivations and preconceived notions that guided it were significant and telling. When consulting photos, postcards, and travel advertisements from the period, it becomes obvious that Native Hawaiians were portrayed, and thus popularly conceived as being noble, and purposefully primitive. Again, it could be argued that their treatment in school was even more paternalistic in nature than the process of Americanization endured by other peoples who were seen as having less potential; that Hawaiian children were Americanized within the schools less because they were seen as being dangerously close to savage and grossly inferior (as other groups of people certainly were), but because they were seen as being remarkably close to the level of whites.

To some degree, the elevated status Hawaiians enjoyed was due at least in part to the willingness of the monarchy, throughout the nineteenth century, to replicate various aspects of respectable, “civilized” Western society, in an effort to be recognized as players in the world of nations. In this effort, the trappings of high society were widely adopted by royal Hawaiians, as any visitor to Honolulu’s `Iolani Palace can attest. In room after room and case after case, artifacts that had once belonged to the monarchy show their almost frantic desire to stake their claim within the civilized world. In her study, *Colonizing Hawai`i: The Cultural Power of Law*, Sally Engle Merry maintains that:

...paradoxically, as Hawai`i sought to claim sovereign status as a nation, it was mocked by other nations because of its mimicry or the ceremonial forms of European nationalism. One writer labeled it a ‘pygmy kingdom’, for example, and after his 1866 visit, Mark Twain called it a place where the grown folk ‘play

empire,' mocking both the Hawaiians and the society they imitated."¹⁵

But Native Hawaiians and the relative status that they enjoyed in the colonized world would have to shift to accommodate the facts that the Islands held impressive financial potential. Additionally, their location was incredibly strategic and most auspicious for the United States, which was anxious to secure a path to Asia. With the influx of more and more immigrant workers, it became easier to justify and support a change in thinking about Native Hawaiians, who would then simply be grouped in with other non-whites. One potent example of how this played out was the increasing popularity of images of hula dancers, with their inherent distance from restrained sexuality and other trappings of 'dignified society.' The hula girl image, in particular, would encapsulate notions of Hawaiians as noble savages who were both idolaters and sexually permissive by nature, traits the missionaries and Americanizers after them believed were inherent in all Hawaiians.¹⁶ Although the tourist industry in Hawai'i would make repeated attempts to popularize softer, less sensuous versions of the hula girl, the attempts did little to change the sexually charged stereotypes.¹⁷

Though not overtly sinister, these characterizations of Hawaiians insinuated that they were simple, sexual beings, and while there was certainly an allure to these images, the message was clear--Hawaiians were not particularly cerebral creatures. The space they inhabited was purely physical,

¹⁵ Sally Engle Merry *Colonizing Hawai'i: the Cultural Power of Law* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 20.

¹⁶ Aeko Sereno "Images of the Hula Dancer and 'Hula Girl': 1778-1960" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawai'i, 1990).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, vii.

and while there was an aesthetic enjoyment white people could take from them, they had little else to offer. Again, this kind of stereotyping was necessary in the period if Americans were going to be able to justify taking what mattered most to Native Hawaiians--their land. In order to set the stage for their subjugation, they simply had to be made to be less than whites, and the hula dancer image was one way of going about fashioning Native Hawaiians as being doleful, simple people who needed the U.S. to guide them. Or worse, they were depicted as being sexually lascivious, lazy, ignoble savages who threatened to take others, those who were not firmly in control, down with them.¹⁸ Indeed, the relationship had changed to such a degree that by 1903, D.L. Leonard, in a missionary publication, could flatly report, "Speaking generally, a region larger than several of our States has been redeemed from utter savagery...Tho (sic) the natives are steadily disappearing in numbers and seem likely sooner or later to disappear, their places are already supplied by others of sturdier stock."¹⁹

Adding to just how increasingly complex the situation in Hawai`i was in the period is the fact that it was forced to change and evolve at a dizzying rate of speed. To fully appreciate Hawai`i in the period, much less what it meant to be Hawaiian, one must realize that the first European contact with the Islands was not until January 18, 1778, when British naval explorer Captain James Cook first sighted the island of O`ahu. This would mark the end of more than 500 years of isolation from the rest of the world. This isolation from

¹⁸ Ibid., 10-11.

¹⁹ D.L. Leonard, "Christianity and the Hawaiian Islands," *The Missionary Review of the Word* 16 (July 1903).

the outside world had been so complete that it is likely that by that time, there were few, if any, stories of other peoples still circulating among Native Hawaiians. Cook's first sighting marked the end of that isolation, and the beginning of the decline of this civilization in the Pacific. Though initially welcomed with open arms, Captain Cook would be murdered by Native Hawaiians in 1779, at least in part for betraying the hospitality shown to him and his men by sharing little more with the Native people than syphilis, a myriad of other diseases, and widespread death. In 1810, King Kamehameha united all of the Hawaiian islands under one crown, a fact that makes clear the point that a collective Native Hawaiian identity had not had time to fully develop before the first missionaries arrived ten years later in 1820.²⁰

Not long after, a number of industries took hold on the Islands, industries that underscored just how wildly profitable the Islands could be. First, the number of whaling ships in the area grew from 172 in 1842 to 490 in 1844.²¹ This incredibly lucrative industry, however, would soon be replaced by land-based ones, namely the cultivation of sugar, beginning in 1835, and, later, pineapples. The Hawaiian sugar industry enjoyed success and stability through the 1850s, but it was the beginning of the Civil War in 1861 that would lead to the boom. Because the northern states had always relied upon the South for its sugar, the outbreak of the war meant that they would have to

²⁰ For the purposes of this study, what is important about this fact is that one can then make the case that the collective notion of Hawaiianness that develops later did not have to compete with and depose a strong, solidified identity for Native Hawaiians throughout the Islands. For Native Hawaiians in the period, identity hinged more upon regional particularities than on perceiving themselves as a collective whole.

²¹ Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1965), 307.

look elsewhere, and for the most part, that place would be Hawai`i.²² The trade of sugar was steady throughout the war, but it wasn't until the passing of the U.S-Hawai`i Reciprocity Treaty in 1875, at the urging of Hawai`i's King Kalakaua, that the industry really exploded. The Treaty was of paramount importance because it increased profits by allowing for the admission of various agricultural products, including sugar, to the United States without customs duties, and likewise, a variety of products and manufactured goods from the mainland would be admitted duty-free.²³ As an indicator of just how much the sugar industry was able to increase in light of the Reciprocity Treaty, it should be noted that in 1874, Hawai`i exported approximately 21,000,000 pounds of sugar to the mainland, whereas that figure would jump to approximately 114,100,000 pounds six years later in 1883.²⁴

This massive increase would necessitate an equally massive number of workers just to keep up with the demand. In that effort, between 1877 and 1896 approximately 100,000 Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Portuguese workers, among others, arrived on the Islands ready to work.²⁵ The numbers of Chinese immigrants, of course, dropped off dramatically after the Chinese Exclusion Laws of 1882.²⁶ Still, the number of immigrants continued to soar, and by 1920 there were over 300,000 Asians (namely from China, Korea, the

²² Theodore Morgan, *Hawaii—a Century of Economic Change, 1778-1876* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), 213.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 214.

²⁵ Romanzo C. Adams, *The Peoples of Hawaii* (Honolulu: American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1933), 8.

²⁶ It should be noted, though, that the Chinese Exclusion Act did not apply to Hawai`i until the 1898 Annexation.

Philippines, and more than anywhere else, Japan) living, working, and raising their children on the Islands. What this massive influx of Asians meant for the demographics of the Islands cannot be over-stated. From a population that had been 97 percent Native Hawaiian/part-Hawaiian and 2 percent white in 1853, Hawai'i would then shift to a population of 62 percent Asia, 16.3 percent Native Hawaiian/part-Hawaiian, and 7.7 percent white in 1920.²⁷ Despite the fact that they made up only 7.7 percent of the population, the haole minority dominated industry and the political realm, and they were, not surprisingly, fixated on maintaining their position of prominence.

As a result of this explosion of population and trade, five sugar-related companies, which were all run by white men and collectively known as the Big Five, would come to dominate not only the sugar industry, but also nearly all aspects of economic and political life on the Islands.²⁸ Though they were bitter rivals, these corporations were keenly aware that in order to maintain their powerful hold on the Islands, they had to work together to maintain the balance of power in their favor. One of the most important results of this partnership was their establishment, along with other elite haole political and business leaders, of an organization called the Hawaiian League, which would soon see to the destruction of the independent Kingdom of Hawai'i with the

²⁷ Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. (Boston: Little Brown, 1998),132.

²⁸ The so-called Big Five was a group of sugarcane processing corporations, which also enjoyed widespread political power throughout the islands. It was comprised of: Castle & Cooke, Alexander & Baldwin, C. Brewer & Co., Amfac, and Theo H. Davies & Co.

unseating of the monarchy.²⁹ After writing a new Hawaiian constitution, which would later be known as the “Bayonet Constitution” in 1887, the Hawaiian League forced King Kalakaua to sign it with the backing of a band of approximately 200 armed haole men, who were collectively known as the Honolulu Rifles. In addition to essentially reducing Kalakaua to a simple figurehead, the constitution stripped voting rights from all but those who could meet highly restrictive criteria---meaning, almost everyone aside from the wealthiest businessmen and landowners, who, not surprisingly, were largely Caucasian. After King Kalakaua died in 1891, his sister and heir, Princess Lili`uokalani took the throne. She would be the last in the line of the Hawaiian monarchs, as she would be unable to fight off the forces moving Hawai`i toward annexation by the United States.³⁰

After the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, the new government leaders pushed hard for annexation with the United States in order to protect valuable business interests there. Politician John L. Stevens in his article, “A Plea for Annexation”, articulated the fervency with which some pushed for annexation. In it, he asserted, “A paramount reason why annexation should not be long postponed is that, if it soon takes place, the crown and government lands will be cut up and sold to American and Christian people, thus preventing the Islands from being submerged and

²⁹Lorrin A. Thurston, who was a son of missionaries, led this secret society, also known as the Annexation Club. Indeed, the saying, “They came to do good, and did very well” could hardly be more fitting.

³⁰ Further information about this period can be found in Jonathan Kamakawiwo`ole Osorio *Dismembering Lihui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2002) and Julia Flynn Siler, *Lost Kingdom: Hawai`i's Last Queen, the Sugar Kings, and America's First Imperial Adventure* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2012).

overrun by Asiatics.”³¹ Much to their chagrin, however, was the inconvenient U.S. law that required a public vote to establish that the majority of any given area in question actually supported annexation. Despite the fact that 95 percent of the Native population of the Hawaiian Islands signed an anti-annexation petition,³² Congress moved forward, and on July 7th, 1898, President William McKinley signed a joint congressional resolution approving the annexation.³³ With annexation, it became clear that there was simply no need to elevate the Hawaiian and his (alleged) propensity for learning any longer. In fact, extending such respect to Native Hawaiians or others who wound up on the plantations ready to work would have been an exercise in self-sabotage for planters and business owners. In the same way that racism was used as a tool to justify the African slave trade, Native Hawaiians, in particular, had to be downgraded in order to justify the business practices used on the Islands. And certainly, immigrants had to be perceived as being undeserving of the kind of treatment haoles enjoyed in order for the economic systems in place to progress and function smoothly.³⁴

³¹ John L. Stevens, “A Plea for Annexation,” *The North American Review* 157, (December 1893): 736-745.

³² For more information on this topic, please see Noenoe K. Silva *Aloha Betrayed*.

³³ Hawai`i’s importance as a strategic halfway point between the mainland and Asia was made very clear just three months earlier with the beginning of the Spanish-American War, which saw the arrival of thousands of U.S. troops in the Philippines.

³⁴ This, of course, is the age-old, nasty trick of business; one cannot pay a pittance to another who is one the same footing--it would be a sin. But if the worker is made to be lower, suddenly they are being done a favor, no matter how low the pay or rotten the working conditions. This would be the way life functioned on the Islands for quite some time to come.

Two years later, in 1900, Hawai`i officially became a U.S. Territory. According to Lorrin A. Thurston, who had headed the Hawaiian League, “As a business asset, as a national playground and as the key to peace in the Pacific, Hawaii is of tremendous importance”³⁵ Indeed, once it became an official Territory, Hawai`i experienced increased American military and business presence, and the rapid growth of the tourist industry would follow as more passenger ships began arriving and new hotels were built. Though it had long been a favorite vacation spot for the very wealthy, Hawai`i increasingly became a place that captured the popular imagination, and a desired destination. The sense of Hawaiianness that had developed in and that permeated the period, as a result of the dynamic mix of influences and traditions, of course, only added to its appeal. Hawai`i and Hawaiians were seen as being deliciously exotic on one hand, but their islands were under the firm control and regulation of whites, so it was commonly seen as being a safe and civilized spot to visit by ever increasing numbers of people.

According to historian David Stannard, the growing unity between non-whites in the period was partly the result of the infamous Massie trial of 1932.³⁶ The trial was the culmination of events that started with white socialite Thalia Massie’s charge that she had been gang raped by five local young men. The country was then enraptured by the spectacle and the horror; the nation wondered aloud how the so-called American way of life

³⁵ Quoted in Martha H. Noyes, *Then There Were None* (Honolulu: Bess Press, 2003), 63.

³⁶ Though a work of popular history, Stannard’s study is impeccably researched and documented. For more information about this pivotal case, see David Stannard, *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow’s Spectacular Last Case* (New York: Penguin Group), 2005.

could continue on islands so infested with sin and debauchery that a pure, white woman was not safe on its streets. As the facts of the case emerged, it became clear that much of Massie's story had been fabricated. Indeed, she even dramatically destroyed several damning documents whilst on the witness stand.³⁷ Still, the firestorm of emotion and raw racism that had been ignited could not be quelled. Hawaiians during this period were commonly referred to by whites in Hawai'i and on the mainland as "niggers" or "brutes". Indeed, in this period it was clear that whether one was Native or Japanese, or Korean, or some combination thereof was irrelevant, Hawaiians were suddenly and publicly perceived as being "niggers", and this too, quite understandably led to the collective sense of identity and belonging that developed in the period, and to some degree served to mitigate the feelings of animosity within non-haole circles on the Islands.³⁸

The allegations of rape and the popular outrage that ensued emboldened Massie's mother, husband, and two other accomplices to take matters into their own hands while awaiting the retrial. They kidnapped and murdered one of the accused, a 23-year-old Hawaiian named Joseph Kahahawai. According to Stannard, this was a Southern-style lynching of a young Hawaiian man who, as it was shown not long after his death, was falsely accused of kidnapping and raping Massie, the wife of a white naval officer.³⁹ The resulting press and pandemonium shined the light not only on the deeply held racism of the power structure and, frankly, most whites who

³⁷ Theon Wright, *Rape in Paradise* (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 2005), 247.

³⁸ Stannard, 152-154.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 264-265.

lived in Hawai`i at the time, but the similar racism of those on the mainland. Hawai`i, and its reputed incompatibility with the sensibilities and values of white America was routinely reported in papers such as the *New York Times*, for example, as being unsafe for white womanhood---a place where mongrel savages lurked to defile America's finest.⁴⁰ Massie's mother, Grace Hubbard Fortescue, husband, Thomas Massie, and the two accomplices, Albert O. Jones and Edward J. Lord, stood trial for the kidnapping and murder of Kahahawai in 1932.

The worldwide attention that the trial received was unprecedented in Hawai`i. Despite the best efforts of their defense attorney Clarence Darrow, arguably one of the most famous attorneys in U.S. history, it became clear to many that Kahahawai and the other young men had not, in fact, raped Massie. By then, though, the murder was no longer the point. For whites, the case offered the opportunity to air the increasing fear and paranoia of the Other that marked the period, a fear and paranoia that was emblematic of the slipping grip whites had on minorities at home and colonies abroad. And for non-haoles the trial made clear once and for all that whites could, quite literally, get away with murder. And in this case, as with so many others on the mainland, they did. The four murders each had their sentences commuted and were made to serve one hour each in the office of the Territorial Governor, Lawrence Judd.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Ibid., 304.

⁴¹ Arthur Weinberg and Lila Weinberg, "The Massie Trial: Darrow's Last Case," *Trial Diplomacy Journal* 11 (Fall 1988): 27.

For Stannard, this case was a turning point in Hawaiian history. Within twenty years, between the codification of Pidgin, which will be discussed further in the remaining chapters, and the changing use of the term, “local”, which according to Stannard largely ceased to include haoles as a result of the widespread racism exposed by the trial, life would change dramatically on the Islands. Indeed, according to Stannard:

...after the killing of Joe Kahahawai, cracks started to appear in what for years had been a monolithic social order. Prominent haoles in the legal community, in the press, and in politics began to speak out against the arrogance of the long-standing white oligarchy. At the same time, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino community leaders began meeting and finding more common ground than ever before.⁴²

By 1954, the Big Five, commonly referred to as “the white oligarchy” which had long controlled most aspects of life on the Islands would be overthrown. The Democratic Revolution of 1954, as it came to be known, when the Territorial government turned Democratic overnight, was a dream come true for many Hawaiians who simply could not have imagined a time when the oligarchy would not be in firm control of the Islands. And between Reinecke’s spotlight on the formalization and adoption of Pidgin and the overthrow of the so-called oligarchy was the creation, existence, and planned dismantling of the English Standard schools, schools that sought to segregate the Pidgin-speaking Other.

It should be made clear, however, that the development of a collective Hawaiian identity did not result in a kind of unified utopia for non-white people on the Islands. All groups in Hawai`i held stereotypical views about one another, and had clear ideas about how one’s ethnicity informed their place in

⁴² Stannard, 410.

society and their individual strengths and weaknesses. This was the focus of a 1948 study undertaken by University of Hawai`i Psychology Department researcher, W. Edgar Vinacke.⁴³ The study is primarily concerned with the way ethnocentrism influenced how various groups in Hawai`i judged and evaluated each other by the standards of their own norms. This pre-Statehood examination not only offers glimpses into the window of how the various groups viewed one another, but also a window into how these groups viewed themselves and their ethnic and cultural attributes. Ninety University of Hawai`i students (Japanese, Chinese, Caucasian, Korean, Filipino, and hapa-Hawaiian among them) were consulted about their general perceptions of Japanese, Chinese, Caucasian, Korean, Filipino, Hawaiian, African American (though the study identifies them as “Negro”, as was the custom at that time), and Samoan people.

The stereotypes revealed are generally familiar ones: Japanese people were identified as being clean and industrious; Koreans were talkative and outspoken, whereas African Americans (who began coming to Hawai`i in WWII) were described as being strong, lower class, and prone to inferiority complexes. Interestingly, according to Vinacke:

The sharpest stereotype of all is that of the Hawaiian, for there is general agreement on a long list of terms, nearly all of them favorable. The good characteristics are musical, easy-going, happy-go-lucky, friendly, generous, good-natured, strong (athletic), hospitable, jovial, sociable, and happy. The bad traits assigned to them are lazy, superstitious, lacking in ambition, drink too much, slovenly, and noisy.⁴⁴

⁴³ W. Edgar Vinacke, “Stereotyping Among National-Racial Groups in Hawaii: A Study in Ethnocentrism,” *The Journal of Social Psychology* vol. 30 (1949): 265-291.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 283.

As for the Samoan, who made up a comparatively small percentage of the population as they had only fairly recently been arriving in large numbers, the general consensus was that they were a sort of, “primitive version of Hawaiians.”⁴⁵ Because they were relatively recent arriviers, though, it could be argued that enough time had not elapsed for stereotypes about them to be cemented in the popular imaginations of the students polled in the study.

The same could not be said, however, of the Filipinos, who were routinely labeled as being “ignorant.” Though they too had arrived relatively recently, as compared to the Chinese or Japanese, for example, there were more than enough on the plantations to solidify the notion that that was all they had to offer Hawai`i. In contrast, the Chinese were consistently labeled as being, “good businessmen.” The Chinese, of course, had a fairly lengthy history in Hawai`i at that point, so it should come as no surprise that they generally enjoyed success there. The stereotype that followed them was largely the result of the role the students were accustomed to seeing the Chinese in. The same could be said of Caucasians, who were labeled as being, “good leaders.” According to Vinake, “that stereotype is probably a function of their role to date in the life of Hawaii.”⁴⁶ He concluded by asserting that, “in short, there is good reason to believe that stereotypes include valid elements, expressing fairly general cultural traits”⁴⁷

Just as there existed stereotypes among the various groups in Hawai`i, each group had stereotypes about themselves. In an article that explored

⁴⁵ Ibid., 284.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 285.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 286.

race relations and tensions on the Islands, author Ch'eng-K'un Cheng

observed:

Until recently Japanese from Japan tended to look down upon Okinawans...The *Punti* Chinese used to think that they were better than *Hakka* Chinese, Tagalogs from the Philippines would not relish too much the idea of being mistaken for Ilocanos. And quite a few of the old Caucasian families harbored considerable feelings against Caucasian newcomers because the bulk of the latter were from the working class in the continental United States and their manner and standard of living had undermined the long-established prestige of the Caucasians in the eyes of non-Caucasians.⁴⁸

Indeed, while it is clear that inhabitants of the Islands thought of themselves as Hawaiians alongside other Hawaiians, stereotypes and preconceived ideas about themselves and others worked to ensure that even Hawaiianness would have its limits.

Perhaps the most virulent stereotypes, though, came from the mainland. In the period, much of America was convinced that Hawai'i and its inhabitants were not sufficiently civilized. From the moment Hawai'i became a territory in 1900, numerous bills pushing for statehood were introduced in Congress. Of course, Hawai'i would not actually become a state until 1959, partially because Southern congressmen, in particular, were leery of Hawai'i's multi-ethnic population. For them, making Hawai'i a state would be tantamount to racial suicide as the "Yellow Peril" that so dictated the thinking of the time would be invited to U.S. shores through the massive Asian immigration that would surely follow if Hawai'i was allowed fully into the fold. The racial and ethnic cooperation that started in the fields and spilled out into Hawai'i's towns and cities terrified these congressmen, and those of their ilk.

⁴⁸ Ch'eng-K'un Cheng, "Assimilation in Hawaii and the Bid for Statehood" *Social Forces* vol. 30, issue 1 (October 1951), 16-29.

Their view of Hawai`i's government leaders, many of whom were of Native Hawaiian and/or Japanese descent was equally abysmal, and it was assumed that Hawaiian leaders lacked intelligence and the moral fortitude necessary for facilitating the transition from territory to statehood. Still, for many Hawaiians, statehood, and the perceived benefits associated with it, was a shared goal--one that also helped facilitate a common feeling of Hawaiianness.

Also adding to the sense of cohesion was the fact that intermarriage on the Islands was increasingly common. According to author Lawrence Fuchs, intermarriage among Native Hawaiians was particularly significant, as the act would ensure that their traditions and customs carried on despite the consistently plummeting number of pure Native Hawaiians. Of Native Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian intermarriage with different ethnic groups, Fuchs maintained that the practice resulted in some very positive influences being disseminated:

It was largely through the part Hawaiian that the Hawaiian tradition of *aloha* was carried. In addition to miscegenation, the tradition that ordained that, despite group animosities, Hawaiians treat individuals with friendliness and generosity. Hawaiians who complained of Oriental economic competition could easily give affection to an adopted Chinese child. Hawaiians who resented the overthrow of the monarchy by American haoles might welcome and feed a *milihini* haole stranger for weeks at a time. *Aloha* was not just an advertising man's gimmick. Not did it mean only sexual hospitality. It was and is an authentic Polynesian tradition, which rubbed off on the Islands' newcomers as the years went by.⁴⁹

The upshot of this openness, this willingness to marry outside of one's ethnic lines did, as Fuchs argues, help to keep Native Hawaiian traditions

⁴⁹ Fuchs, 85.

alive. Unfortunately, though, it also resulted in the watering-down of what was left of the Native Hawaiian gene pool. The statistical findings of scholar Andrew Lind bear this out. According to Lind, In 1920 there were twice as many full-blooded Native Hawaiians as there were part-Hawaiians. Within just twenty years, the reverse was true. On average, between the years 1920-1940, forty to fifty percent of Native Hawaiians married non-Native Hawaiians. Ultimately, in the period, people of at least part Native Hawaiian extraction would be the fastest growing group on the Islands, right at a point when pure Native Hawaiians were reaching their lowest numbers.⁵⁰

Long gone, though, were the days of Native Hawaiians, whether pure or hapa, enjoying a privileged position within society.⁵¹ By the time Hawai`i became an official Territory, its face and the way its inhabitants were viewed by the haole elite, and indeed, the way Hawaiians had viewed themselves and one another had changed entirely. This chapter has examined Hawai`i and Hawaiians in the popular mindset of the period. It has shown that while early missionaries to the Islands treasured them as being part of an idyllic, far-off land populated by an exceptional people, the Islands would come to be unique in their diversity, not in their homogeneity, once the boat loads of immigrants arrived from throughout Asia, Portugal, and Puerto Rico, just for example.

So what happened then, in this period in between the growth of a plantation economy, the rise of tourism, and the influx of people from Asia and

⁵⁰ Andrew Lind *Hawaii's People* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1955), 48.

⁵¹ The term hapa is used to describe people of mixed racial and/or ethnic origin.

beyond to man them, was that Hawaiians essentially had to be demoted. When Hawaiians were seen as being uniquely suited to education, it was commonly thought to be an honorable and noble task to educate them. With the growth of cash crops there, though, Hawaiians no longer had to be elevated in the popular imagination in order for white planters and businessmen to justify being there. In fact, quite the opposite seems to have been true, especially as more and more people flooded onto the Islands to work in the fields. Immigration, as on the mainland, saw more open racism and vilification of the Other. Indeed, the status quo had little use for a populous that had been previously viewed as being particularly well-suited to learning. And as the bloodlines in Hawai'i became more and more mixed, it became clear that the diversity of Hawai'i would pose a very unique challenge to the powerful business interests there. Increasingly, the ability to speak Standard English became the accepted indicator for how well one would adapt to the process of Americanization, and, ultimately, how successful they might become within an ever-changing Hawai'i.

Chapter Three

Standard English and the Push for Americanization in the Period Before Statehood

From the mid-19th century until Statehood in 1959, a number of educational opportunities existed for children in Hawai`i. However different they may have been, what they had in common was that they were all deeply concerned with Americanizing their student populations, and put great emphasis on the sole use of Standard English as a first step. The practices schools such as Punahou, the Kamehameha Schools, McKinley, and Roosevelt High schools employed to create “American” students are very telling and offer insight into how Hawai`i would deal with the rapid population growth, much of which was accounted for by the arrival of workers and their families, that marked the period.¹ By highlighting the various methods and ideologies that guided both public and private schools in their effort to Americanize children so far from the mainland, this chapter will illuminate the complexities of education in Hawai`i. It has long been held that Hawai`i was an incubator for racial toleration and cooperation, if only because the establishment of a plantation economy shortly after Contact ensured that people of all races wound up on her shores. But what is significant is that education on the Islands, in many ways, has largely been a segregated affair even while the schools espoused the virtues of Americanism, whose chief

¹ This is to in no way suggest that these were the only schools on the Islands that were concerned with Americanizing pupils. While all public and private schools in Hawai`i were concerned with Americanizing pupils, these four will receive special attention in this chapter because of their large sizes and considerable influence on other schools on the Islands. It should be noted that the Kamehameha Schools and Punahou were private institutions while McKinley High School and Roosevelt High School were both public high schools. In fact, Roosevelt was Honolulu’s English Standard high school.

value, democracy, was completely at odds with the reality of segregated schools.²

This chapter will highlight this paradox--that while Hawaiian schools in the period, both public and private, whether aimed at Native or Caucasian, sought to create better citizens, they generally did so by encouraging separation. And in the case of the public schools, this separation was (in areas with haole populations large enough to warrant the establishment of English Standard schools) dictated by a student's ability or inability to speak Standard English. But even the private school curriculums were deeply focused on Standard English and the stomping out of the use of Pidgin and/or native languages.

Private schools in Hawai'i, such as Punahou, had a relatively long history of providing American-style education for the children of missionaries, plantation owners, and wealthy (and/or royal) Hawaiians who not only wanted their children to be prepared for life and higher education on the mainland, they fancied the idea of their children being cultured, and exposed to the wider world.³ With increased immigration, though, public schools (where they existed at all) were flooded with children who either spoke their native languages, or who, especially as it developed over time, spoke Pidgin. Along with their languages, they also brought with them their customs and habits,

² Because of the custom of the day and the fact that it was prohibitively expensive, Punahou was largely a haole school, though this would change over time. The Kamehameha Schools were segregated by mandate, as they were established for Native Hawaiian children. And, of course, the students of Roosevelt, as it was an English Standard school, were segregated from non-Standard English speaking children. The nearest rival public high school, McKinley, was often called, "Tokyo High" because of the large number of Japanese-American students there.

³ For a straightforward, well-documented history of Hawai'i's most prestigious private school, see Norris Whitfield Potter, *The Punahou Story* (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books, 1969).

and these were often seen as being at odds with American life. Great effort would be expended on these children in particular. Indeed, the greatest indicator of the success of the Americanization project would be the widespread adoption of Standard English, and the schools were the obvious and most effective place to ready the Hawaiian population for mastering Standard English, the American way of life, and the eventuality of becoming the 50th state.

In the pivotal years before Statehood, the longstanding effort to Americanize the inhabitants of the Islands was stepped up in intensity. This was the case partially because the massive flood of immigrants in the mid-19th century and beyond meant that the bloodlines had simply become a great deal more intricate and complex than they had been when missionaries first arrived and began the Americanization project. Also, the interaction between immigrant groups and the Pidgin that resulted from years of contact were quite threatening to the existing power structure, and both would be met with concerted efforts aimed at their mitigation. Likewise, on a larger scale throughout the United States, feelings of xenophobia would dictate that the years directly preceding and following World War I and then again, even more so, before and after World War II, be marked by intolerance and many examples of legislation aimed at monitoring and even dictating how different ethnic groups could live and function on the Islands. For this reason, special attention will be given to the period right after the bombing at Pearl Harbor and its role in the Americanization project. No other single event in Hawai'i would have such a dramatic impact on Americanization. After that day, Japanese residents, in particular, would be deeply concerned with showing

their loyalty and dedication to the United States in the schools, the larger community, and, eventually, on the battlefields.

This chapter, then, will also explore ways all Hawaiian schools sought to offer students what they considered to be American-style education, where Standard English, and American culture and values would be taught and prized, often at the expense of all others. The Americanization project at Punahou, Hawai`i's most prestigious private school and long-bastion of the haole elite, for example, was quite clear and agreed upon. In fact, since its foundation in 1841, many haole parents chose Punahou for their children's education because it offered the same rigors and standards as the mainland's finest private schools. Likewise, even the Kamehameha schools, which were to be reserved for Native Hawaiian children, pushed an agenda of Americanization in order to ensure that Native children could be successful in an increasingly U.S.-dominated Hawai`i.⁴ The public schools, of course, would see the greatest focus on Americanization, though, because public school students were most likely to be immigrants or the children of immigrants. Likewise, they were more likely to use Pidgin than their private school counterparts. Whichever schools they went to, for students, the message was clear that success in Hawai`i would be contingent upon becoming thoroughly American as Statehood was imminent. How ever clear this might have been, students and citizens also made it equally clear that

⁴ For information about the schools and the recent controversies experienced within them, please see Gavan Daws and Na Leo O Kamehameha, *Wayfinding Through the Storm: Speaking Truth to Power at Kamehameha Schools, 1993-1999* (Honolulu: Watermark Publishing, 2009) and Samuel P. King and Randall W. Roth, *Broken Trust: Greed, Mismanagement, & Political Manipulation at America's Largest Charitable Trust* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2006).

theirs was a hybrid culture, and that being Hawaiian would not be a casualty of being American.⁵

The move to Americanize the inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands began shortly after Contact. Historian Lawrence H. Fuchs asserted that:

The missionaries' zeal for education had been unbounded. Education to serve God was their primary goal...The missionary leaders and their immediate descendants—especially the women—insisted that education was a good thing, not just for the elite, but for everyone. Education, they believed, would make better Christians and citizens of the children of the commonest Hawaiians and Orientals.⁶

But as was so often the case around the globe, the situation became more dire when it was not just souls at stake. As the plantation economy matured, the incentive to Americanize (and tame) its workers did too. While it was seen as being important to bring Hawaiians, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, into the fold, the possibility that this education could lead to their empowerment and political mobilization was a constant source of stress. As a safety measure, the entire public school system was managed from Honolulu. In his 1940 study, *A Century of Public Instruction in Hawaii*, author Benjamin O. Wist established that as a territory, the educational system of Hawai'i fell under the auspices of the U.S. federal government, as apposed to more local levels, as enjoyed by individual states on the mainland.⁷

Further, it should be clarified that not only did Hawai'i not enjoy any measure of independence in the way that individual states on the mainland

⁵ This struggle, whether played out in the battle for Japanese language schools, or in the resistance to the segregated English Standard system, will also be discussed in a later chapter.

⁶ Fuchs, 263.

⁷ Wist, 140-141.

would have in the period, regional governing of the schools within Hawai'i was not possible either. The schools were under one central administration, led by the superintendent of public instruction who was selected by the governor. Also selected by the governor was the small board of commissioners. All of these positions, of course, were very carefully filled by men who were generally quite happy to protect the governor's interests. Their influence, of course, was immense, and according to author Robert Littler in 1929, "The board of education and the superintendent have almost complete control over the entire Hawaiian education system."⁸

The Japanese, because of their sheer numbers on the Islands, were often the focus of this stress felt by plantation owners and the white oligarchy that controlled nearly all aspects of political life on the Islands. On this point, historian of Hawaiian history Gavan Daws asserts that according to the power structure:

If Americanization did not take hold among the Nisei the islands might become an extension of the Japanese political system in the Pacific, and that was unthinkable. But if the Americanization through education was successful, the Japanese—once Hawaii became a state—might vote together and elect a governor of their race, and that would be insupportable.⁹

Clearly, the Americanization project held within it a great risk: that these very children who were meant to be tamed, would use their education to get themselves off the plantations and into important positions of power.

In this way, the Americanization project was much riskier to the status quo on the Islands than it was on the mainland. The mainland had numbers

⁸ Robert M.C. Littler, *The Governance of Hawaii* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1929), 135.

⁹ Daws, 316-317.

that could support the upward mobility of a small percentage of the immigrant population. It was unclear, however, if the oligarchy could survive the upward mobility of its workers' children. Again, according to Daws, "They [Japanese] were going to public school, and they were being taught that in America not every immigrant's son was a field worker."¹⁰ And this lesson, of course, was not reserved for those of Japanese descent. Indeed, all children in Hawaiian schools would be similarly influenced by the ideal of the American Dream, the promise of democracy, and notions of equality.

In explaining how the process of Americanization was meant to play out in the lives of immigrants, in particular, author Isaac Berkson asserted in 1920 that:

The main point is that all newcomers from foreign lands must as quickly as possible divest themselves of their old characteristics, and through intermarriage and complete taking over of the language customs, hopes, and aspirations of the American type obliterate all ethnic distinctions. They must utterly forget the land of their birth and completely lose from their memory all recollection of its traditions in a single-minded adherence to American life in all its aspects. The foreigners must mold themselves into the ready-made form. The foreigner must do all the changing; the situation is not to be changed by them.¹¹

Likewise, according to long-time University of Hawai'i American Studies professor Dennis M. Ogawa, the Americanization project required the wholesale adoption of American culture, which offered no opportunity for local variation. Indeed, according to Ogawa, "...it is a method of indoctrination by which certain American values are inculcated and all alien habits, customs, and values are destroyed. The end product is not a romantic blend of two

¹⁰ Ibid., 316.

¹¹ Isaac B. Berkson, *Theories of Americanization: A Critical Study with Special Reference to the Jewish Group* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University Press, 1920), 55.

cultures, but the imposition of one culture over another.”¹² The goal, then, was to completely assimilate Native and immigrant children (or the children of immigrants) to the American culture of the mainland. But this was not how assimilation actually played out on the mainland, and it was even further from how the process worked on the Islands. What would make Americanization more complicated than simply assimilating immigrant children on the mainland, for example, was the hybrid Hawaiian culture that had emerged on the plantations and on the streets. Indeed, on the Islands, the Americanization project had to do double-time; first, one’s native culture was to be compromised, and, second, the hybrid-Hawaiian identity and its resulting Pidgin would also have to be brought into submission.

A main indicator of the success of the Americanization project, regardless of location, was a mastery of the English language. Again, what was different in Hawai`i was that in addition to a variety of native languages, the schools also sought to stomp out the home-grown Pidgin, which embodied a very powerful and threatening sense of camaraderie and belonging. As a result, Americanization would be fought on a dizzying number of fronts in Hawai`i between the increasingly large number of ethnicities present there, and the Hawaiian culture that formed as a result. It is clear that all were to be tamed in the period, and that language was to be the starting point.

Underscoring this point, Sociologist William C. Smith noted in his 1939 work *Americans in the Making: The Natural History of the Assimilation of Immigrants* that:

¹² Dennis M. Ogawa, *From Japs to Japanese: An Evolution of Japanese American Stereotypes* (Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1971), 27.

Ignorance of our language is an important barrier to assimilation. Undoubtedly the most baffling and embarrassing obstacle the immigrant encounters upon his arrival in America is his inability to use the current speech. Without a common means of communication, full and free interchange of ideas is impossible, and he is left outside the range of influences that would aid his acculturation.¹³

It was true, though, that with the evolution and widespread use of Pidgin, there did exist a “common means of communication.” Pidgin, however, would have to be marginalized, and the use of native languages similarly discouraged. From there, the curriculum could be created to inculcate American values.

Some of the first pupils steeped in the Americanization project, though, were the children of missionaries and wealthy plantation owners. Punahou School was established in Honolulu in 1841 for the children of missionaries who, before its founding, were generally sent away to the east coast of the mainland to attend boarding schools. So strong was the sentiment that their children should not be educated alongside Native Hawaiian children, the missionaries had preferred instead to send their children off, often for years at a time. Once Punahou opened, though, parents were able to offer them what they saw as being an appropriate American-style education at home. In fact, it was the first college-preparatory school of its kind west of the Rockies. Once admission was opened to the general public, wealthy children from throughout the Pacific and the west coast of the United States soon joined the children of missionaries. Within its classrooms, the largely haole children received an education on par with any elite private school on the mainland.

¹³ William C. Smith, *Americans in the Making: The Natural History of the Assimilation of Immigrants* (New York, Appleton-Century, 1939), 147.

Indeed, were it not for the landscape, students could have very well forgotten that they were thousands of miles away from the United States. This was, and continues to be, the most prestigious school in Hawai'i.

Native Hawaiian children would also have schools established for them with their Americanization in mind. Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the great-granddaughter of King Kamehameha I, had requested that her entire estate be used for the education of Native Hawaiian children, and in 1887 the first of the Kamehameha Schools was established in Kapalama Heights on the island of O`ahu. The Kamehameha Schools, as mandated by their benefactor, were meant to serve a very specific kind of students. All applicants had to prove that they were at least part-Native Hawaiian. These schools, paid for and administered by the Bishop Estate, which owns a significant portion of O`ahu's land, would not remain strictly segregated for long given the reality of intermarriage and interaction that so typified Hawai'i. While these schools eventually became racially diverse like all other aspects of Hawaiian society, the main agenda remained intact: to help Native Hawaiian children thrive within their increasingly American-dominated homeland.

These schools were to blend traditional Western education practices with select elements of Native Hawaiian culture. However, even within the Kamehameha Schools there were limitations. This is the subject matter of Derek Shoichi Taira's dissertation entitled "The Benevolent Imperialist of Paradise."¹⁴ In the study, Taira argues that the curriculum of the Kamehameha Schools actually contributed to a decline of Native Hawaiian

¹⁴ Derek Shoichi Taira "The Benevolent Imperialist of Paradise" (PhD dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2000).

culture. Specifically, Taira is of the opinion that the curriculum of these schools inhibited and restricted the development of Native Hawaiian culture and language in favor of those of their Western counterparts. He does not, however, suggest that Bernice Pauahi Bishop had intended for this to be the case. Indeed, she believed that part of survival in the modern world was dependent upon knowing and understanding *haole* ways. The schools were to be the meeting ground for both Native Hawaiian traditions and those of *haoles*. The blending of the two was meant to ensure that Native Hawaiian children would have the skills necessary to succeed. However, instead of the intended hybrid population who not only knew of and understood the modern world, but their own traditions and history, as well, Kamehameha Schools, for Taira, “only succeeded in educating Hawaiians in the conventional Western world.”¹⁵ He suggests that this was not a process done to Native Hawaiians, but rather, that they themselves were largely responsible for what he refers to as the “peripheralizing” of their culture and language within the curriculum.

Indeed, to Taira:

The Kamehameha Schools provides the perfect example of how Hawaiians themselves participated in the...trivializing of their culture by embracing curricula that marginalized any instruction in their Native Hawaiian heritage...The decline of Hawaiian culture has led to the development of a cultural hybrid that assumes the appearance of Hawaiian culture but is actually little more than the *haole* culture dressed up in Hawaiian clothes.¹⁶

The experiences of former student Nona Beamer supports Taira’s assertion. Beamer, who in 1948 coined the term “Hawaiiana”, discussed her experiences in both English Standard and Kamehameha schools in a 1994

¹⁵ Ibid., 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., 3.

interview.¹⁷ She recounted how she resented the attempts of educators to deny Hawaiian children access to their language and culture.¹⁸ Of her experience in the Kamehameha School, which she started attending in 1935, she says:

...the school's theme is "to produce good and industrious men and women." That's a carryover from the missionary days. I think the Kamehameha School was the first Hawaiian institution to formally say, "No language, no culture." We did have our poi once a week, but *that* was it. We learned everything else in an English way; how to set the table, which fork to use, how to hold a teacup. To a lot of us, this wasn't sufficient. We wanted language and culture and chant and dance.¹⁹

Additionally, she says of her experiences:

We wanted so badly to be Hawaiian. My friends kept asking me, "Can't you teach us how to chant, can't you teach us something about the Creation Chant of the Hawaiian people? Well, I had come from a big family, and we were used to talking together, dancing together, singing together in our home, so I had some knowledge to share. I had been teaching informally since I was very young. I was the oldest child in my family, and I had cousins, too, that I had to supervise. I told them stories. The best ingredient of a big family is storytelling.²⁰

In the Kamehameha Schools, then, it was not only the case that children were generally shielded from their own language and culture, they were not allowed to learn in ways they might be inclined to resonate with culturally in favor of a more Americanized approach.

Students in Hawai'i's public schools, though, would be subject to the most rigorous Americanization curriculum. And because the vast majority of

¹⁷ Phil Hoose, "Keep Your Love: An Interview with Nona Beamer," *Pass It On! The Journal of the Children's Music Network*, issue 17 (Summer 1994): 19-24.

¹⁸ It is interesting to note that she would later teach at a Kamehameha School. In fact, she founded the Hawaiiana department there.

¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

²⁰ Ibid., 21.

these students were of Japanese descent, their experiences warrant careful examination. The first Japanese laborers arrived in 1868. These early arrivers, who were generally from Tokyo, often came armed with three-year work contracts.²¹ They tended to find life in Hawai`i to be quite difficult, namely because they had not been engaged in agricultural work in Japan. However, by 1885, immigration picked up, and those who arrived tended to come straight from agricultural, rural areas.²² For most of these workers, the hope was that they could earn so much on the plantations of Hawai`i that they would eventually be able to return to their native homeland. Not surprisingly, this would not actually be the fate of most Japanese plantation workers on the Islands, and, over time, more and more immigrants changed their focus.²³ This shift, whether due to a longing to establish a new home, or the reality that the wages earned on the plantation would not allow for such lofty goals, was colorfully described by historian Francis Hilary Conroy thusly:

Somewhere in the long process of cutting row upon row of sugar cane or in the hours of labor in the sugar house a majority of these people lost sight of the original reason for their coming to Hawaii...More and more people forgot that they had come to Hawaii for a three-year hitch...they made up their minds to stay on in Hawaii.²⁴

And once they decided to stay, focus turned toward community building; the skewed number of men to women, however, made this

²¹ Henry Pratt Fairchild, *The Melting Pot Mistake* (New York: Arno Press, 1977), 228.

²² Yukiko Kimura, "Psychological Aspects of Japanese Immigration," *Social Progress in Hawaii* 6, (1940), 124.

²³ Dorothy Ochiai Hazama and Jane Okamoto Komeji, *Okage Sama De: The Japanese in Hawai`i 1885-1985* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1986), 53.

²⁴ Francis Hilary Conroy, *The Japanese Frontier in Hawaii, 1868-1898* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953), 86.

problematic. Picture brides were imported to take the lure away from the red light district of Honolulu, for example, where laborers often found entertainment and enjoyment in the gambling halls and brothels. With the arrival of picture brides, the plantation economy was dealt a stabilizing hand. With the establishment of families and communities, men would be bound by commitment to both family and the wider community.²⁵ So, in this way, they would return to their social mores and the plantation economy itself would benefit from a more stable (if not in some ways more servile) workforce.

This pattern, of course, would be replicated to some degree with all the groups: the Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Koreans, and others who came to Hawai'i. Ultimately, each brought with them their customs and a desire to make new lives for themselves and their families. These customs and cultures would then meld into a distinctly Hawaiian one, which was at least partially the result of miscegenation. Indeed, according to Hawaiian education expert, Ralph Stueber:

Miscegenation, believed by many to be the ultimate test of the belief in human equality, increased markedly and, in combination with an expanding economy, prevented racial prejudices from upsetting official mores supporting racial harmony.²⁶

Between the mixing of the races that occurred on the plantations and the very literal mixing that resulted from marriages and other partnerships, the push toward Americanization would become increasingly complicated. It would then be the job of educators and administrators on the Islands to see to it that these people were not only stripped of their native cultures but the uniquely

²⁵ Hamaza and Komeji, 66.

²⁶ Stueber, 225.

Hawaiian one as well, at least to the degree necessary to allow for their Americanization. This process was difficult for children as the American values they learned in school often came into conflict with the norms and values taught at home. In this way, the Americanization project could often be a source of stress and tension within homes and among the generations. This would be particularly acute in Hawai`i because the tension was two-fold: the first pull children often felt was to the culture of the home, but there was also a pull to the newly developed Hawaiian culture, and so, in this way, the Americanization project had to work double time on the Islands.

Well before the federal survey of the schools carried out by a team of investigators in 1920 suggested that Pidgin-speaking children should be separated from children who had mastered Standard English, the process of Americanization threatened non-haole languages and cultures. In her book, *Then There Were None* (which is the accompaniment to Elizabeth Kapu`uwailani Lindsey Buyers' documentary by the same name), author Martha Noyes asserts that Native Hawaiian children were often forbidden from speaking Hawaiian in their classrooms and that they suffered cognitive dissonance as a result when she asserted:

But the Americanizing dug deeper than official disapproval of our language. Many Hawaiian parents, concerned for their children's future, would not allow their own children to speak Hawaiian at all. And it wasn't just the Hawaiian language that was being suppressed. It was Hawaiian ways.²⁷

Noyes, in support, offers the early schooling experiences of Mary Kawena Pukui, who would later become a noted Hawaiian scholar. As a child, she was fluent in both English and Hawaiian due to her mixed parentage, and

²⁷ Noyes, 64-65.

recalled using Hawaiian to help a classmate understand some instruction given. She was physically punished and warned never again to use her native language in the classroom.²⁸ By way of lessons like this one, children in Hawai`i understood that their languages, customs, and cultures were often at odds with the goal of Americanization they were subjected to.

However clear the message was to children, it was not always clear to educators in Hawai`i that the Americanization project was going to be a successful one. According to Elmer Anderson in a 1948 article entitled, “The Americanization of a Polyglot Population,” many teachers, in particular, argued that:

...the school could never hope to counteract the influence of the home—that basic moral principles and attitudes were set years before the teacher was given an opportunity to apply the Americanization techniques.²⁹

And there was no doubt that it was a challenge. Between the near constant stream of immigrant arrivals and the collective sense of belonging that developed between people living in Hawai`i in the period, it was clearly going to be a struggle to fully Americanize these children.

Adding to their sense that the task would be a difficult one was the notion that non-haole children differed wildly from their haole counterparts, which, of course, is deeply revealing of the mindset of the day. In line with the racist milieu, non-haole children were a potentially corrupting, contaminating force. Frank F. Bunker, the architect of the 1920 federal survey, wrote in an article entitled, “The Education of the Child of the

²⁸ Ibid., 65.

²⁹ Elmer Anderson, “The Americanization of a Polyglot Population,” *The Educational Forum*, volume 12, issue 4 (1948), 471.

American-Born Parent in Hawaii” of non-haole children that, “the fact is, they are different and because they are fundamentally different they are not American, and because they are not American those parents who have known no other allegiance than to America hesitate, and rightly hesitate, when it comes to the education of their own children.”³⁰ This hesitation on the part of the Caucasian parents, many of whom were American-born, underscores the importance of Americanizing non-haole children in an effort to reduce the risk associated with them. And according to the thinking of the day, language was to be the starting point. Because its use had become so widespread in the period, Bunker asserted, “...many of those [students] who do come with some knowledge of English would better not have any at all, for it is the jargon of the plantations and the “Pidgin English” of the streets, which must, in the end, be eliminated.”³¹

But it was not just their use of Pidgin that made non-haole children potential contaminants. As was the case on the mainland, part of the Americanization project on the Islands was concerned with imparting “proper” methods of personal hygiene.³² This topic was addressed in 1919 by educator Ruth C. Shaw in the *Hawaiian Educational Review*. In it, she asserted that children within Hawaiian public schools were to be instructed on the proper way to bathe, clean their teeth, and the proper foods to eat (which,

³⁰ Frank F. Bunker. “The Education of the Child of the American-Born Parent in Hawaii,” *Hawaii Education Review* (September 1920), 1.

³¹ *A Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 37.

³² This variety of patronizing guidance was commonly aimed at non-white peoples throughout the United States and the territories during this period. To some extent, such focus may have been more excusable on the Islands given the tropical climate, but there existed an implicit condemnation of non-haole children, who were seen as being filthy.

of course, were not what they were actually eating in their multi-cultural homes). Shaw stressed that, “All this goes to secure a foundation for a strong, healthy body and mind—the first essentials for right living and American citizenship.”³³

Beyond the children’s physicality, the Americanization project was applied to all aspects of their academic lives. While subjects such as history, geography, literature, civics, and the like were natural vehicles for the important lessons in how to be American, so too was math class exploited as a forum for this agenda. Again, Shaw asserted, “The aim of arithmetic should be not only to teach children how to think accurately and reason clearly, but to give them the fundamental processes of the business operations likely to come within the range of the ordinary boy and girl of our public schools.”³⁴

Music classes also provided a rich environment for Americanization.

According to Shaw in the same publication:

A group of children cannot study the words and practice the music of a great national song like “America” and then sing it to an audience without having it make some lasting impression for Americanism upon them...The child lives to sing and willingly puts the knowledge that he learns in all subjects into music, singing his “Cocoa Palm,” and “Home, Sweet Home.” The seeds of these songs thus planted, will later develop into high ideals and actions. This, too is Americanism.”³⁵

Every subject, then, became a platform for Americanization.

Another area that saw great focus in the Americanization effort was vocational training. Given the gender bias of the day, this broke down roughly

³³ Ruth C. Shaw, “Americanization and the Course of Study,” *Hawaiian Educational Review* 8 (December 1919), 25.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

into home economics for girls, and manufacturing and agricultural training for boys. Concerning the role of vocational training and the Americanization project, Shaw questioned, “How can American ideals be better first expressed in daily life than through the cooking of American food, the wearing of American clothes, and the making of American houses and furniture?”³⁶ In this way, students in Hawaiian schools were not only trained in the manufacturing of American ideals, they were also taught to consume them, literally and figuratively. Agricultural training, in particular, would be heavily pushed because the lucrative sugar industry would always require more workers. This was not always an easy sell, though, as parents and children often had other, more white collar professions in mind. As a response to this, in 1921 Kauai’s Ele`ele School began emphasizing the study of agriculture in all grades at the urging of the Department of Public Instruction.³⁷ This concerted effort to ensure that rural children would mature into agricultural work was bolstered by the 1925 Smith-Hughes Act, which provided federal aid for vocational education programs, including the extra curricular Future Farmers of America.³⁸ This move would be replicated throughout the Island, particularly in rural areas. The message sent to these children, that their role in America was in its fields and processing plants, was a strong one.

Given this context, in her dissertation “Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawai`i,” Eileen H. Tamura explores the issues faced by second-generation Japanese children within

³⁶ Ibid., 25.

³⁷ *Ele`ele School, 150 Years of Memories: Sesquicentennial Celebration, 1837-1987*. Ele`ele, HI: Ele`ele School, 1987).

³⁸ Ibid.

Hawai`i's public schools from the 1920s to the 1940s. She maintains that Japanese children and their parents were able to hold back the tide of their collective Americanization in favor of acculturation. Ultimately, she argues that Japanese Americans were able to retain their ethnic identity and cultural heritage while simultaneously absorbing those European American values which were deemed as being useful and constructive for them to achieve success on the Islands. In this way, we see a very deliberate maneuvering on the part of Japanese Americans within the varied educational environments offered in Hawai`i. Tamura argues that in the end the Nisei overcame the push for Americanization, and instead were able to exert some measure of control within the school system of Hawai`i from the 1920s to the 1940s. For her, the failure of the efforts to completely strip Japanese children of their customs and traditions, "clearly evidences the triumph of acculturation over Americanization."³⁹

While Alan Russell Shoho, in his dissertation entitled, "Americanization Through Public Education of Japanese Americans in Hawai`i: 1930-1941," is concerned with essentially the same issue, his findings differ radically from those of Tamura. Very early on he clarifies that after an exhaustive analysis of school documents, yearbooks, student handbooks, and a number of interviews, he is of the opinion that, "...ironically, Japanese American students were not conscious of the school agenda to acculturate them with American ideals."⁴⁰ It is difficult to accept this naïve characterization of Japanese

³⁹ Tamura, Eileen H., "The Americanization Campaign and the Assimilation of the Nisei in Hawaii, 1920-1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1990), 239.

⁴⁰ Alan Russell Shoho, "Americanization Through Public Education of Japanese Americans in Hawai`i: 1930-1941" (Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, 1990), iii.

American students. Tamura's case that they knew exactly what was happening to them at the hands of school administrators and writers of curriculum is more convincing. Further, a long-time teacher in the period remarked, "it was not the occasional talks in the civics or history class that made the Oriental student think and act as an American, but the democratic climate in which he practiced American ideals."⁴¹ This sentiment, that American ideals be espoused consistently and in all aspects of life within the schools was often echoed.

One tactic of the Americanization project that many students and their parents found to be very alienating was the common practice of giving hiring preference to mainland teachers over local ones. For principals, the motivation was, it seems, the idea that these teachers could serve as examples, not just in their Pidgin-free language, but also with their mainland habits and customs. This was, of course, seen as being problematic for a number of reasons, not least of which was that local teachers were finding it very difficult to find employment. As a result, Japanese American teachers, in particular, charged the Department of Public Education with giving mainland teachers preferential treatment.⁴² On this subject, in 1938 author Ernest K. Wakukawa stressed that, "the steady increase in the number of teachers of Japanese ancestry will as matter of course promote and facilitate the Americanization process of boys and girls of their own racial group and also

⁴¹ Anderson, 473.

⁴² Miriam Allen DeFord, "The Japanese in Hawaii," *The American Mercury*, (July 1935): 335.

that of non-citizen Japanese of Hawaii.”⁴³ The merit of local teachers over those from the mainland would be a source of tension for years to come, with both sides arguing that they held the key to a smoother Americanization process for Hawai`i’s children. For Japanese-American parents, in particular, it is not hard to imagine that they hoped for advocates for their children and their culture in their children’s classroom.

Perhaps the best example of a public school educator who epitomized the role of child advocate was Seattle-native Miles Cary, who was principal of Honolulu’s McKinley High School from 1924 to 1948. Though commonly referred to as “Tokyo High” and thought to be of lesser quality when compared to its English Standard rival, Roosevelt High, which opened in 1932, there can be no question that the Americanization project implemented under Cary’s watchful eye was both respectful of students’ heritage and focused on the successful training of generations of Honolulu’s youth. In his 1930 Master’s thesis at the University of Hawai`i, entitled, “A Vitalized Curriculum for McKinley High School,” Cary sought to make, “practical suggestions for the reorganization of the curriculum of McKinley High School”.⁴⁴ It should be noted that his focus on the Honolulu school was not necessarily out of loyalty to the school; McKinley was simply the only public high school in Honolulu at the time. The school housed a shocking 2339

⁴³ Ernest K. Wakukawa, *A History of Japanese People in Hawaii* (Honolulu: Toyo Shoin, 1938), 370.

⁴⁴ Miles Cary, “A Vitalized Curriculum for McKinley High School” (master’s thesis, University of Hawai`i, 1930), 4.

students as of 1929, which absolutely dwarfed the enrollment numbers of all the other schools in Honolulu.⁴⁵

His study is indicative of the progressive push of the day that suggested that educational environments that replicated the democratic ideals of society would better enable children to function successfully in adulthood as productive, engaged citizens. To this end, in his thesis, Cary outlined that curriculum should encourage critical thinking and the development of problem-solving skills; that students and teachers should see to the day-to-day running of school government and other important committees; that the physical health of students be encouraged; and that both college preparatory and vocational courses be available so that children of all abilities have as many opportunities open to them as possible. Although Cary's study was focused on McKinley High, he makes it quite clear that, "special consideration will be given to the needs of a high school in Honolulu, yet it is believed that the general principles of reorganization advanced herein may be applied to any locality in the United States."⁴⁶

Cary advocated constant study and reevaluation of educational practices in order to be sure that student and community needs were being met, as both tend to change over time. In a 1934 article entitled, "Non-Caucasians and Education in Hawaii," he highlighted the importance of this approach when he wrote:

We teachers are learning, too...While we may not be able to tell youth and the community what should and should not be done we can at least help young people and the community, to get at,

⁴⁵ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 5.

and study most thoughtfully, those terrifically vital problems which all Americans in common face today. Continuous study and experimentation seems to be the American way of solving our community problems.⁴⁷

He later summarized his approach and hopes for his students in the 1940-1941 McKinley High School yearbook when he wrote:

McKinley High School's progressive program with its basic aim, education for citizenship in a democracy, attempts to help young people to develop effective health habits: to read, speak, and write more effectively; to be happy, useful members of a home; to fill leisure hours with useful, creative activities; to prepare for entrance into the industrial life of the Territory; to help certain qualified students to prepare for college; to be courteous, friendly, neighborly.

Underlying and running through the above objectives, and other efforts of the school, is the constant emphasis on the task of helping our young people to develop those attitudes, dispositions, and abilities which we call the democratic way of living together.⁴⁸

Ever the advocate of his largely Japanese student body, he was met with opposition by some less forward-thinking colleagues. He was often labeled as being, "pro-Japanese" in a period when resentment and fear of the Japanese was growing both on the Islands and on the mainland. In recounting an episode in which Cary made clear his sympathies for Japanese-Americans, Lawrence Fuchs wrote:

Late in his career, when criticism mounted against Japan, some teachers were troubled by his sanguine attitude toward the Japanese in Hawaii. When he criticized one of the teachers by listing as a "significant limitation" on her rating sheet that she "becomes alarmed if her students do not think the way she does," the teacher went to higher authorities to complain of Cary's pro-Japanese tendencies. Specifically, she had been cross with a student who said that Japan's activities during the 1930's were similar to those of the United States in developing

⁴⁷ Miles Cary, "Non-Caucasians and Education in Hawaii," *Hawaii Educational Review* 22 (May 1934), 269.

⁴⁸ *Black and Gold: McKinley High School Yearbook, 1940-1941* (Honolulu: McKinley High School, 1941), 16.

the Monroe Doctrine. Cary was forced to apologize to the teacher and remove the critical rating.⁴⁹

Cary was clearly an advocate for his students, but it was equally clear that there was only so much he could do in his quest to stress democratic principles and civic responsibility.⁵⁰ In a sense, he epitomized Hawaiianness. He was both respectful of difference and adamant that those differences be harnessed and honed in an effort to train students, in accordance to their abilities, to function in an ever-changing Hawai`i. He attempted to give legs and teeth to the stated beliefs and ideals of America--that it could be a multi-cultural nation, respectful of differences in racial background and individual ability, and that it could start in Hawai`i. However progressive his ideas may have been, though, the existence of Roosevelt High, a mile and a half away, would be a reminder that Hawai`i was not there quite yet.

While they were certainly steeped in American history and the idea of civic responsibility, for example, as every other student would be on the mainland, students within the English Standard schools would not be subject to the same level of intense Americanization that non-Standard students were. According to one Roosevelt High student:

...I think at McKinley High School they used to have the flag raising ceremony every morning at eight...We didn't have that at Roosevelt. At least I don't remember the flag raising ceremony. So it wasn't that kind of doctrinaire training. It [Roosevelt] was a pretty easygoing school when it came to being Americanized.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Department of Public Instruction, Honolulu, to Miles Elwood Cary, Honolulu, In Papers of Governor Ingram M. Stainback, State of Hawaii Archives, Honolulu; quoted in Fuchs, 287-288.

⁵⁰ As further evidence of his commitment to Japanese-American students, it is worthy of note that during WWII, he took a leave of absence from his post as principal to act as educational director as an internment camp for Japanese and Japanese-Americans in Poston, Arizona.

⁵¹ As quoted in Shoho, 250.

It was not necessary for there to be a special focus on Americanization at Roosevelt and other English Standard schools because those students generally came from middle to upper middle class homes where English was the primary language. In short, they were already the kind of Americans *and* Hawaiians that Hawai'i had imagined for itself: Standard English-speaking Americans.

Despite the best efforts of administrators and individuals, whether in English Standard, non-English Standard, or private schools, the Americanization project would not erase differences and children, particularly children of Japanese descent, would be subject to racism, especially after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Historian William Tuttle explores how the children of Hawai'i felt about Pearl Harbor in the days and months after the bombing in December of 1941 in his study, *Daddy's Gone to War: the Second World War in the Lives of America's Children*. In describing how children dealt with the stress of the attack and their parents' reactions to it, Tuttle asserts that children, many hearing it for the first time, were often very struck by their parents' racism when he wrote:

Children listened as their fathers and other men swore and raged at the Japanese. Racism fed the stereotypes that portrayed the Japanese as duplicitous plotters, hiding behind steel-rimmed glasses and toothy grins. And Americans everywhere vowed to avenge the sneak attack. "Why those dirty sons-a-bitches," screamed one man. Another man, deep in drink, repeated over and over, "I'm gonna get me a machine gun and kill every one of those slant eyed sons-of-bitches I can find."⁵²

⁵² Tuttle, 5.

This racism, of course, existed on the Hawaiian Islands, particularly around military bases, but while 1942's Executive Order 9066 would see the internment of approximately 127,000 Japanese-Americans on the mainland (an estimated two-thirds of whom were born in the United States), those of Japanese heritage in Hawai'i were largely free from such humiliation. Their numbers, their connection to the workings of Hawai'i, were such that mass internment would have been impossible. Still, they suffered in this period and were often concerned with proving their loyalty to the United States. The English Standard schools, of course, offered the ultimate forum for parents and children to stake their claim to American culture, while distancing themselves, at least outwardly, from their Japanese background--a background that the wider American culture had a very difficult time separating from its wartime foes.

However misguided this racism was, Tuttle is right in stressing just how heavily the bombing of Pearl Harbor weighed on people in Hawai'i, when he wrote:

...the fear of another attack persisted, children received gas masks and had periodic tear-gas tests. Richard Chalmers, who was eleven when Pearl Harbor was attacked, recalled that an Army officer would close off a classroom, fill it with tear gas, and check the fit of the masks by walking the students through the room. "Usually, just as we got ready to leave the room, they would ask us to open our gas masks so we would know what the smell of tear gas was like," and their eyes would immediately fill with tears.⁵³

This fear and trauma, though, would wind up being an incredibly compelling force for Americanization. For many Hawaiians, the bombing, ensuing war, and the resulting three years of martial law in Hawai'i were a sea change, and

⁵³ Ibid., 8-9.

they ushered in the period that personal identity, for many, was aligned first and foremost with being American. This point was articulated by Martha Noyes when she asserted that from the Native Hawaiian standpoint:

After the war, change came faster and faster... Now we were American, but what did being American mean? It meant soda pop, hot dogs, bebop, suburbs, two cars in every garage, Elvis Presley, and Johnny Weissmuller, jobs from nine to five, white bread... Doris Day, cocktail parties, personal ambition, the American Dream, and the guarantee of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. America prospered after the war. Americans in Hawai`i prospered, too. But Hawaiians on the whole were not prospering. We wore American clothes, listened to American music, and saluted the American flag. We were willing to sacrifice being Hawaiian if the sacrifice could make us prosperous Americans."⁵⁴

For children in Hawai`i, Americanization was an integral part of education. Whether they were educated at elite private schools such as Punahou, the Kamehameha Schools, or in Standard or non-Standard public schools, the children of Hawai`i were subject to curriculum that sought to mold them into model American citizens, who were deeply imbued with ideas such as freedom, democracy, and equality. That such lessons were taught in a wide variety of segregated settings was deeply ironic. In the case of the public schools, in particular, the move to separate Pidgin-speaking children from non Pidgin-speaking children may well have made it more difficult to raise the level of Standard English in the schools, which, of course, was a primary goal of the Americanization project. What this makes clear is just how corrupting non-Standard English speaking children were seen as being in the period, and just how important it was that their influence be mitigated.

⁵⁴ Noyes, 91.

Chapter Four

The English Standard Schools: From the Vision to Implementation

The years preceding the establishment of separate English Standard schools in 1924 were notable for their influx of middle-class white families from the mainland United States. Of course, there had been haole families on the Islands since the missionaries arrived in 1820, but their children, by and large, were educated in private schools. For these families, the aim was that their children be educated to the standard of private schools on the mainland. But with the rise of various industries throughout the islands (sugar and pineapple chief among them) and the ever-increasing number of military personnel stationed in Hawai`i, more and more haoles without the means to afford to have their children educated in private schools demanded that there be other options available for their children, options free from Pidgin-speaking children. Additionally, there was mounting concern among white plantation owners, military members, and parents that the growing number of foreign language schools (primarily Japanese schools) was interfering with Hawaiian children's ability to master (or even learn) English, thereby thwarting the push towards Americanization that marked the period.

An obvious outcome of the English Standard school was the exclusion of all kinds of Hawaiian children who either spoke their native language, or more commonly, who spoke only Pidgin. By segregating children in accordance to their English skills, school officials served to ensure a de-facto system of ethnic segregation within the schools, which, in turn, reinforced the social class stratification that resulted from the existence of a plantation economy. This chapter will examine these issues, make clear how and why

the segregated school system came to be, and uncover how its nature changed as more and more non-haole children gained admission.

The state of the public schools on the Hawaiian Islands was of great concern to Progressive educators on the mainland after the turn of the century and beyond.¹ Issues such as classroom overcrowding, low teacher salaries, meager per capita funds earmarked for education, and substandard facilities led to a very thorough investigation of the schools under the direction of a team of mainland investigators for the Federal Commissioner of Education in 1920. At the core, what concerned them about what they found in Hawai`i was not the focus on agricultural education that was common in the period, but rather, the fact that that tended to be the only area of focus for children on the Islands. What the investigators encouraged instead was, “a wider range of thought and action” for Hawai`i’s young that should include fostering interest in medicine, languages, law, and other disciplines, as was the norm in a well-rounded schools on the mainland.² Indeed, according to the resulting *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, education in the Territory was lacking on every front in the period. In addition to the deficiencies already listed, there were no publically funded kindergartens in the period, no transportation for children who lived in rural areas, and no stipends for teachers to equip their classrooms with the most basic materials. Despite these deficiencies, the investigators found the children to be, “universally better behaved, cleaner, neater in their appearance, more attentive to work, more amenable to

¹ For further information see: Hawaii Department of Public Instruction, “Progressive Education and the Public Schools of Hawaii” *Bulletin*, issue 5 (1930).

² *A Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 31.

suggestions from their teachers..." than any of the schools on the mainland they visited.³

The investigators, perhaps in part because they were so charmed by the children they encountered, were surprisingly candid in their report as they passionately exposed what they saw as being the various factors that worked together to limit the educational opportunities of Hawai`i's children. In a move that overstepped their educational expertise (but that effectively brought the obvious to light), the investigators openly questioned Hawai`i's taxation system, which guarded wealthy plantation and business owners from shelling out much for public services.⁴ They were adamant that the schools were suffering from a lack of funds from top to bottom. In illustrating just how detrimental the lack of funds for the schools had proven to be, they stressed that everyone affiliated with the schools, even those who held the highest positions, did without basic necessities when they wrote, "principals' offices in both McKinley and Hilo were so small, so inconvenient and so ill-supplied with decent office furniture as almost to be an affront to the dignity of the men who were forced to occupy them."⁵ Indeed, it was not the case that the schools could be improved simply by more equitable uses of available funds.

It should come as no great surprise that at least part of the reason the public schools were in such a dismal state is because it was very, very rare for wealthy white children to attend them. Instead, haole children attended prestigious private schools, and they took their relative wealth with them. But

³ Ibid., 68, 74, 105-106.

⁴ Ibid., 65.

⁵ Ibid., 251.

the *Survey* would forever alter education on the Islands, and the English Standard schools, whose establishment was just one of the many outcomes of the investigators' findings, would eventually attract both haole and non-haole students alike.

The roots of the Federal Survey of 1920 were established in 1916 when the Hawaii College Club, which was made up of 169 middle and upper-class haole women, sent a detailed letter of criticism of Hawai'i's public schools to Governor Lucius E. Pinkham, Superintendent of Public Instruction Henry Kinney and the members of the Board of Commissioners of Public Instruction. According to these women (none of whom had children in the public schools), the main problem was that the teachers were not well trained or prepared by the Territorial Normal School.⁶ They asserted that until the teacher training facility raised its standards, candidates who were educated on the mainland should enjoy first priority in hiring. While the Club was quick to clarify that they were not concerned whether, "Japanese or Chinese coolie, the humblest white, or Hawaiian laborer"⁷ were hired, they insinuated that by giving preference to locally trained teachers, the public schools were actually anti-haole. They cited the "Americanization problem" as their justification for their call to change hiring practices by arguing that the process of assimilating immigrants on the mainland, "is now a nationwide problem that might easily become a national menace...Hawaii has its own acute form of this, and the type of teacher to which we commit its handling in the schools is unavoidably

⁶ The College Club to Governor Lucius E. Pinkham, November 15, 1916 (Pinkham Papers, State Archives, Honolulu, Hawai'i).

⁷ Ibid.

one element in its solution.”⁸ The Club, given their concern about the effects of the “menace” within the schools, was convinced that the educational opportunities in Hawai`i were limited by non-white teachers. Of course, what this uncovers is a fundamental difference in philosophy in the period. While preparation for statehood was of primary concern to all involved, the Superintendent and Board of Commissioners clearly believed that the best way to deal with the realities of multi-ethnic schools was to train and hire local teachers, whereas the College Club believed just as adamantly that accommodating the unique needs of the islands would take them further away from mainland ideas and practices.

What was particularly important about this letter was that, at the end, the Club informed the Governor and school officials that they had been in contact with the United States Commissioner of Education, Dr. P.P. Claxton, and that he was interested in conducting a federal survey in the Territory. The letter ended with the request that, “this Territory invite, through its proper officials, this constructive criticism from the highest source in the nation, which, by the very nature of the case, would be free from all suspicions either as to purity or motive or the ability to advise.”⁹ This assessment, of course, is very optimistic. It is not hard to imagine that the findings of such a study and the resulting recommendations by the United States Bureau of Education would be influenced by the desire to make the schools as amenable to the United States government as possible. After all, these were very lucrative islands.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Not surprisingly, Governor Pinkham was not pleased with the letter, and even less pleased with the news that his schools would be visited by government officials. In his letter of response to Claxton, Pinkham stressed the following:

There seems to be a rather hazy idea being pubically [sic] expressed by those ladies that there should be a federal survey made of our schools...It is the judgment of our department of public instruction that our local teachers and Normal School graduates know the race situation and problems better than strangers.”¹⁰

So while at first glance it might have seemed as though the efforts of the College Club to get the survey underway were at least partly motivated by the rather unsavory desire to secure teaching positions for their own who were educated on the mainland, the result would be a careful, thorough examination of the schools, despite the governor’s desire that Hawai`i be left to its own devices.

Presumably seeking back up, Governor Pinkham reached out to educators and leaders throughout the Islands for their opinions about the proposed survey. The most negative response he got to the impending survey was quite revealing. Bishop Henry Bond Restarick of the Episcopal Church, wrote to Pinkham of mainland educators: “They assume that educators in Hawaii know nothing.”¹¹ He favored the locally trained teachers of the Islands over their mainland-trained counterparts despite the very strong likelihood that they might have enjoyed “far greater learning.”¹² Other

¹⁰ Gov. Pinkham to Commissioner Claxton, December 15, 1916 (Pinkham Papers, State Archives, Honolulu, Hawai`i).

¹¹ Henry Bond Restarick to Governor Lucian E. Pinkham, December 15, 1917 (Pinkham Papers, State Archives, Honolulu, Hawai`i).

¹² Ibid.

educators, though, including heads of the Kamehameha Schools, the Mid-Pacific Institute, Punahou, and McKinley High School welcomed the federal commission. In fact, McKinley principal M.M. Scott wrote Governor Pinkham the following:

We teachers of McKinley High School are able to see the defects of those that enter from grammar grades in the first years of high school. These defects are fundamental because they are defects in speaking and writing simple English.¹³

Seeing well beyond what effects such a survey might have on the education of his own students, Scott asserted that the benefits of a careful examination of the schools would be felt on a much wider level in a multi-ethnic America when he wrote, "Hawaii is a museum of ethnology, and its racial future will be a wonderful experiment in sociology."¹⁴ By and large, most in Hawai`i favored the completion of the survey and were anxious to learn of its findings.

Federal Commission Director Dr. Frank Bunker and his team of investigators were concerned with a number of aspects of education on the Islands, including: mitigating the influence of the foreign language schools, improving teacher education and preparation, ensuring that students had access to vocational and academic training, and expanding the availability of secondary education. For the investigators, the foreign language schools were one of the most vexing issues in terms of creating a populace ready for Statehood. Because Japanese children made up roughly half of the total school population in Hawai`i, it was the Japanese foreign language schools that were particularly scrutinized in the *Survey*. In it, Bunker stressed,

¹³ M.M. Scott to Governor Lucian E. Pinkham, June 18, 1917 (Pinkham Papers, State Archives, Honolulu, Hawai`i).

¹⁴ Ibid.

“whether or not the Japanese desire to achieve political control, without a doubt within a few years they will be in a position to do so if they choose.”¹⁵

The concern, then, was to assimilate these children as soon as possible so as to ensure that if and when the Japanese did achieve political control on the Islands, they would first and foremost identify as Americans.

Complicating this goal further was the fact that most of these children were first generation, and because of the constant stream of picture brides to the Islands, Bunker asserted that these children, who generally attended Japanese language schools and who also spoke Pidgin, were simply not being Americanized properly. Indeed, according to the *Survey* investigators, the picture brides, who generally arrived with no real understanding of American culture (to say nothing of the language), “...soon become mothers of the children who will presently be the voters of the territory. As long as the stream of ‘picture brides’ continues, flowing into Hawaii, just so long will there be a ‘first generation’ of Japanese in the Islands.”¹⁶ One of the most important outcomes of the *Survey* would be the move to monitor and control the foreign language schools in Hawai‘i by bringing them under the control of the Territory-wide public school system.¹⁷

Bunker and the other *Survey* investigators found, as the College Club had charged, that teachers in Hawai‘i were woefully unprepared for their posts. In fact, island-trained teachers had often only received four years of normal school training after completing eighth grade, whereas the teachers

¹⁵ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 25.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁷ The reaction to this imposition and the resulting lawsuit will be discussed later in this chapter.

trained on the mainland generally had at least two years of training beyond high school.¹⁸ And, according to the findings in the *Survey*, nine out of ten students receiving training in the Normal School were, "...under a heavy handicap, having failed to master the English language before undertaking the serious responsibility of teacher preparation."¹⁹ What really drove the concern, of course, was best articulated later in the *Survey*:

Neither the United States nor its people, nor its government, occupy much space in the consciousness of those teachers who possess only the Hawaiian or Hawaiian-Oriental background. The full meaning and significance of Americanism or of America's place in the family of nations is not grasped.²⁰

This disconnect, this sense of autonomy on the part of Hawaiians was, of course, problematic and it was clear to the investigators that the classrooms could be the very place where young Hawaiians could be trained to think of themselves as Americans first and foremost. An important step in meeting this goal, then, would be ensuring that public school teachers spoke Standard English. Benjamin Wist, who had served as the president of the Territorial Normal and Training School beginning in 1921, made clear how difficult the process would be when he explained that:

The high school during its four-year program cannot break down the faulty habits acquired during the previous eight years, nor can the Normal School in two years do what the high school has failed to do in four years, in spite of its greater selection and its efforts during the period of training. The result is elementary teachers who are incapable of developing the proper English habits of our children."²¹

¹⁸ Stueber, 236.

¹⁹ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 83.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

²¹ As quoted in Eileen Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity*, 198.

In response, beginning in the mid-1920s, Hawaiian teachers-in-training were subject to an oral examination of their English skills. They were called upon to give a five-minute speech in front of a panel of seven judges. If it was determined that their native language or, as was more often the case, Pidgin heavily marked their speech, they would fail. The students would be allowed to repeat the exam until they passed, but, ultimately, twenty-four students failed to graduate in 1925 because of their English skills.²² If Hawai`i was to eventually become a state, and there can be no doubt that it was being groomed for that eventuality, educators were going to have to speak Standard English. Further, Hawai`i was going to need the help of carefully trained educators not only to make America's place in the world clear to the Territory's younger citizens, but also more importantly, these teachers were to underscore the place of Hawai`i within the United States, even as its role was continuously shifting and changing in the period.

Beyond the concern that Hawai`i's teachers were relatively unprepared to guide the largely Asian-American student body toward greater assimilation, the *Survey* also lamented the low enrollment numbers of middle-class haole children in the public schools. They hypothesized that if they would attend, Hawaiian schools would benefit in the way that mainland schools benefited when middle-class children attended public schools. The *Survey* asserted that these children would, "exert a predominant influence on the contents of the melting pot."²³ Bunker and the commissioners of the *Survey* were quite

²² Hawaii Territory, Department of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report to the Governor and Legislature* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction, 1926), 91-92.

²³ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 245.

aware, though, that this was not what was happening on the Islands as middle-class haoles were generally sending their children to private schools. And so they proposed that in order to attract these students, Hawai`i's children should be tracked according to their proficiency in spoken English. They maintained that such a system would, "...go far toward removing the objections of English-speaking families to send their children to the public schools."²⁴ In an effort to assuage any fears that such an arrangement would be inequitable, it was stressed that, "...if the distribution among groups were made wholly on the basis of ability to get on rapidly and successfully with the work there would be no grounds for any feeling of discrimination."²⁵ While the notion is a satisfying one, it is hard to imagine how such a policy could have been carried out without feelings of inadequacy and discrimination plaguing the children whose English was not up to par. And the fact that the dividing line, especially in the early years, tended to come down to ethnicity ensured that there would, in point of fact, be grounds for charges of discrimination to arise.

Bunker and the other *Survey* investigators asserted that non-haole children would learn and benefit simply by being in close proximity, within the public school system, to children steeped in the American way of life. On this point, they went on to assert the following:

...children of all the other national descents should have the opportunity for contact and discussion on questions of American history and civic ideals with the children of American parents. That they should have this contact in discussion with children

²⁴ Ibid., 247.

²⁵ Ibid., 248.

who have had the habit of looking at things in general from the American standpoint since babyhood seems perfectly obvious.²⁶

In an interesting departure, though, from the period's more typical call for complete Americanization, the *Survey*, possibly because its authors were so impressed by the multi-cultural nature of Hawai`i, went on to stress that non-haole children had a lot to offer in terms of Hawai`i's long-term success, as well. Concerning the goal of having more haole children in the public schools and the mutually beneficial good that could come from increased contact between haole and non-haole children, the *Survey* stresses that:

...contact on this basis would also be equally good for the children of American and Anglo-Saxon parentage in order that they may get the other racial point of view in this field. For all these diverse racial elements must meet outside the school and in industries and business life on the common ground of democratic citizenship; and a spirit of tolerance and mutual good will must prevail in the interest of peace and the common safety.²⁷

Indeed, according to the investigators, it would not just be beneficial for Hawaiian schools to see greater mixing of the races in daily life, it would be vital to Hawai`i's success.

So, for Bunker and the other investigators, the idea of the interaction of previously all but sequestered middle-class haole children with the majority polyglot population was an appealing one. However appealing it may have been for them, though, it was clear that they would never be able to convince haole parents to send their children to regular public schools without some serious changes taking place. Ultimately, what they hoped to replicate was the private education the haole children were receiving within the public

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

system. This is exactly what would happen within the carefully constructed English Standard classrooms. Indeed, they hoped that with the tracking system in place they could, "...offer even more than the private schools now offer of what is best and most valuable in secondary education."²⁸ It is worthy of note, however, that after observing a number of the private schools on the islands, the commissioners of the *Survey* stressed that, "The almost universal testimony of the teachers at these schools...is that the white children and the Hawaiians will not apply themselves as persistently as the Japanese and Chinese do; this should give the former and their parents food for thought."²⁹ So while the haole children might be uniquely suited to teaching their fellow students what life is like from the "American standpoint," Japanese and Chinese students, for example, had their own lessons to share.

In 1920, then Superintendent Vaughan MacCaughey received a petition signed by the parents of 400 Honolulu school children.³⁰ The parents, who had clearly kept abreast of the call to action issued by the College Club and the resulting federal survey, demanded the establishment of public schools for children fluent in English. Echoing the anger and the indignation of haole parents, MacCaughey, in a publication that summarized the events of the 1919-1920 school year, stressed that haole children had as much right to a public education as did non-haole children, and that:

²⁸ Ibid., 249.

²⁹ Ibid., 322.

³⁰ Vaughan MacCaughey took the office in 1919, succeeding Henry Kinney, and held the post when the College Club submitted the letter that had set the chain of events in motion that would culminate in the establishment of the English Standard Schools.

...such children have a right to such an education under conditions which will insure them and their parents that it can be had without endangering those standards and character quality which are distinctly American and which must be preserved and kept inviolate and are part of them because of their parentage.³¹

In that quest, though, he clarified that, “The separation between the children in this system would never be based on race but simply on the use of school facilities.”³²

Of the policy of testing children for admission into the proposed English Standard program, he again maintained that, “...the race or nationality of an applicant be allowed no weight whatever in this test; in other words we desire that the sole consideration, aside from ordinary scholastic requirements for the grade, be the quality of the applicant’s oral English.”³³ Whether or not this was a genuine desire is an interesting question. There can be no doubt that a concern that surrounded the schools was that they would appear to be antithetical to the tenets of the American nation, despite its own well-developed, homegrown systems of segregation. This would be a very real fear within Hawai`i as, since the annexation in 1898, many had looked to the day that the Territory would become a state. By stressing that admission to the schools would be dependant solely upon a child’s grasp of spoken English, it was hoped that the policy would not be seen as contradicting the

³¹ Vaughan MacCaughey, “The School Year 1919-20 in Hawaii.” *The Hawaii Educational Review* 9.1 (September 1920): 7.

³² Ibid.

³³ As quoted in Stueber, 243.

commonly agreed upon (though not uniformly applied) American values of the day.³⁴

It was clear that by 1922, Bunker, in particular, still grappled with the implementation of a system that separated children into different schools. He questioned, “whether or not it is possible to devise a plan whereby children of American-born parents who desire it may have their children educated at public expense without violating any of the fundamental principals of democracy.”³⁵ He proposed that the separate schools be established in only those areas sufficiently populated with haole children, and those areas with smaller numbers of children whose parents, “have been citizens of no other country than America.”³⁶ Further, he instructed that as an added measure against discrimination, “perhaps 15 to 20 percent, to begin with, to be drawn from the various groups, having other national origins living in the attendance district, the individuals to be selected on the basis of scholarship and facility in the use of the English language.”³⁷ And perhaps most importantly, no such schools were to be established in areas where, “equal educational facilities to the children of all other racial groups living in the community” did not exist.³⁸

It is worthy of note that Bunker was also very clear that the English Standard

³⁴ One wonders how the English Standard system would have been carried out and what the reaction to the schools might have been had the looming question of Statehood not informed their decisions. Had they not been watching their steps so as to not offend, it is interesting to think how far they might have gone to keep non-Standard English-speaking children quarantined from their haole counterparts.

³⁵ Frank E. Bunker, “The Education of the Children of the American-born Parents in Hawaii,” *Hawaii Educational Review*, XI no. 1 (1922): 1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

schools were to be a temporary solution. They were just meant to act as a stopgap in the effort to bring all of Hawai'i's students, and their English proficiency, up to the level seen on the mainland. Indeed, according to Bunker:

It is in no sense recommended as a permanent form of school organization. Ultimately conditions in Hawaii will be such as not to call for an expedient of this character, nevertheless the time has not been reached and to meet the situation which now obtains the adoption and execution of the foregoing plan is justifiable.³⁹

And so, having established that admissions would not be based on race, that they would not receive more funds than other public schools, and that they would not function as separate schools on a permanent basis, it became clear that this system of segregating fluent English-speaking children (in areas with significant numbers of such students) would be implemented.⁴⁰ All other scrambling to justify their establishment aside, the widely felt and accepted disdain for Pidgin made the creation of the schools almost unavoidable. This disdain was articulated by School Superintendent Willard Givens in 1924, when he wrote:

Most of the children come from non-English speaking homes. The first so-called English that they hear is the "pidgin" English of the cane fields, the ranches, and the streets, frequently mixed with profanity. This jargon is used when conversing with their playmates and improper speech habits are formed before the

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that although the English Standard schools enjoyed the reputation of being better equipped than other public schools, the school board documents make no clear indication that this was, in fact, the case. That is not to suggest, of course, that they were not. Indeed, it must be said that it was striking how few references to the English Standard schools were to be found in various school board documents, budgetary records, and papers and correspondences of governors and other officials.

children attend school. Once these habits are formed the correction of them is not an easy problem.⁴¹

Because this sentiment was so widely held, even before the official Hawai`i-wide implementation of the school system in 1924, there were a few schools, influenced by the findings in the *Survey*, that had started their own programs. First was Honolulu's Central Grammar School (which would later be known as Lincoln Elementary). Central Grammar was established as what was referred to as a "select school" in 1920 as a direct response to pressure from haole parents. And once it was established, those same haole parents were clamoring for more.⁴²

In his 1964 dissertation, *Hawaii: a Case Study in Developmental Education, 1778-1960*, Ralph Stueber maintains that it was not the intention that these schools be established to segregate students according to race.⁴³ Still, in these early years there can be little doubt that that was exactly what happened. According to Stueber,

Patriotic fervor, hostility toward the Japanese and a failure to discriminate only on the basis of language clouded the issue of segregated public schools. What MacCaughey had labeled as an instructional device became, instead, a device for the haole middle class to temporarily preserve its own distinctive place in Hawaii's stratified society.⁴⁴

⁴¹ W.E. Givens, *Report of the Superintendent for the Biennial Ending December 31, 1924* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction, 1924), 17.

⁴² Riley H. Allen, "Education and Race Problems in Hawaii". *The American Review of Reviews*, (December 1921): 617.

⁴³ Stueber. 243.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 244.

And so, with the designation of Central Grammar as a “select school” and the establishment of the English Standard schools that would follow, middle-class haoles would, at least for a time, hold on to their distinctive place of privilege in Hawaiian society.

Taking a queue from Central Grammar principal Williard E. Givens of McKinley High School in Honolulu initiated segregated classes within the school. Honolulu, and indeed Hawai`i would not have an English Standard high school until Roosevelt opened in 1932, so Givens’ response to the void was to create special classes for the students fluent in English in hopes of luring haole students away from the private schools. However, he was met with opposition from the Hawaiian Chinese Civic Association. The situation at McKinley was a significant one in this process of establishing the English Standard system because the protest led by the Chinese Civic Association:

...ultimately led to a grand jury investigation. The grand jury supported the Givens plan, a page out of the federal survey, and agreed that it was a sound educational procedure. It found no evidence of discrimination other than that based on language. The case demonstrated the difficulty Islanders would have distinguishing between segregation by language and segregation by race.⁴⁵

This charge is an important and an accurate one as these would be constantly conflated by students, parents, teachers, and administrators, especially after 1924 when the English Standard system would be officially implemented by Givens, who had assumed the position of superintendent in 1923. Both Givens and then-Governor Wallace R. Farrington walked a thin line in the effort to ensure that the public schools would serve the non-haole majority and continue to supply the Territory with a dependable workforce, while

⁴⁵ Ibid., 247-248.

simultaneously appealing to and attracting haole attendance. Authors Maenette K.P. Benham and Ronald H. Heck identified the dilemma they faced as being rooted in, “the need to maintain an elite organization on one hand, and the need to uphold the ideals, or at least the rhetoric, of democratic parity on the other.”⁴⁶ Despite the obvious complications involved in the implementation of such a system, greater haole support of and attendance in the public schools were a result of the creation of the English Standard schools. But, as Stueber asserted, “not without a struggle.”⁴⁷

There were certainly others who were displeased with the federal investigator’s findings and the push to improve the schools. For example, politically connected plantation manager George C. Watt remarked to the equally powerful James C. Campsie, “Every penny we spend on educating these kids beyond the sixth grade is wasted!” Campsie agreed, and asserted further, “Public education beyond fourth grade is not only a waste, it is a menace. We spend to educate them and they will destroy us.”⁴⁸ Many haole politicians and landowners viewed the schools as little more than holding pens for future workers. This sentiment was illustrated clearly by the soon-to-be Territorial Governor Farrington, who asserted that:

It is expected that the Federal Survey Commission...will recommend in its report that academic and classical courses be thrown overboard and replaced by domestic science, agriculture, and manual training. We hope that this recommendation will be made.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Benham and Heck, 151.

⁴⁷ Stueber, 248.

⁴⁸ As quoted in Fuchs, 263.

⁴⁹ As quoted in Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity*, 126.

And though he does not mention race directly, there can be no doubt that he was not aiming this hope at haole children, most of whom, of course, did not attend public schools in the period. And those who did, it was almost certain, were not headed for the plantation after their schooling years. But, as has been shown, that was not what the *Survey* called for. Instead, the *Survey* stressed the importance of the children of Hawai`i having a wide array of opportunities available to them--the plantation, business, and the academic world among them. Moreover, it would contend, however optimistically, that Hawai`i's students should be encouraged to take pride in their work, whatever it may be, when it was stressed in its pages:

Children growing up in Hawaii, coming as they do in their plastic years under the influence of the public school, preparing them for the assumption of the responsibilities which life in Hawaii demands, should come to feel that, in cutting cane on the plantation, in driving a tractor in the fields, in swinging a sledge in a blacksmith shop...as well as in sitting in a doctor's or merchant's or manager's or banker's desk, there is opportunity for rendering a necessary as well as intelligent, worthy, and creative service.⁵⁰

This goal, that all Hawaiian children have a place in the rapidly changing society and that they be made to feel pride in their contribution, was indicative of the collective sense of belonging that would develop and characterize the period.

As was the case on the mainland in the 1920s, the schools were a place where the battles of the period, the conflict between tradition and modernity, capitalism and democracy, just for example, played out. In her study of the first woman in the Territorial Senate of Hawai`i, *Women and Children First: The Life and Times of Elsie Wilcox of Kaua`i*, author Judith

⁵⁰ *A Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 4.

Dean Gething Hughes maintains that for Hawai`i, in particular, it was often unclear whose interest should take priority. Given that the Territory was home to so many lucrative industries (pineapple and sugar among them), and that its location was so strategic in a period when a large outpost between the East and West was becoming increasingly important for the United States, there existed fundamental differences concerning managing the interests of plantation owners and businessmen, versus those of laborers and their children.⁵¹ Indeed, according to Hughes:

Plantation owners and managers felt they needed a supply of cheap, docile agricultural labor to maintain the economy of the territory...Paradoxically, the businessmen also supported the “Americanization” programs designed to inculcate American ideals of democracy and other accoutrements of American culture in first-and second-generation children. The Americanization programs were fundamentally subversive to the goals of the business leaders....⁵²

So even aside from nefarious business leaders and their propensity for acting in their own self-interest, it was often unclear what was in Hawai`i’s best interest in the period (to say nothing of the best interest of individual Hawaiians). For Hughes, “the real life of Hawai`i in the 1920s, the competing needs of the English-speaking and the non-English-speaking children were diametrically opposed, and accommodating both appeared impossible.”⁵³

Despite the struggles, the planning and development of separate schools beyond Honolulu’s Central Grammar School began in 1924. In 1927, “the territorial legislature made official provision for English Standard schools

⁵¹ Judith Dean Gething Hughes, *Women and Children First: The Life and Times of Elsie Wilcox of Kaua`i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1996), 60.

⁵² Ibid., 60-61.

⁵³ Ibid., 68.

(Act 103 of 1927) by substituting the phrases 'select schools' for 'standard schools' in section 312 of the Revised Laws of 1925."⁵⁴ Eventually, there would be many more English Standard Schools: Thomas Jefferson Elementary, Ma`ema`e Elementary, Kapalama Elementary, Ali`iolani Elementary, Robert Louis Stevenson Junior High School, Roosevelt High School (all of which were in Honolulu), Leilehua Elementary in rural O`ahu, Riverside School in Hilo, Lihue Grammar School on Kauai, and Kaunoa Grammar School on Maui. Additionally, there were schools in areas with relatively few haoles that simply had English Standard classrooms within regular public schools.⁵⁵

While these schools were created, at least in part, because middle-class haoles demanded schools they would feel comfortable sending their children to, their domination of these schools would not last long. But there can be no doubt that haole children did, in fact, form a majority in these schools, and that the schools were, therefore, largely racially segregated institutions. For example, the enrollment records from Honolulu's Lincoln Elementary show that on the first day of school in 1924, there were 572 white, 27 Chinese, and 19 Japanese students on the roster despite the fact that haoles were minorities in the city.⁵⁶ These numbers would shift gradually as more and more children of non-white backgrounds were able to gain admission. According to historian Ralph Stueber:

⁵⁴ Norman Meller. "Hawaii's English Standard Schools." Report No. 3 (Honolulu: Hawaii Territorial Legislature, 1948), 4.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Fuchs, 227.

...by 1939 nearly seventeen percent were Oriental. In Stevenson Junior High, during 1928 and 1929, ten percent of the students were Oriental, a figure comparable to the Oriental group in Punahou. By the end of the 1930's the Oriental segment at Stevenson had doubled and in the 1942-1943 school year one third of the students were Oriental.⁵⁷

And this shift was mirrored in other English Standard schools:

Between 1930 and 1937 the Oriental segment of the student body at Roosevelt High School grew five times faster than the haole segment. Of 1,751 students in Roosevelt in 1936, ten were Hawaiian, 260 were part-Hawaiian, 140 Portuguese, 8 Spanish, 171 Chinese, 82 Japanese, 25 Koreans, 8 Filipinos, and 1,047 Haoles....Clearly, although the haole children were not in the minority status, they received an increasingly greater exposure to non-haole children, whose numbers continued to increase in the standard schools.⁵⁸

Over time, then, enrollments in these schools became more diverse and interaction increased. This, of course, was a major goal of the survey investigators. Still, there can be no doubt that in the interim the existence of separate schools was a complicated and somewhat divisive issue in this period when Hawaiians were struggling to develop a Hawaiian identity that would then have to be reconciled with the ever quickening march toward statehood.⁵⁹

Aside from the English Standard schools, another major proposal of the *Survey* was that the foreign language schools, which parents of a variety of different ethnicities sent their children to in order to maintain cultural and linguistic ties to their homelands, be carefully monitored. Beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, foreign language schools were established

⁵⁷ Stueber, 251-252.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Chapter four will focus on this struggle and the place of the English Standard schools within it.

throughout the Islands so that Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Portuguese children, for example, could learn the language and culture of their parents and grandparents. This was not unlike the earlier efforts of the missionaries who established Punahou School in 1841 to ensure that their children could speak English and be educated in the culture and customs of the United States. Because they had the largest enrollments, most of the debate about the role of foreign language schools in Hawai'i centered around the Japanese. One concern of school administrators, in particular, was the Japanese tendency toward what would be described as emperor worship, which was, not surprisingly, seen as being completely incompatible with democracy and in direct opposition to the Americanization project.⁶⁰

The 1920 *Survey* had made it clear that only about three percent of children entering school at six or seven spoke Standard English, and that about one-third to one-half of them were Japanese.⁶¹ As a safeguard, comprehensive legislation was passed in 1920 that would oversee and streamline the foreign language schools, in order to ensure that children were not completely submerged in their native language at the expense of their learning of Standard English. One of the new requirements was that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) would see to it that all foreign language schools, most of which were sponsored by Buddhist temples, were licensed and that all teachers be required to take an exam to demonstrate their proficiency in the English language, culture, and history.⁶²

⁶⁰ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 116-118.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶² Hughes, 65.

These requirements, however, were challenged immediately. Though representatives of the schools requested that these requirements not be implemented, a compromise was reached when it was decided that while an interpreter for the section of the exam concerned with American history and culture be provided, teachers would have to pass the English-language section.⁶³ The agreement was put to the test three years later when it was discovered by the Department of Public Instruction that there were teachers in the foreign language schools who had not passed the English exam. The DPI then attempted to close these schools, but was met with major opposition and legal action. In the 1926 case *Farrington v. Tokushige*, the Supreme Court sided in favor of the Japanese language schools, and ruled that any regulation of the foreign language schools by the public school board was unconstitutional.⁶⁴ This is significant given that the largely segregated English Standard schools were not met with such immediate and unified opposition.

By 1930, linguist John Reinecke estimated that about 15 percent of Hawai'i's population spoke Standard English, while approximately 85 percent spoke some form of Pidgin.⁶⁵ Given that the estimate had been around 3 percent for incoming elementary students, the increase in this 10-year period was quite significant. By 1938, in an article entitled, "How Good is the English of High School Graduates," author William N. Brigance presented the findings accumulated one year earlier that showed that of the public high school

⁶³ "Minutes," Department of Public Instruction, 3 October 1931 (Honolulu: Hawai'i State Archives).

⁶⁴ *Farrington v. Tokushige*, 273 U.S. 284 (1926).

⁶⁵ As cited in Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity*, 199.

students entering the University of Hawai`i who took oral and written English tests, most did well on the written portion, but that 40 percent scored poorly on the oral test. The study asserts that this was due to the fact that English was often a student's second or third language, after Pidgin and their parents' native tongue.⁶⁶ As a result, it was not uncommon for children to understand and be proficient in the mechanics of English, but their pronunciation and enunciation often suffered.⁶⁷ Given the relatively low percentage of Standard English speakers in Hawai`i in the period any perceived threat to the spread of its usage, in this case the foreign language schools, were subject to scrutiny and suspicion.

But it was not just the monitoring of the foreign language schools that was met with acrimony in the period. Though it would not happen immediately, the business community, as a response to the *Survey* and its push for the expansion of education on the Islands, came together to fund its own study of the schools in 1931. In 1929, Lawrence M Judd (whose missionary grandfather, Gerrit P. Judd, had served as cabinet minister to King Kamehameha III and was a co-founder of Punahou School), was appointed by President Herbert Hoover to be the Territorial Governor. Soon after, he created the Governor's Advisory Committee on Education. The committee, which was comprised of Island business and economic leaders, including the presidents of the Big Five companies, had grown increasingly wary of the

⁶⁶ William N. Brigance, "How Good Is the English of High School Graduates in Hawaii?" *Hawaii Educational Review*, XXVI (1938): 133-134.

⁶⁷ It is worthy of note that more current research on the topic of multilingual children does not show this to necessarily be the case. Indeed, many experts assert that knowing many languages enables children to understand each one of them more deeply. Still, in the context of this study, the findings are significant in that they show just how prevalent Pidgin was in the period.

expansion of educational opportunities, and sought to find ways to ensure that there would always be workers in Hawai`i's fields.⁶⁸

Together, they hired Charles Prosser, who served as the director of the William Hood Dunwoody Industrial Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1931, the resulting document, the *Survey of Schools and Industry*, stressed that given the precarious financial situation of the Territory, additional funds should not be funneled into the schools.⁶⁹ A more beneficial tactic, Prosser and the Governor's Advisory Committee asserted, would be for those funds to be diverted instead to the Island's various industries in order to encourage growth. According to this panel of businessmen, the agricultural-based economy of Hawai`i could not support or provide for a large population of highly educated graduates. It was argued that the public schools were training Hawaiian children for white-collar jobs that simply did not exist. Instead, they encouraged parents and educators to shift their expectations when they asserted in the study that:

Many parents seem to rely on the hope that by spending many years in school their children will automatically gain both high social and high economic standing. The Committee believes that these hopes of the schools and the parents have not been realized, and we see no grounds for the belief that they will be realized in the future. We feel that the continuation or expansion of such a scheme of schooling will lead great numbers of youth to build up ambitions and aspirations which are predestined to frustration.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Fuchs, 292-294.

⁶⁹ Governor's Advisory Committee on Education, *Survey of Schools and Industry* (Honolulu: Printshop, 1931), 1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

This benevolent notion, this seeming concern for the psychological wellbeing of students and parents at the core, of course, was actually just the tactic employed by the keepers of industry to encourage the masses, most of whom were non-white, to abandon any hope of getting off of the plantation. To this end, one of their concrete recommendations was that the Department of Public Instruction limit the number of students admitted to tenth grade to the number that had been admitted in September 1930, and that expenditures should be frozen at 1931 levels. Further, they wanted to see University of Hawai'i enrollment and spending to be limited to 1930-1931 levels. Beyond that, they suggested that public schools focus on vocational education, and that students be made to understand that, "to function usefully as a member of a community, a young man must perform such duties as fall his lot."⁷¹

In the end, the report, which sought to cut spending on public schools and to restrict the number of children who attended them, was not particularly influential. The schools would simply be too important to the success of the Territory, too instrumental in the Americanization of the population, and perhaps most importantly, too highly prized and desired by parents and children throughout the Islands to not move forward and make the kinds of sweeping changes and improvements outlined in the 1920 *Survey*. While it is clear that the *Survey* was further reaching and more progressive than industry would have hoped, it was just as clear that the people of Hawai'i welcomed the changes that it helped to usher in.

Though the ravaging effects of the Depression were never felt as strongly on the Islands as they were on the mainland, the mid-1930s would be

⁷¹ Ibid., 14.

marked by increasing interest in devising ways to cut the amount of money spent on education. As the Depression wore on, this was a particularly alluring idea for many because the Department of Public Instruction absorbed about half the territorial budget every year. Many haole parents, in particular, resented the fact that their tax dollars were used to educate and train children who would, ultimately, come to compete for jobs with their own children. These parents, among others, advocated the introduction of a tuition fee for high school students, which they hoped would limit the enrollment of non-white children. In a letter to editor of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, one haole parent had earlier advocated high school tuition as a way to “alleviate the burdens of the taxpayer” and to “eliminate the growing army of...‘white collar’ job aspirants.”⁷² Indeed, according to one parent:

...A look over the grounds of these public places of learning—McKinley high school, for instance, on a morning before [the]school hour is on will immediately show that there is a preponderance of a certain nationality (way in the majority) in attendance...Our ‘white’ or Caucasian employers are employing this class of people in their offices in preference to our own boys and girls. It is no wonder, then, that the latter are losing interest and ambition at their school work, for they know that there is nothing in store for them when they leave school outside of ordinary common labor.”⁷³

There can be no mistaking the fact that this parent was referring specifically to ethnically Japanese students. (McKinley High was known as “Tokyo High” in the period.) And while “common labor” was seen as being perfectly acceptable for non-haole children, it simply would not do for their white counterparts.

⁷² As quoted in Tamura, 134.

⁷³ Ibid.

The idea of charging a small tuition fee to secondary students had been suggested by various parties over the years, but the policy was not actually implemented until 1933 when the Department of Public Instruction levied a ten dollar tuition fee for students in grades nine through twelve.⁷⁴ While the high school tuition fee was obviously an effective way of generating money for the Islands' schools, it should be equally obvious that this was also an attempt at limiting the numbers of students who attended high school. Those who could not or would not pay the tuition fee would instead find themselves on plantations.

Aside from the tuition, though, there would be other fees, including a student body fee of fifty cents per student, and then optional fees for things like a subscription to the school paper, the yearbook, and admission to athletic events.⁷⁵ Beyond these fees (whether optional or obligatory), students were expected to rent their textbooks and they often had to pay a special fee for taking elective subjects (such as Drawing and Hawaiian Arts). The fee schedule laid out in the 1930 Department of Public Instruction Teacher's Manual indicates that these fees ranged from \$5.00 for the rental of a Chemistry textbook, for example, to a \$2.00 fee for Music, and \$1.00 for Design.⁷⁶

The Department of Public Instruction could not help but address that this system of fees was very unorthodox. Indeed, it was written in the 1935-

⁷⁴ Wist, 181.

⁷⁵ *The Handbook of McKinley High School: 1934-1935* (Honolulu: McKinley High School, 1934), 26.

⁷⁶ Department of Public Instruction, *High School Course of Study Series Part One: Teacher's Manual* (Honolulu, Department of Public Instruction, 1930), 60.

1936 biennial report that, “The charging of tuition for attendance at public secondary schools is not a practice among the states of the union—in fact, such a charge is peculiar to Hawaii.”⁷⁷ Further, a year earlier, the Department of Public Instruction recognized that this system of fees,

...is a threat to this equality of opportunity. It is based on the growing tendency to place more of the cost of education on the individual. The adoption of the tuition charge and the reduction in appropriations for educational supplies and equipment make it increasingly difficult for children from poorer homes to continue in school. In many instances, it places a burden on those least able to pay.⁷⁸

Speaking to the motivation of such a practice, author Andrew William Lind asserted that:

It is frequently charged that the public schools have “educated” the children away from the humble tasks of life and have developed in them expectations which the limited resources of Island economy do not justify. It is a common complaint that the schools are educating their youth for “white collar jobs,” which do not exist and the widespread suspicion of free public education in other colonial areas emanates in part from the fear of its serious consequences in social unrest and disaffection.⁷⁹

The result, though, of these various fees was not at all as big business and some bigoted haole parents on the Islands might have hoped. The lure of the American Dream would prove to be too strong, and droves of students flocked to the schools, despite the various fees, determined to capitalize on the new opportunities. According to historian Benjamin Wist “senior high school

⁷⁷ Department of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report of the Department of Public Instruction of the Territory of Hawaii: 1935-1936* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction), 34.

⁷⁸ Department of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report of the Department of Public Instruction of the Territory of Hawaii: 1933-1934* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction), 3.

⁷⁹ Andrew Lind, *An Island Community: Ecological Succession in Hawaii* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 288.

enrollment (grades nine to twelve) increased over ninety percent” despite the tuition fee.⁸⁰ By 1937, though, the largely unpopular ten-dollar tuition fee for ninth through twelfth graders was abolished.⁸¹

But accommodating the ever-increasing number of students throughout the Islands would be a difficult task. Though providing more educational opportunities and working to grow the student population were main goals of the *Survey*, as in any period, money was an issue. The financial troubles, of course, were only exacerbated by the onset of the Great Depression, and it was not long before plans for new buildings were abandoned, and the maintenance of existing buildings also suffered as administrators were unable to keep up with the sheer number of students. According to Katherine M. Cook in a United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education report in 1935:

...owing to depression economics, these expectations were not fully realized. School buildings, already inadequate, were still further taxed during the biennium 1933-1934 by an increase in school enrollment of approximately 5,300 children.⁸²

Indeed, what was desired and what could be afforded often did not match in the ensuing years. Between the Depression and, later, the war effort, schools no longer enjoyed the kind of financial support from the Territorial government that they once had. According to the 1935-1936 biennial report:

The building program has been practically at a standstill for the past four years. As a result, the present needs are cumulative and are out of proportion to what they should be. In view of the

⁸⁰ Wist, 168.

⁸¹ Meller, 5.

⁸² Department of the Interior, Office of Education, *Public Education in Hawaii*, by Katherine M. Cook, Bulletin No. 10 (Washington, D.C.:U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, 1935), 34.

fact that the City and County budget for 1937 provides nothing at all for new buildings and the repair and maintenance item is wholly inadequate, it is obvious that this phase of the school program has reached a crisis. This problem merits the careful consideration of the Legislature.⁸³

It should be noted that despite the commonly held notion that the English Standard schools routinely enjoyed better facilities and materials than other public schools, there seems to be no evidence in the various records and budgets to bear this out. Instead, it is clear in the public records that an effort was made to ensure that all schools in the period be equally constructed and maintained, and that, “every school building should be made as economical, efficient, and attractive as possible. No extravagant expenditures have been made for science apparatus, gymnasium, or classroom equipment.”⁸⁴

In lieu of such luxuries, it was stressed that special focus should be given to each school’s exterior when it was clarified that, “While no excessive decorations are being provided, more attention is being given to the appearance of the building. There can be no excuse for an ugly building, if with the means available an attractive building can be secured.”⁸⁵ While this might seem like a frivolous point of focus for the Island-wide district, it is not at all a surprising one. The schools, like no other institutions on the Islands, represented the changing Hawai`i. The Hawai`i that developed in the period was one where children became both American, in a Territory that was

⁸³ Department of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report of the Department of Public Instruction of the Territory of Hawaii: 1935-1936* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction, January 1937), 35.

⁸⁴ Department of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report of the Department of Public Instruction of the Territory of Hawaii: 1929-1930* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction), 2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

marching its way towards statehood, and distinctly Hawaiian. The significance of these institutions was not lost on the members of the communities where they existed. In fact, according to the *Biennial Report of the Department of Public Instruction* in 1930:

...principals, teachers, and pupils have been giving a great deal of attention to the beautification of school grounds. Landscaping has been carried on in accordance with well laid out plans. Local agencies such as the Outdoor Circle, Parent-Teacher Associations, and governmental authorities have cooperated in making many of the schools the most attractive places in the community. This program will continue to receive emphasis.⁸⁶

It is interesting to note that the aesthetics of the educational facilities were more prized than what was housed within them. In any case, such focus was not the domain of the English Standard schools. Indeed, this focus on having visually appealing, modern campuses was the goal for all schools throughout the Islands in these years and beyond. So with no concrete evidence that the English Standard schools were better funded or maintained, it is clear that their prestige was, instead, an outcome of their relative exclusivity.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Chapter Five

Opportunity or Imposition?: the Various Ways Children, Parents, Educators and Administrators Reacted to Hawai`i's English Standard School System

The ways students, parents, and teachers reacted to the English Standard schools varied greatly. Generally, the reactions were very complicated as the schools served as symbols of the changing nature of Hawai`i, but were, for some, in opposition to the new sense of Hawaiianness and development of sense of place and self that marked the period. Not surprisingly, this was most common for those who had in some way been excluded from the segregated system. For others, though, the very opposite was true; for those who were able to attend an English Standard School, or send their children to one, the sense of pride and place within the Hawaiian-American system was often palpable---even in interviews many years after the fact. In the most simplistic terms possible, there were those who passionately supported the system, and those who were very opposed to the existence of the segregated system on the grounds that it was anti-democratic and, at least in the beginning, influenced by racist ideology. But, by and large, the establishment and existence of the schools were met with relatively little fanfare by the vast majority of the population, who either did not know about the English Standard schools, or did not seem to have strong feelings for or against them. The latter, including many graduates of various English Standard schools, often vacillated between being vaguely uncomfortable with the idea of segregating children based solely on their linguistic abilities, and being grateful to have received what they almost universally agree to have been a better education than they would have gotten otherwise.

These reactions help to illustrate that in the years following 1924's establishment of the English Standard system, it was still very unclear to most Hawaiians what role Pidgin would have in their lives, especially once the widely held goal of Statehood was achieved. For Hawaiians, Pidgin was (and continues to be) a very emotive topic; for many there is simultaneous pride and shame wrapped up in its use. The fact that Pidgin and its role in Hawaiian society is still a controversial and complicated topic now should be some indication of just how problematic the subject was at the time.

Attendance at an English Standard school was prestigious and coveted by many, especially status-seeking parents who were lured by the possibility of having their children act as the outward evidence of their family's successful Americanization. In a 1948 report of the schools published by the Legislative Reference Bureau of the Territorial government, it was stated that, "There can be no question but that English standard schools and sections are regarded by some persons as a means of maintaining social and economic stratification and discrimination."¹ Further, the report made clear the fact that it was the use of Pidgin that dictated this stratification by asserting that the "ability to speak good English has become associated with status, at least to the extent that use of "pidgin" sets one off as not "belonging" to the middle class groups."² Additionally, it was asserted that:

For one occupying a relatively privileged position in society, failure of his child to enter an English standard school or section is a blow to his social prestige; to one occupying a more lowly

¹ Meller, 12.

² Ibid.

position, successful completion of the test by the child reflects credit on the parent and thereby raises the latter's status.³

For others, these schools were offensive in their separation of the races, a practice that flew in the face of the American ideal of equality and inclusion. It is clear that, in the areas they existed, these schools were often divisive forces because they highlighted ethnic, racial, and economic distinctions within Hawaiian society. On this point, according to historian Lawrence Fuchs:

Hawaiian and Oriental children, especially from tougher neighborhoods, accused nonhaole boys at Standard schools of being sissies. To belong to the gang, it was necessary to speak pidgin. Since nearly all haoles went to English Standard or private schools, thousands of Hawaii's children went through the public schools without ever having close contact with Caucasian youngsters.⁴

Fuchs argued further that not only were children kept from interacting as a result of this segregated system, but that English Standard students, who often came from relatively wealthier homes, enjoyed more support and better resources from the school district, and that, as a result, class distinctions were perpetuated.⁵ Indeed, he maintains:

Students at the English Standard schools usually dressed in better clothes and had more spending money. Inevitably, the Standard schools became the prestige schools, not just for the students, but for teachers as well. Newer and better equipment was given Standard schools. Teaching assignments to them were given as rewards, the best teachers gravitating to them, where they were needed the least.⁶

³ Ibid.

⁴ Fuchs, 278.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

As evidence, though, Fuchs offers only a vague citation that indicates that the assertion was based on discussions with two “schoolteachers.”⁷ Indeed, it would seem obvious that this was the case, but a thorough search through the school board budget records did not turn up any definitive evidence that this was, in fact, true. While it is certainly possible that information that would support the claim that English Standard schools were better funded and equipped was simply obscured and buried under other costs and tallies, one should not assume that this was the case without solid evidence. Really, though, whether or not these schools enjoyed greater funding and support is actually of little importance in this context. What is important is that the status of having a child attend these schools, schools that promised the American Dream and all that went along with it, was what was desirable, and what so many parents wanted for their children in a time when relatively little Standard English was spoken in Hawaiian homes.

While it is tempting to assume that such a system was always detested, the research presented here shows that the reality was often far more complicated. For many students and their families, gaining admission into one of the elite English Standard Schools was understood as being both a fantastic opportunity to enjoy a level of education previously unavailable to them, and a direct route to better scholastic training. While the level of Standard English required to pass the oral examination came quite effortlessly for some students, other children felt particularly clever and street-smart for having duped the educators administering the exams by being able to speak just enough Pidgin-free English to ensure their admission. For other children,

⁷ Ibid., 480.

though, the oral entrance exam was terribly stressful. Even if they were too young to understand the implications of getting into an English Standard school, children often understood just how important it was to their parents, and, more broadly, how parents used a child's academic performance to measure their own success or failure in their quests to be fully American and Hawaiian. For these children, there would be preschools and kindergartens, cram sessions with older siblings and grandparents, and a lot of worrying in anticipation of the oral test they would take that would either guarantee their attendance or preclude it. Of course, it was not the case that all children experienced the English Standard schools this way. Some children were scarcely aware of what was happening to them, and the larger implications of the process of segregation that they were being subjected to. The reactions of parents, educators, and administrators were similarly scattered.

The aim, then, of this chapter is to add some authenticity to the narrative by examining personal experiences, and to discover who the students of the English Standard Schools were. Perhaps more importantly, this chapter reveals how their attendance at these schools often solidified a child's sense of belonging to the wider American society, while simultaneously adding to their sense of Hawaiianness. (After all, in the later years of the system, especially, these schools were very integrated and indicative of the polyglot society that was Hawai'i). Examining personal experiences will also help uncover how exclusion from these schools encouraged some children to feel at odds with American society as a whole, while paradoxically also adding to their sense of Hawaiianness. This is a particularly interesting aspect of

Hawaiianness--it came to include what might seem to be opposing forces, both inclusion and exclusion from the broader American culture.

One would be remiss, of course, in not addressing some of the possible pitfalls of relying too heavily upon the experiences of others as source material for elucidation. By tapping people's memories of what is commonly thought to be a kinder, gentler time, one runs the risk of coming away with overly idealized views. And, frankly, what's not to be idealistic about in the process of remembering after school meet-ups in the shadow of Diamond Head on Waikiki Beach? It is perfectly reasonable that one might become a bit wistful by the memory of not having to wear shoes to school until middle school, for example, and of playground vistas of hills festooned with lush, green vegetation and crowned with rainbows. But these were also the years of the Massey Trial, Pearl Harbor, and strained race relations, and it does not take long to get to this part of the story when considering childhood in Hawai'i during the period under examination. Indeed, it was these very complexities that often worked to further encourage and engrain the sense of Hawaiianness--the sense of belonging to one another.

While it can be quite easy to find graduates of the English Standard schools who are willing to share their experiences, locating those who are willing to discuss their experiences of having failed to gain entrance is a great deal more difficult, as there is still a sense of shame for many associated with the use of Pidgin.⁸ For the most part, though, children in Hawai'i did not have the opportunity to attend an English Standard school as there were relatively

⁸ Though it is worthwhile to note that those who are able to effortlessly move between Pidgin and Standard English generally describe the ability as being both incredibly useful and something to be proud of.

few of them. For those children, there was no additional sense of cultural, ethnic, or linguistic inferiority to that which already existed to some degree given the realities of living in a plantation economy. But for the children who were excluded, sometimes from the schools attended by their siblings or other relatives, these feelings were often acute and damaging. It was not the case that all children who knew of these schools necessarily wanted to attend them, though. In some cases, these schools were seen as being alien and unfair in nature, and children occasionally made the decision very early on that they had no desire to attend them.

In his article, "Racial Complexion of Hawaii's Future Population," Bernhard Hormann asserts that Hawai'i's schools, as in all places and times, played a pivotal role in forming the academic and personal identities of Hawaiians in the period.⁹ Because of the nature of the dual system, though, it was not uncommon for students to feel sharply divided from one another. English Standard students often considered themselves as being separate from other public school children, and they often identified themselves more closely with those who attended private schools. According to Hormann some of these students:

...especially early on, felt like the schools were very haole and feared (or hoped) that they would be "haolified" by attending them. The children who were excluded from these schools had similar perceptions, of course, but there was, not surprisingly, less positive identification with these attributes.¹⁰

⁹ Bernhard L. Hormann, "Racial Complexion of Hawaii's Future Population," *Social Forces* vol. 1, no. 1 (Oct. 1948): 68-72.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

Furthermore, this feeling of division, this separation of the haole and the “haolified” from the rest resulted in a notable sense of what Hormann refers to as “snobbishness” associated with the English Standard schools, despite the fact that:

...there is every evidence that the policy of maintaining the dual standard system was never deliberately administered in any way to justify this feeling on the part of the non-Haoles and, in fact, much evidence to the contrary as witness the fact that the proportion of non-Haoles in the English standard schools was climbing steadily, it is nevertheless true that the feelings of resentment against the standard school has continued.¹¹

But this resentment, this unease with the separation caused by the English Standard schools was not new in the late 1940s, nor was it the domain of students and their parents. Indeed, Superintendent of Public Instruction Oren F. Long diverged from the overly optimistic view of his predecessor when he was asked if he believed that the English Standard system, “conforms to the ideal of the American public school system,” and he confessed that in his view it, “created feelings of snobbishness among their students and that, in principle, they were un-American.”¹² And there can be no doubt that, especially in the early years of the program, *de facto* segregation worked to keep most Asian children out of the segregated schools. A very concrete example of the *de facto* segregation that existed in the period occurred when a group of Japanese parents established a kindergarten, with special focus on English, for their children so that they would be able to pass the oral examination and then be admitted to Central

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² As quoted in Stueber, 253.

Grammar.¹³ A group of haole parents expressed their disappointment when the children, “easily passed the tests for entrance into the school which it had hoped would, by an exclusion of little Orientals, meet the demand for an ‘American school.’”¹⁴ As a response to this concern on the part of some haole parents, classrooms at Central Grammar, which served as a forerunner to the English Standard system--a school where the limits could be tested before the program was officially implemented, were segregated by ethnicity during the 1922 school year.¹⁵ This bold change did not go over well with many parents, one of whom submitted the following letter to Superintendent MacCaughey:

Ever since the opening of school, I have witnessed such unjust treatment given the children of Portuguese blood that all my American ideals and ideas have been shattered...The children of the Central Grammar School have been segregated—the Portuguese, Hawaiian, and Orientals being put together and the Anglo-Saxons have been placed in rooms all by themselves—the others being considered unfit to mingle with them. Mrs. Overend, who is strictly *prejudiced*, and Vaughan MacCaughey did that on their own hook...Those who preach Americanization the loudest are the worse [sic] *snobs* out. They *preach* but don’t *practice*.¹⁶

Of course, this outrage was justified. According to historian Eileen Tamura, “such complaints caused MacCaughey to appoint a committee to investigate the situation, and the segregation apparently ended.”¹⁷ This episode offered the Department of Public Instruction a valuable lesson. With

¹³ As discussed in the last chapter, Central Grammar should be seen as a testing ground for the practices that would be implemented once the English Standard program was officially established in 1924.

¹⁴ Allen, 617.

¹⁵ Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity*, 110.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

this outcry, it was made clear that they could not push this far; they could not blatantly segregate public school children by race and/or ethnicity in such a manner. It was made clear that parents, most of whom were well-steeped in the American notions of equality, would not tolerate such a policy.

Again, the letter writer's outrage was completely understandable, but the level of indignation expressed was also likely to have been rooted in the fact that educational opportunities had been so limited in Hawai'i to begin with, as evidenced by the findings in the *Survey of Education in Hawaii*. It is not hard to understand why the Hawaiian public school system came under investigation in 1920, and there can be no doubt that public education on the Hawaiian Islands was in a very sorry state when the federal survey was ordered. Theoretically, children between the ages of 6-15 had to attend school, but many stopped at the eighth grade as there were only four public high schools for all of Hawai'i's six main islands.¹⁸ Not only were there not enough schools to accommodate Hawai'i's children, there were no publically funded school busses to make the facilities that did exist accessible for children in rural and outlying areas. Again, these limitations were felt most acutely by children beyond the eighth grade level, and, as a result, only 1,193 students (about 2.4 percent of the total school population) were enrolled in Hawai'i's four public high schools in 1920.¹⁹ Likewise, children younger than six did not receive public education as kindergartens were seen as being

¹⁸ There are, of course, eight main islands in the Hawaiian Island chain. The two not included above are Kaho'olawe and Ni'ihau. Kaho'olawe. The islands that were included are: Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Hawai'i (commonly referred to as the Big Island), Molokai, and Lanai.

¹⁹ *Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 212.

unnecessary,²⁰ a view that the *Survey* would challenge.²¹ Aside from focusing on ways to increase enrollments, the architects of the *Survey* were particularly concerned with the level of Standard English spoken by teachers in Hawaiian schools. English was meant to be the language of instruction in all public schools, and, as was previously discussed, many teachers from the mainland were recruited to teach throughout the islands in an effort to ensure this. While there was a teacher training school in Honolulu, many of these teachers were not fluent in Pidgin-free English, which, of course, made teaching children Standard English and American ways problematic.²²

The recommendations made within the *Survey* concerning these various issues were taken to heart, and within ten years there were monumental changes made to the public school system of Hawai'i. By 1930, there were five new high schools and fifteen junior highs, and because there were simply more facilities available, the number of high school students in all ethnic groups had risen dramatically.²³ In addition to the increased number of schools and the impressive jump in enrollment, another important outcome of the recommendations made in the *Survey*, of course, was the establishment of the English Standard schools.

The oral examination administered to children seeking admission to an English Standard school was almost entirely focused on that child's

²⁰ For more information, please see: Hilda Lee Fo, "A History of the Development of Public Schools Kindergartens in Hawaii" (master's thesis, University of Hawaii, 1959).

²¹ Ibid., 70-75.

²² The issue of teacher education in Hawai'i is well documented in Robert E. Potter and Linda L. Logan, *A History of Teacher Education in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association, 1995).

²³ Stueber, 298.

pronunciation. (Though, obviously, not using English words at all would have been equally problematic.) While there could be some variation from school to school, examiners were encouraged to engage the children in casual conversation to start off the short examination. As specified in the example distributed by the Department of Public Instruction for the testing of first graders, examiners were meant to “disregard physical defects such as lisping and stammering.”²⁴ The children were then to identify objects while the examiners were instructed to, “note errors in “th” sound, lip movement, and word endings.”²⁵ As is problematic for many non-native English speakers, children often had trouble with the “th” sound. Likewise, examiners were also concerned with word endings, as it is quite common for Pidgin words to be abbreviated versions of English. Within a few minutes, children were rated as being either “excellent,” “satisfactory,” or “unsatisfactory,” and the examiner was free to make his or her recommendation as to whether the child should be admitted to an English Standard school (or classroom).

For many children, the process was merely a formality. Of the oral test to gain admission, a graduate of Roosevelt High School’s English Standard program shared:

I distinctly remember being shown a page of pictures which included a birthday cake and a spool of thread. If I said ‘birthday’ with the ‘th’ sound and the ‘thread’ with the ‘th’ sound, not the ‘t’ sound, I passed. It wasn’t stressful at all. My mother was an English teacher in a junior college, both my parents were grads of the UH and spoke proper English, even though they themselves grew up in Chinese speaking homes.²⁶

²⁴ Meller, 23.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ 1. 1960 Roosevelt High School graduate, email message to author, April 10, 2009.

For other children, though, there was a certain level of training and coaching, and individual craftiness employed to guarantee their admission. Hilo resident Craig Miyamoto's experience of being tested for admission to the Big Island's Riverside School is a particularly telling example. According to Miyamoto:

One day, mom began coaching me about my English. She told me I was going to talk to a lady at Riverside School, and that I should answer her questions in complete sentences. What actually was happening was that mom and dad were applying me for admission to the school...Ha ha. Fooled them. I not only spoke in complete sentences, I was absolutely brilliant!...I guess mom was nervous, but me, I didn't care, so of course, I got to go to Riverside.²⁷

For Miyamoto, and any number of other children, there was familial pressure to pass the oral exam and attend English Standard schools, and for some of these children, the process was a serious source of stress. University of Hawai'i English professor Marie Hara, in her short story "Fourth Grade Ukus," presented a story based on her own experience of failing the admissions exam. In the story, the protagonist, Lei, was taken by her mother to Lincoln School (formerly known as Central Grammar School, which was the first English Standard school in Hawai'i) to be tested for admission. Of little Lei's experience, Hara wrote:

The woman tester was young and Japanese and smiley. I relaxed, thought for sure I wouldn't have to act "put on" with her. But she kept after me to say the printed words on the picture cards that she, now unsmiling, held before my eyes.

"Da bolocano," I repeated politely at the cone-shaped mountain where a spiral of smoke signaled into the crayon-shaded air. She must have drawn it.

She shook her head. "Again."

"Da BO-LO-CA-NO" I repeated loudly. Maybe like O-Jiji with the stink ear on his left side, she couldn't hear. "We wen' go'n see da bolocano," I explained confidentially to her. And what a big flat *puka* it was, I thought, ready to tell her the picture made a clear mistake.

²⁷ Craig Miyamoto, email message to author, July 3, 2010.

“It’s the vol-cano,” she enunciated clearly, forcing me to watch her mouth move aggressively. She continued with downcast eyes. “We went to see the vol-cano.’ You can go wait outside, okay?”

Outside I wondered why—if she had seen it for real—she drew it all wrong.

Mama shrugged it off as we trudged home.

“Neva’ mind. Get too many stuck shet ladies ova dea. People no need act, Lei. You wait. You gon’ get one good education, not like me.”

That was how I ended up at Ka`ahumanu School which was a non-English Standard.²⁸

Hara’s recounting encapsulates the complexities of the relationship within the schools, and Hawaiian society in general during this period. While there can be no doubt that Lei’s mother had hoped that she would gain admission, when she did not, Lei’s mother articulated the commonly held notion that the English Standard schools were reserved for a higher class of people. But more telling is the fact that she consoles her daughter by letting her know that she will receive a good education either way. Indeed, as a child in post-*Survey* Territorial Hawai`i, it was her birthright.

In an interview, one 1958 Roosevelt graduate recounted his own preparation for the examination for admission to Honolulu’s Jefferson Elementary School. After some drilling and focus on pronunciation with his older sister, his parents, and grandparents, he was escorted by his sister to the school on the examination day. She waited outside the classroom, and told him later that her heart stopped when she overheard him use the Japanese word for scissors when he was given objects to identify. Despite his error, he was accepted into the English Standard system. When asked if he felt like his class was overwhelmingly haole, he clarified that because there

²⁸ Marie Hara, *Bananaheart and Other Stories* (Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1994), 48.

were ten haoles, eleven Japanese, two Chinese, and three Hawaiians, it certainly did not feel as though it was dominated by haole children. When his older sister attended Jefferson ten years earlier, though, she was only one of two Japanese children in attendance, so it was very clear that there had been a shift in the decade between the attendances of the two siblings.²⁹

Despite the fact that the English Standard schools became more multi-cultural as time went on, much of the public still, by and large, saw them as being tainted by an air of “snobbishness,” as charged by Superintendent Oren Long. Whether they were seen as being snobbish or not, for some students, the relative prestige of the English Standard schools was just what they needed to focus and work harder in school. One such student, Fred Belmont Medinas who graduated from Roosevelt in 1937, asserted that the eventual abolition of the English Standard schools was, “the worst thing the state ever did...In the non-Standard intermediate school, I had no incentive to study, but when I came to Roosevelt I had to struggle. Roosevelt was the way a little guy like me from the wrong side of the tracks learned to speak well. Also, the contacts I made have helped me all my life.”³⁰ So, while for some the English Standard schools were un-democratic and therefore un-American in their separation, for others, they offered students a chance to live out the American Dream: to climb above one’s station and enjoy the fruits of their labors.

For some students, it was the possible embarrassment of speaking Pidgin in front of classmates that helped them to always speak Standard

²⁹ 2. 1958 Roosevelt High School graduate, in discussion with the author, April 23, 2009.

³⁰ *Roosevelt High School: the Jubilee Book, 1930-1980*. (Honolulu: Roosevelt High School, 1981) 3.

English. Such was the experience of Hilo-native Henry Shigekane when he found himself in an English Standard classroom in the seventh grade.³¹ Although he felt like his English was not up to the level of his classmates, he was enrolled in English Standard classes. With the exception of the period immediately following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, when all Hawaiian public schools were shut down, Shigekane was schooled in this program, and every day he tried to improve his English. Although he'd always felt like the class outcast and that his English skills lagged behind those of his classmates, Shigekane was chosen to be the class president, a job that required him to speak in front of the class every morning. In his retelling of the experience of just how much his spoken English improved, he stressed, "I thought that was an amazing thing, and they really gave me the shove which no other thing or person could have done for me at that time---only the kids from that school."³²

In a 1991 interview with former Roosevelt High School English teacher Virginia McBride conducted by Joe Rossi for the Center for Oral History at the University of Hawai'i, McBride touched on a similar situation. While at the school in the 1930s and early 1940s, McBride required her students to write a short paper in which they identified the grade they believed they deserved for the class, and why. McBride reflected on a paper written by one Japanese student that really stood out to her. In it, the student asked for a C, though

³¹ It is worthy of note that because the haole population was so small, Hilo, the largest city on the Big Island, did not have a designated English Standard secondary or high school. Instead, they had English Standard classes within non-Standard schools.

³² "A Tribute to our Founders-Part 2," Damon, Key, Leong, Kupchak, Hastert: A Law Corporation, accessed April 23, 2009, http://www.hawaiilawyer.com/index.php.about/a_tribute_to_our_founders_-_part_2/.

she had never made a C before. McBride recounted the girl's reasoning thusly:

“...I've always had A's and B's. But a C at Roosevelt is better than an A at McKinley, because I can talk English all day here and nobody makes fun of me. When I was at McKinley, we talked English in the classroom, but when we went out everybody made fun of you if you tried to talk English then.” She said, “Now I can talk English in and out of school and nobody makes fun of me. I will be very happy if you give me a C.” And then, of course, I gave her a B...³³

But it was not the case that all students and their families within the English Standard program shared this disparaging view of Pidgin. In fact, many sought to cultivate both as the advantage of essentially being bilingual was obvious. Additionally, because Pidgin was a language of the people, it served to bind Hawaiians to one another in what many would feel was a more personal, authentic way than English. Famous Hawaiian singer Alfred Apaka graduated from the English Standard program at Roosevelt High in 1938. In a 1998 issue of *Hawai'i Magazine*, reporter John Berger said of him:

Of Chinese, Hawaiian and Portuguese descent...His family had ties to the monarchy, and his great aunt, Lydia Aholo, was a *hanai* daughter of Queen Liliuokalani...With the exception of two years spent on Molokai, Alfred Jr. grew up in Honolulu...Alfred, Sr. sent his son back from Molokai so Alfred, Jr. could attend Roosevelt and remain proficient in grammatical "standard" English as well as pidgin.³⁴

However concerned Apaka's father may have been about ensuring that his son did not lose his ability to speak Pidgin, it was generally English that parents sought to protect within the English Standard schools. Gaylord

³³ Virginia McBride, interview by Joe Rossi, *Public Education in Hawai'i Oral Histories*, vol. II (Honolulu: Center for Oral History, Social Science Research Institute. University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 1991), 346.

³⁴ John Berger, "The Magnetic Alfred Apaka," *Hawai'i Magazine*, October 1998, 23.

Kubota, former Kaunoa Grammar School student maintained that, from his point of view, the English Standard schools were not established as an attempt to stamp out Pidgin.³⁵ Instead, “They just wanted to preserve (proper English) among their own children.”³⁶ And there can be no question that it was useful to know both Standard English and Pidgin. On this point of the usefulness of being proficient in both, according to another former Kaunoa Grammar school student, Shirley Kodani Cavanaugh, in a 2007 *Honolulu Advertiser* article, “The parents wanted a better education. It wasn’t a put-down or anything. They were looking for something to teach their children proper English for a better quality of life.” Cavanaugh said. “We went home and spoke pidgin. We had the ability to go back and forth and be flexible.”³⁷ Likewise, one 1960 Roosevelt graduate, who had attended the Manoa School added:

English Standard schools weren’t separate schools in the elementary years necessarily. At Manoa School, where I went, in each grade there was one class of ES and one classroom of non-ES. So we didn’t have a separate school, and we all played together at recess. I had to learn pidgin in order to play dodge ball, a useful skill in later life...I was horrified to learn by listening that the second grade non-ES teacher didn’t speak standard English.³⁸

It is significant that even though it is clear that she valued knowing Pidgin, and recognized that it was a valuable tool for navigating life in Hawai`i, she was

³⁵ Kaunoa Grammar School was located in Spreckelsville, Maui.

³⁶ Christie Wilson, “My Communities,” *Honolulu Advertiser*. Print October 31, 2007. <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2007/Oct/31/In/hawaii710310383.html>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ 3. 1960 Roosevelt High School graduate, email message to author, April 16, 2009.

adamant that its use in the classroom was inappropriate. This would continue to be a conflict throughout the period.

But it was not always the case that a child's native language was something that they were particularly excited to abandon in favor of Standard English. Indeed, some students who went through the English Standard schools, would really come to lament the fact that they had lost some ability to speak Pidgin as a result of their schooling. One such former student, Jean Yamasaki Toyama, professor of French at the University of Hawai'i, articulated such a notion in a collection of short stories called, *Growing Up Local: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose from Hawai'i*.³⁹ Of her experiences at Roosevelt, the 1960 graduate stressed:

This may not mean anything today, but back then, Roosevelt was the Punahou of the public school system...Much effort was made drilling into us the finer points of this "foreign" language, and it was foreign to most of us because pidgin was likely the language spoken at home. For me this has been a mixed blessing. My English is a bookish kind...But this language is not exactly me, because my intimate, my family language was a mixture of peasant Hiroshima Japanese, pidgin, and an evolving English spoken by me and my sisters which we in turn were teaching to our parents. Since my separation from pidgin started in second grade—when my father decided to move us to a district with a English Standard feeding school—my pidgin today is limited.

Throughout my life I have been working on finding a language that is me. As a second grader I was told that the one I grew up with and spoke "naturally" was wrong, bad, and needed to be changed.⁴⁰

Given the outcry that accompanied the legislation that sought to control foreign language schools (which, as previously discussed, was largely aimed

³⁹ Eric Chock, James R. Harstad, Darrell H.Y. Lum, and Bill Teter, ed., *Growing Up Local: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose from Hawai'i*. (Honolulu, Bamboo Ridge Press, 1998).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 375.

at the Japanese language schools, in particular), it is clear that Toyama was not alone in her reluctance to turn her back on her heritage entirely. Again, it is quite telling that the two recommendations, the policing of the foreign language schools and the establishment of the English Standard schools, would evoke such different reactions. Ultimately, the reactions lend themselves to offering some understanding of the uniquely Hawaiian identity that arose in the period. In the case of the legislation that sought to mandate how the foreign language schools operated, proponents were met with immediate opposition, whereas the English Standard program was not.

In the case of the Japanese, in particular, the reaction against the legislation that sought to control the foreign language schools can be interpreted thusly: in an effort to live and be perceived as being both American and Hawaiian, Japanese, like so many other ethnic groups in Hawai'i in the period, were willing to abandon their native languages in favor of English in the public schools. And, as has been discussed, a child's mastery of Standard English was often a status symbol for parents and, indeed, the extended family. However, it was equally clear given the immediate outcry against the proposed legislation that sought to severely limit the reach of the foreign language schools, that Japanese families were keen to ensure that their children would have the opportunity to retain their traditional language, culture, traditions, and religion. So while there was undoubtedly a desire to become American and Hawaiian, it did not follow that these identities were to come at the cost of the abandonment of their ethnic heritage. In a sense, this is part of what makes identity in Hawai'i so rich even now. Just as the German language allows for comprehensive articulation by simply tacking on

more and more meaning and length to words in order to really capture the complexities of a thing, sense, or emotion, etc., Hawaiian identity does the same. So, in this case, as Japanese people in Hawai'i sought to add American and Hawaiian to the list of their own makeup, they made it clear that they were not willing to subtract their Japanese heritage. Many Hawaiians, then, in the period experienced a shift away from identifying solely with their ethnic identity, to a wider Hawaiian sense of self. The attack on Pidgin, though, was not nearly as galvanizing of a force. As articulated by Toyama, for some, it was a language that felt like home, and when it was vilified and/or its use forbidden, cognitive dissonance resulted.

This struggle identified by Toyama, this feeling of not belonging to any language as a result of being made to give up your mother tongue could also work to alienate children from their families and friends. One 1958 graduate of Honolulu's Roosevelt High said the following of his experience:

When we moved to the Kalihi area (I was 8) I was allowed to attend Kapalama Elementary (also English Standard) because I had come highly recommended from the previous grade school. I was the only one of about 15 cousins/neighbors to attend school in the English Standard system. In fact, I used to get beat up by my older cousins for "talking like a Haole". The street I grew up on had the record for the most teen delinquents in the entire state. We used to brag that the state prison was put in Kalihi so that relatives could walk to visit their family member who were incarcerated...⁴¹

On some level, this can be equated with the present-day phenomenon referred to as "acting white" that so often dissuades student success in the classroom. Likewise, though, this can work in reverse: his deliberate use of Pidgin can serve to shut out those in his life who do not know the language:

⁴¹ 4. 1958 Roosevelt High School graduate, in e-mail correspondence with author, April 11, 2009.

I still find it quite natural to slip into (as my wife says) “local” talk, whenever I am around anyone from Hawaii. My wife gets irritated because she can’t understand the foreign language (she’s a haole girl from Chicago) when we slip into Pidgeon English.⁴²

As is so often the case, Hawai`i’s schools in the period served the function of maintaining the stratification of societal classes, which was generally dictated by race and ethnicity. In the same way that children in non-English Standard classrooms knew the roles that they were encouraged to play within society upon the completion of their educations, so too did the primarily haole students who attended elite private schools, such as Punahou. Of their lot in life, according to two such students:

“What do we care about these vocational discussions?” one of them snapped. “Yes,” agreed another. And referring to the school attended mainly by Asian students, he added: “It’s all settled; we, the Punahou boys, will be the lunas [managers] and the McKinley fellows will carry the cane.”⁴³

In the middle, then, would be the English Standard graduates. Indeed, according to one 1960 Roosevelt graduate, “I guess we always compared ourselves with Punahou, the top private school, and of course, we didn’t measure up to them.”⁴⁴ In this way, the schools carried on the plantation-style stratification of society, but it could be argued that the English Standard schools, especially as they increasingly came to represent the multi-ethnic society, would be emblematic of the new possibilities, and indicative of a new route for Asian Americans in Hawai`i. Of course, there were many success

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 172.

⁴⁴ 5. 1960 Roosevelt High School graduate, e-mail message to author, April 10, 2009. It should be noted that the former graduate was careful to add, “But we did beat them in football.”

stories, particularly out of the very progressive programs at McKinley High, and it should not be assumed that the only road to success on the Islands began in English Standard classrooms, but it was the case that for many non-haole Hawaiians, it would be the only prestigious educational facility available to them. And while the American ideal of the underdog who made good was appealing to many, Hawaiians were not immune to the allure of pure prestige.

One of the most notable, and certainly the most effective, examples of resistance to the English Standard system was the protest at Ma`ema`e Elementary. The school, whose name means “clean and pure” in Hawaiian, was located in an old, established part of Honolulu known as the Nu`uanu Valley, which had later been settled by newly-arrived military families from the mainland as the Territory prepared for the possibility of war in the Pacific. In early September 1940, Ma`ema`e was slated to become an English Standard school, but on September 23rd many of the parents of the 162 children at the school who did not pass the oral examination for admission (a full seventy-five percent of the student body) protested the school’s new status.⁴⁵ For these parents, the fact that their children would be taken out of the neighborhood in order to go to school at nearby Kauluwela, Kawananakoa, Lanakila, or Pauoa School was totally unacceptable, especially in this period of increased tensions and threat of war.⁴⁶ A petition was generated and signed by Chinese, Japanese, haole, Hawaiian, and Portuguese parents. In short,

⁴⁵ *Ma`ema`e, Then and Now: a Commemorative Centennial Celebration, 1896-1996*. (Honolulu: Ma`ema`e School, 1996), 27.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

opposition was backed by a typical cross-section of Hawaiian society. In the petition, the parents stressed:

...any selective grouping of children according to their ability to speak and write the English language is unfair and entirely too prejudicial because it is the duty of your servants in these schools to train the young children in the manner of speaking and writing the English language correctly. This practice should be entirely removed or greatly modified.⁴⁷

Despite the initial protest, the transfers were made effective, and the children who had not passed the exam were made to attend other schools. In response, fifty parents kept their children home from the transfer schools in protest, starting on September 26th.⁴⁸ By October 1st, a compromise was made to provide a two-room annex on site for all first and second graders who did not pass the English Standard oral exam. All students above the second grade, though, who had not passed were to attend alternate, non-Standard schools. Protests and public hearings continued to be held throughout the school year until, finally, on April 30, 1941 it was decided that the children who had previously attended the school would be re-enrolled the following school year. Ultimately, then, it was the dedication of parents and their willingness to protest in front of the school and Iolani Palace, and their determination to ensure that all the children of their community were welcome at their local school, that forced Ma`ema`e to be restored to its former status.⁴⁹

Later that year, all aspects of life on the Islands changed after the attack on Pearl Harbor. As a precautionary measure, a little over ten

⁴⁷ "Senatorial Inquiry on Maemae is Planned," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (Honolulu), September 24, 1940.

⁴⁸ "Maemae Parents to Keep Children Home," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (Honolulu), September 26, 1940.

⁴⁹ Hughes, 78.

thousand women and children (most of whom were haoles) were voluntarily evacuated to the mainland.⁵⁰ In its 1947 report, the Department of Public Instruction uncovered that while there had been 4,024 haole children enrolled in English Standard programs throughout the Islands in the fall of 1941, that number plummeted to 1,261 by the end of 1942. Even after the war had ended, there were still less than half the number of enrolled haole children than there had been in 1941.⁵¹ What this meant, of course, was that spaces were effectively opened for non-haole, Pidgin-free children to compete for the newly vacated spaces within the English Standard schools. The war, then, played a pivotal role in changing and, ultimately, dismantling of the English Standard system. As has been shown, there had been concerns from the beginning that the system was unfair, fractural, and exclusionary, but after the war, despite the fact that non-haole children were able to secure more spots within them, the English Standard program struck an increasing numbers of people, even haoles, as being anathema to the Hawaiian way of life.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the schools (along with many other facilities and services) were closed. By February 1942, the schools were allowed to reopen and the general population tried to restore a sense of normalcy. For parents in the Manoa Valley whose children tested out of the local school and into the English Standard program at Lincoln Elementary, the thought of sending their children any further from

⁵⁰ Bailey and Farber, 12.

⁵¹ Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Instruction* (Honolulu: The Department of Public Instruction, 1947).

home than necessary was terrifying in that period of martial law.⁵² In an effort to keep their children close, the Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) of the Manoa School sought to become a truly neighborhood school, one that would include English Standard and non-Standard students under one roof.⁵³ In fact, the example set there, in the affluent Manoa Valley of Honolulu, would ultimately be quite influential in setting the tone for how and why the school system would eventually be dismantled. A compromise was reached for the remainder of the 1941-1942 school year when it was decided that Lincoln would establish an “annex” on the campus of the Manoa School, complete with its own acting principal, so that the English Standard students from that neighborhood would be able to stay closer to home. For the parents who encouraged this establishment of essentially two schools within one facility, the arrangement would allow for:

The feelings of neighborliness and the spirit of cooperation that come through association with youngsters of the same vicinity, the absence of snobbishness and self-consciousness among those who hold with ease their place in the English standard part of the school, and the incentive given to children whose native tongue is not English to achieve promotion to English standard groups.⁵⁴

Some brave and forward-thinking parents, though, wanted to see the arrangement pushed even further. Led by P.T.A. members Mrs. Harold St. John and Mrs. John William Devereux, parents came together to create a fully integrated school for their children on the Manoa School campus. Though not all parents were initially convinced that this so-called “neighborhood school”

⁵² It should be noted that martial law in Hawai'i did not come to an end until October 1944.

⁵³ Parent Teacher Association Historical Committee of Manoa School, *The History of Manoa School* (Honolulu: Manoa School, 1952).

⁵⁴ Ibid., as quoted on page 14.

could effectively bring together English Standard and non-Standard classes within one, fully integrated, school, it was agreed that such a school would be established for the 1942 school year, with Mrs. Lela Brewer acting as the principal. The program, initiated by women known only by their husbands' names, was such a success that when legislation was finally passed in 1949 to begin the process of dismantling the segregated system in favor of bringing all schools up to the level enjoyed in the English Standard schools, Manoa served as a working example of maintaining rigorous, challenging curriculum that sought to include all students.⁵⁵

Manoa School's example garnered attention and respect even before this final culmination, though. After years of debate as to the appropriateness of such a system, in 1945 the Territorial Legislature passed Act 126. It directed the Department of Public Instruction to "maintain the standards of English Standard schools already in existence and to establish as rapidly as possible, standard sections in all public school."⁵⁶ With this compromise, children would still be segregated, but they would no longer be in separate schools. Edgar M. Draper and Alice H. Hayden, of the University of Washington, were commissioned by the American Council of Education to undertake a survey of Hawai'i's public school system, and they published their findings in 1946 in a publication called, *Hawaiian Schools: A Curriculum Survey, 1944-1945*.⁵⁷ The examiners supported this call for the expansion of

⁵⁵ Ibid.,15.

⁵⁶ As quoted in Hughes, 78.

⁵⁷ Edgar M. Draper and Alice H. Hayden, *Hawaiian Schools: A Curriculum Survey, 1944-1945* (Washington: American Council on Education), 1946.

English Standard sections, with an eye on its eventual demise, when they wrote:

Adoption of this policy would eventually lead to the elimination of the dual-system. The combination of the two schools in one building, providing for segregation of classes according to language fluency, might stimulate more interest in language improvement on the part of the pupils throughout the territory.⁵⁸

As had been the case at Manoa School, though, there was a move to push change even further, and this idea of continuing to separate children was met with opposition.

From rather humble beginnings in Hilo in 1921, the Hawaii Education Association (HEA), a united group of teachers, most of whom were members of the Democratic Party, initiated the steps that would lead to the dismantling of the segregated school system. At their 1946 meeting, they called for the elimination of the English Standard schools by June 1950 on the basis that segregation was antithetical to democracy, and that the practice would actually further undermine English language fluency when they asserted that:

...it is desirable and necessary that children of all races study and play together, and whereas, segregation hinders the rapid growth of good speech, therefore: Be it resolved that the Hawaii Education Association in convention assembled go on record as favoring the re-establishment of a single standard school system and the elimination of the dual system...⁵⁹

By their meeting the next year, the Hawaii Education Association, supported by the Parent Teacher's Association and others, would come closer to making their demands a reality. In what would become the blueprint for the law that would mark the end of the segregated school system in Hawai'i, the Hawaii

⁵⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁹ Hawaii Education Association, *Proceedings of the Hawaii Education Association* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association, 1946), 22.

Education Association suggested a process of phasing out that would allow the children who were presently enrolled within the English Standard system to remain so until they graduated in 1960. By not admitting any new students in the interim, the segregated system would be allowed to phase out over time.⁶⁰ Both because of mounting pressure and the ever-present fears that such a system would appear undemocratic and that it could possibly hinder the move towards Statehood, on May 11, 1949, the Hawaii Education Association's proposal, in the form of Act 227, was signed into law by Governor Ingram Stainback.⁶¹ The act mandated that the Department of Public Instruction, "raise the standards of all public schools to the level of the English Standard system starting in September 1949, and to continue adjustments annually until all schools of the territory are raised to the level of the single standard system."⁶² And so, the system, which the Hawaiian people were never quite sure how to deal with, would begin its eleven-year process of dismantling.

For all the worry caused by the 1920 survey, by the time the segregated schools it essentially created were abolished, Hawai'i's schools had largely caught up with public education on the mainland. An investigation of students in the fourth, sixth, and eighth grades by the Department of Public Instruction was undertaken in 1959. It showed that students in the new state

⁶⁰ The details of the proposal can be found in the following document: Hawaii Education Association, *Proceedings of the Hawaii Education Association* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Association, 1947), 12.

⁶¹ Territory of Hawaii, *Session Laws, Act 227, Sec. 1-2* (Honolulu: Territory of Hawaii, 1949).

⁶² Ibid.

generally scored at higher levels in reading comprehension, arithmetic, and punctuation and spelling than children on the mainland. For example, the average total achievement score of a Hawaiian fourth grader was 4.3, whereas the average was 4.0 on the mainland. Likewise, sixth grade children also scored slightly higher at 6.5, and the eighth graders were right on par with the national average in total achievement. The only children to score below the national average were the eighth graders, who tested at the 7.6 and 7.8 grade-levels in reading comprehension and spelling.⁶³ The test scores make it clear that the years between 1920 and 1959 saw drastic improvements in the educational opportunities throughout the Islands, and because of these improvements it is equally clear that all Hawaiian children benefitted from the increased access to and quality of educational offerings.

For those who attended English Standard schools, it is often difficult to reconcile what they treasure as being wonderful years and a good education with the realities of the undemocratic motivations behind the founding of the schools. Upon reflection, some were clear that it was wrong to separate children in such a manner, but that they found it difficult to regret the opportunities they enjoyed as they so clearly benefitted from them.⁶⁴ Others, including one 1958 Roosevelt graduate, bristled at the use of the word “segregated” to describe Hawaiian schools in the period.⁶⁵ Like other haole transplants, her mother investigated the educational opportunities available to

⁶³ The Department of Public Instruction, *Annual Report of the Department of Public Instruction* (Honolulu: Department of Public Instruction, 1958-1959).

⁶⁴ 6. 1958 Roosevelt High School graduate, in discussion with the author, April 23, 2009.

⁶⁵ 7. 1958 Roosevelt High School graduate, e-mail message to the author, April 10, 2009.

her five children when they arrived from California in 1955. According to the 1958 graduate, “to say that it was set up to ‘segregate’ the students is a falsehood. We being Haole (as whites were called in Hawaii) were a definite minority.” Again, of course the schools were segregated, but the way that it played out was very, very different from the segregated schools of the mainland. Another 1958 Roosevelt graduate recognized that, “in retrospect, the ES system was okay at the time, but did seemingly have the effect of creating a two-class societal structure...a structure that is essentially sustained in Hawaii today in the divisions created by public schools versus private school distinctions.⁶⁶ Still, many loved these schools and have complicated relationships with the fact that they were segregated.

As has been shown, Hawai'i had an ambivalent relationship with these schools from the start. While they were created at the urging of haole parents, it was not long before opportunity and status-seeking parents of all ethnicities clamored to ensure the admission of their children. And others still, while perhaps troubled by the undemocratic nature of them, truly believed that they offered their children the best opportunities, and so, likewise, were anxious to ensure that their children secured a spot. While there were instances of protest, by and large, the response was fairly anemic, especially as compared to the outcry that accompanied the proposal of the regulation of the foreign language schools. And although the segregated system was theoretically banned in the late-1940s, it was allowed to continue until 1960 for the children who had been admitted. Again, this was a strange response;

⁶⁶ 8. 1958 Roosevelt High School graduate, e-mail message to the author, April 18, 2009.

while the system was ruled to be unfair, and a plan was put in to place to phase it out, the fact that it was allowed to phase out over such a long period instead of just being abolished shows that many Hawaiians were still conflicted, and that the relative prestige the schools offered was often enough to override the sense that these schools were terribly undemocratic.

Chapter Six

Segregated Education in the Pacific's Microcosm of America

This is the promise of Hawaii, a promise for the entire nation, and indeed, the world, that people of different races and creeds can live together, enriching each other, in harmony and democracy.¹

This chapter examines Hawai'i as a microcosm of American ideals, expectations, and experiences through the less familiar lens of the experiences of schoolchildren. More specifically, it is concerned with the fact that while Hawaiian schools in the period sought to create better citizens, they did so by encouraging separation. The fact that the last remnants of the state-sanctioned segregated public school system remained until they were finally entirely dismantled in 1960 with little or no fanfare is indicative of the ambivalence many felt about separation within the schools. So, it appears that Hawai'i was a microcosm in the period, but not a microcosm of our ideals, of what we would wish for ourselves, but a microcosm of what we actually were in many cases--divided. Further, examination of the development of education in Hawai'i offers a unique perspective and opportunity to understand the ways that the Islands both influenced and were influenced by the mainland, and the process of becoming fully American while still retaining the distinctive sense of Hawaiianness that sets the Islands apart.

The notion that Hawai'i has functioned as an incubator for racial toleration and cooperation--two largely unmet ideals throughout U.S. history--as a result of the establishment of a plantation economy after Contact in 1778 is an accurate one. Residents of the 50th state are popularly believed to live

¹ Fuchs, 449.

in a sort of utopia at least in part because of the relative ease with which its people, who since the mid-to-late 1800s have come together from such far-flung regions as Polynesia, China, Japan, Portugal, and the mainland United States, among others, have created a dynamic and entirely new culture. Given its audaciously beautiful location and topography, it is not hard to imagine why Hawai`i made its way into American hearts and minds. What made it even more compelling, though, was its potential for the mainland, both because of its strategic location and because of the potential for cash crops. Both of these incentives would ensure that it would be to the mainland's benefit to nurture its interests there, and influencing the way education was carried out, of course, was one important way to exercise control.

Interestingly, what was happening in Hawai`i in the period under examination often mirrored the struggles and changes experienced on the mainland in its process of Americanizing its multicultural population, but in a much smaller place and in a much shorter period of time. In many important ways, though, Hawai`i did not just mirror the process undergone on the mainland, it also replicated many of the same patterns experienced in other colonized places farther afield. Indeed, the Americanization process undergone in Hawai`i was a familiar one: a cycle of dependence was created by convincing native peoples (whether new or established) of the inferiority of their own culture, languages, and norms, while appealing to them with the promise of the possibility of inclusion into the dominant culture (of the United States, in this case). Of course, the situation was more complicated in Hawai`i because of the new hybrid culture that was created in the period. The sense of Hawaiianness that developed made this seemingly age-old pattern more

complicated because many simultaneously felt pride for what had been created, but also desired to aspire to the American way of life. And, of course, one of the clearest examples of this conflict was the fact that a strong, unified resistance to the English Standard system did not materialize.

Indeed, it was certainly no accident that public education on the Islands followed patterns set on the mainland. The plan for Hawai'i, and its lucrative plantations, was that it would be officially brought into the fold of the United States. And because this was true, its students were routinely trained and prepped for American citizenship. According to Benjamin Wist in his 1940 publication, *A Century of Public Education in Hawaii*:

Public education in Hawaii therefore takes on the responsibility of preparation for statehood with the duties and privileges entitled in full American citizenship...As a result public education in Hawaii has not been developed in terms of purely local needs and purposes, but, in a large measure, in terms of American democracy.²

It could be argued, of course, that Wist's assessment was overly optimistic. It would have been more accurate to charge that the public schools system of Hawai'i had been devised around the tenets of American capitalism, not democracy. Still, regardless of motivation, it is clear that the Islands were crafted as a microcosm of the trends and practices on the mainland. The faces, of course, were different--nowhere on the mainland was as diverse. So, in this way, one could argue that the Hawaiian Islands were, in a sense, an experiment--a training ground, in a sense, for just how multicultural the mainland would become.

But it was not the case that Hawai'i was just to be used for nefarious purposes--the mainland was truly enamored with it. As previously discussed

² Wist, 140.

in chapter one, for many Americans in the late nineteenth century, Hawai`i represented a return to the “paradise” that had been lost in modern, industrial life. In his study of the period, *No Place of Grace*, author T.J. Jackson Lears asserted that many Americans in the period, “...longed for intense experiences to give them some definition, some distinct outline and substance to their vaporous lives.”³ For such Americans, influential cultural critic Edward Said maintained that they were attracted by, “...far-flung and sometimes unknown spaces, with eccentric or unacceptable human beings, with fortune-enhancing or fantasized activities like emigration, money-making, and sexual adventure.”⁴ And, of course, various authors also fell under this spell; indeed, the writings of Mark Twain, Herman Melville, Jack London, and James Michener went a long way in furthering the mystique of the Hawaiian Islands in the minds of mainland Americans and beyond. According to authors Arrel Gibson and John Whitehead, these authors, “...maintained a firm hold on the American mind and continued to draw Americans into the South Seas.”⁵ And, predictably, this draw only intensified with the rise of tourism after World War II. Of course, this desire for the Islands on the part of the mainland affected how Hawaiians viewed themselves and how political, social, and economic institutions functioned, and it obviously affected how schools functioned.

³ T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 32.

⁴ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 64.

⁵ Arrel Gibson and John Whitehead, *Yankees in Paradise* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 379.

Indeed, the schools would take a primary role in the massive changes experienced on the Islands from the point of Contact to Statehood in 1959. In 1957, a group of educators at Stanford University asserted that, “not many other places in the world have changed culturally so smoothly and so completely as have the Hawaiian Islands.”⁶ As they point out, Hawai`i moved from being an entirely Polynesian and monarchical society to part of a democracy. Similarly, in a very short period, they made the jump from a pre-industrial economy to a plantation economy, run by haoles. According to the group of educators, “The Islands of today are an international culture of an order that seems now ready and waiting for the world of tomorrow. Undoubtedly the schools play a most important part in this transition.”⁷ Indeed, from the Christian missionaries who sought to educate the hearts and minds of Natives in the early-to-mid nineteenth century, to the various Americanization projects that followed them, education was at the forefront of the changes Hawai`i experienced in the period.

In considering how Hawai`i came to follow U.S. trends and the role it often played in creating them, it is important to recognize that the course of Hawaiian history was framed by the United States’ foray into imperialism, and because this was true, schooling there would hold the marks of a history of conquest and racial subjugation. The illegal annexation of Hawai`i, which had previously been a fully independent nation, violated the principles of sovereignty. As a result of these ill-gotten gains, the schooling that then developed there, whether public or private, was rather schizophrenic in

⁶ William R. Odell et al., *Organization and Administration of the Public Schools, Territory of Hawaii* (Palo Alto: Stanford University, 1957), 74.

⁷ Ibid.

nature. While espousing the ideals of American values, freedom, and democracy, the schools and their curriculum were haunted in a sense by the specter of what came before them, namely the forced annexation of 1898 and prevalence of highly questionable business practices. For how ever many ways the Islands can be seen as a microcosm of the realities and ideals on the mainland, its road to statehood was singularly unique. Indeed, as the Western hemisphere's last monarchy, its path was a decidedly Hawaiian experience.

Just as Hawaiian history is very illustrative of how disparate groups of people can come together to form a very functional, hybrid culture, Hawai'i's experiences according to historian Robert E. Potter, "provide a laboratory for testing the hypothesis that schooling is a major force in the socialization and acculturation of people."⁸ In the case of the Islands, it would not only be a student's native culture that would have to come under attack, but also the collective sense of Hawaiianness that had developed and the Pidgin that marked its adherents, whose influence had to be mitigated in order for Hawai'i's children to be fully Americanized. This process would be a long and complicated one, and the lessons learned on the Islands would often influence life on the mainland. And because that was true, it becomes clear that Hawai'i was not just a far-flung possession of the United States, but an integral part of life on the mainland.

American norms and beliefs had influenced education on the Hawaiian Islands since the missionaries arrived in 1820. Those missionaries, who were influenced by the pedagogical trends on the mainland, saw to it that the

⁸ Robert E. Potter, "Hawaii Can Close Gaps in Historical Research," *Educational Perspectives* 2 (March 1963): 9.

majority of the Hawaiian population was literate by 1831.⁹ An obvious first step in this endeavor was for the missionaries to learn Hawaiian, give it a written form, and then print textbooks in Hawaiian. They established and utilized a small press, and published the first material in Hawaiian in 1822. By March 1830, nearly 387,000 copies of various publications had been disseminated throughout the Islands.¹⁰ By 1840, education in Hawai`i had been centralized, and the missionary schools system was then replaced by the government-organized and supported “common schools.” Because the Hawaiian public school system was established only three years after a similar system was created in Massachusetts by Horace Mann and his contemporaries, it is quite clear that in this case the trends of the mainland dictated the realities of life on the Islands, and, as such, the schools were meant to be places where children of all economic backgrounds could be molded into responsible citizens. One important way that the system on the Islands differed from the mainland, though, was that the minister of education, who would have the final say in all policy decisions, was to be appointed by the monarch. There can be no doubt that Hawai`i’s schools and their meetings and functions took on a decidedly local flavor in other ways, as well. Clearly taken by how the spectacle differed from what one might have encountered on the mainland in the period, Reverend Reuben Tinker wrote the following in his journal after attending a quarterly examination of the schools:

⁹ Kuykendall, 109.

¹⁰ “Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,” (Honolulu: Mission Press, 1831): 51.

The shell horn blowing early for examination of the schools, in the meeting house. About 2000 scholars present, some wrapped in large quantity of native cloth, with wreaths of evergreen about their heads and hanging toward their feet-- others dressed in calico and silk with large necklaces of braided hair and wreaths of red and yellow and green feathers very beautiful and expensive.¹¹

And so while the practices employed within it would mirror those used on the mainland, education in Hawai`i would have its own unique contributions to add to the enterprise.

The late 19th century saw a rapid acceleration of American interest in the Hawaiian Islands. As a result of the increasing financial possibilities there, American business leaders, backed by American forces, would see to the toppling of the monarchy starting in 1894 with the establishment of the Republic of Hawai`i, with the forced abdication of Hawai`i's last queen, Lili`uokalani, in 1895, and, finally, its official annexation in 1898. In between those major events, the 1896 Laws of the Republic of Hawai`i made English the legal medium of instruction by mandating that, "any school that shall not conform to the provisions of this Section shall not be recognized by the Department."¹² The role played by American-influenced educational policy in the eventual annexation is unclear. Historian Benjamin Wist, in a view shared by many, stressed that:

The extent to which public education played a part in the events leading up to this climax will, of course, never be precisely known. That it was an influential factor can readily be inferred. Public education was a foster child of the American missionaries; and its growing success only increased the efforts of the opponents of Americanism in Hawaii. Public education had contributed to the general adoption of the English language

¹¹ quoted in Kuykendall, 108-9.

¹² Laws of the Republic of Hawaii, Act 57, sec. 30, 1896.

in the Islands—a factor of some significance in the American decision favoring annexation.¹³

Beyond the language of instruction, the educational system of Hawai`i would come to resemble what existed on the mainland in that the 1896 laws also sought to ensure a separation of church and state by mandating that clergymen could not be appointed to the Board of Education. Most importantly for the children of Hawai`i, free public education became universal in 1899.¹⁴ So, by annexation in 1898, Hawai`i's public schools already mirrored many important features of their mainland counterparts. This fact, of course, was not lost on the framers of the 1890 Organic Act, which was to provide the blueprint for the governing of the new territory of Hawai`i. Indeed, the commission in charge of making educational policy recommendations to Congress asserted the following:

The school system and its methods are peculiarly American...The present public school system in the Hawaiian Islands is such an admirable one that improvements in the system can only wisely be made as the Territory expands in population and intellectual growth.¹⁵

Beyond that, in the report, it was stressed that a well-functioning public school system in Hawai`i could be nothing but wholly beneficial for the United States. As the authors put it, by requiring attendance and making English the universal language, the schools would serve to, “break up the racial

¹³ Wist, 123.

¹⁴ Benjamin O. Wist, “American Foundations of Public Education in Hawaii: the Socio-economic Factors Which Were Influential in the Shaping of an American Public School System in Hawaii, 1820-1900” (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1937), 314.

¹⁵ “The Report of the Hawaiian Commission Appointed in Pursuance of the Joint Resolution for Annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States,” 1889, 132-133.

antagonisms otherwise certain to increase and to unite in the schoolroom the children of the Anglo-Saxons, the Hawaiians, the Latins, and the Mongolians in the rivalry for obtaining an education.”¹⁶ Further, they asserted that, “no system could be adopted which would tend to Americanize the people more thoroughly than this.”¹⁷

This period, marked by the shift from monarchy to Republic to Territory, and, later, anticipation of Statehood, also saw the acceleration of the development of Hawai`i’s main industries, including: sugar, pineapple, the military, and tourism. And with this acceleration came increased populations, and, particularly with the growth of the military and tourism, the demographic shift from rural to an increasingly urban population. In addition to the numbers making the switch from country to city, the period also saw the continued immigration of laborers and their families from around the globe. To illustrate the shift and what it meant for the public schools, it should be noted that in 1900, nearly 49 percent of public school children were of Hawaiian descent, while 39 percent were Caucasian, and a mere 17 percent identified as Asian. By 1930, though, only 14 percent of enrolled students were Hawaiian, 12 percent were Caucasian, while Asians comprised a startling 69 percent.¹⁸ Put another way, from the arrival of the first Asians, 816 Chinese in 1869, to be exact, their numbers skyrocketed to an impressive 109,274 Japanese; 23,507

¹⁶ Ibid., 136.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Wist,, *A Century of Public Education*, 144.

Chinese; 4,950 Koreans; and 21,021 Filipinos by 1920.¹⁹ These growing numbers made it clear, as had been the case on the mainland, that this important pool of potential voters would need to be tapped, and an important first step would be their systematic Americanization and the infusion of patriotic ideas. Perhaps most importantly, a strong sense of civic duty would be imparted.

It could be argued, as author Solomon A. Leiomalama does in his 1980 dissertation, "Cross-Cultural Conflicts Between Public Education and Traditional Hawaiian Values," that "public education in Hawaii, both past and present, has developed in accordance with the needs of American business interests."²⁰ Indeed, a quick examination of the development of educational opportunities on the Islands makes clear the fact that every aspect of it had been steeped in the tenets of Americanism from the start. Between the missionaries' introduction of teaching methods and traditions brought from New England, and their eventual domination of political and economic life, Hawaiians would soon be brought into the fold of American life. Again, according to Leiomalama, "throughout this entire period, public education was designed to meet the needs of Americanization and to aggrandize the industrial-agricultural objectives of the plantation system."²¹ And those objectives would dictate that vocational education play a large role in the

¹⁹ Maenette Kape`ahiokalani Padeken Benham "The Voice'less': Hawaiian: An Analysis of Educational Policymaking, 1820-1960" *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 32 (1998), 130.

²⁰ Solomon A. Leiomalama, "Cross-Cultural Conflicts Between Public Education and Traditional Hawaiian Values" (PhD dissertation, Oregon State University, 1980), 61-62.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 62.

marginalization of Hawaiian culture, the streamlining of ambitions and likely outcomes for Hawaiians (whether Native, or not), and would served to encourage American racial hierarchy. In this regard, there existed striking parallels between vocational education practices that existed on the mainland aimed at African Americans and Native Americans, in particular, and those in Hawai`i. Indeed, the parallels were no accident--the systems put in place on the Islands would be extraordinarily influential on the mainland, and vice versa. This would be particularly true at the Hampton Institute of Virginia, which was designed to offer vocational training and “uplift” to both African Americans and Native Americans.

As previously discussed in chapter two, Hawai`i’s Kamehameha Schools were deeply committed to industrial education for Native Hawaiians and they actually used the program at the Hampton Institute as their model. According to author Derek Taira:

By emphasizing a “practical” industrial education designed to “uplift” Hawaiians by training them in manual skills, the faculty demonstrated their adherence to the racial hierarchy of American society that relegated colored Americans to second-class citizenship. Through their manual education courses, the faculty demonstrated their prejudice towards the “limited” intellectual capabilities of Hawaiians by determining the occupational futures for their students.²²

These, of course, were the same limited and regimented futures that awaited countless African and Native American children.

The Kamehameha School for Boys opened in 1887. In an effort to find a workable model to emulate on the Islands, Rev. William Brewster Oleson was sent to the mainland to study the Hampton Institute. What Oleson found

²² Taira, 4.

there would inspire the framework for the Kamehameha Schools.

Additionally, Taira asserts that:

Oleson not only brought back from Hampton an institutional framework for Kamehameha to mirror, he also brought back with him America's paternalistic and benevolent imperialistic attitudes towards "the other."²³

In some ways, this was not an entirely accurate assessment. Hawai`i suffered no lack of paternalism and/or imperialistic attitudes, whether benevolent or otherwise. It should also be noted that the tie between the two institutions goes much further back. The founder of the Hampton Institute, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, was the child of American missionaries to Hawai`i. As Minister of Public Instruction from 1832 until his death in 1860, his father, Richard Armstrong, spent a great deal of time in the schools throughout the Islands, but harbored caustic attitudes about the students and, indeed, Hawaiians as a whole. In fact, according to his father, "...king [Kamehameha III] himself is as near to being an animal as man can well be [and] most of the high chiefs are ignorant, lazy, and stupid."²⁴ His view of common Hawaiians was that they were, "...a lazy people [and] if they are ever to be made industrious the work must begin with the young."²⁵ He asserted that it was necessary that, "...some sort of manual labor [was] connected to every school...[because] without industry they cannot be moral."²⁶ With such a father, it should be no surprise that little Samuel would grow into a man

²³ Taira, 75.

²⁴ Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 2.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

guided by notions of paternalism and white grandeur. It was these notions, of course, that dictated his educational philosophy and that the Hampton Institute was based upon.²⁷

The connection, of course, was not accidental. According to Armstrong, “the negro and the Polynesian have many striking similarities.” In support, he offered that, “of both it is true that not mere ignorance, but deficiency of character is the chief difficulty, and that to build up character is the true objective point in education.” In both cases, the solution was to be a focus on manual labor because, “morality and industry generally go together. Especially in the weak tropical races, idleness, like ignorance, breeds vice.”²⁸ What is significant here, in the case of Native Hawaiians in particular, is the shift from the earlier trend in education on the Islands of focusing on literacy and decidedly less academic pursuits. It is quite clear that as industries grew on the Islands, there developed more concerted efforts to make use of the local population, and this would manifest in the schools by way of focus on manual labor and efforts at Americanization. And in a very illustrative example of the deep connection Hawai`i had to the mainland well before Statehood, even at the time Armstrong recognized that, “an idea transplanted from the Pacific Ocean has flourished wonderfully in old Virginia.”²⁹ Tuskegee Institute founder and industrial education supporter, Booker T. Washington was undoubtedly the Hampton Institute’s most famous graduate. Of Armstrong, he asserted:

²⁷ Ibid., 3.

²⁸ As quoted in Gary Okihiro, *Island World: A History of Hawai`i and the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 114.

²⁹ Ibid., 116.

My race in this country can never cease to be grateful to General Armstrong for all that he did for my people and for American civilization. We always felt that many of the ideas and much of the inspiration he used to such good effect in this country, he got in Hawaii.³⁰

And, so, it is clear that influence and inspiration moved back and forth across the Pacific. Facilities such as the Hampton Institute and the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, established in 1879, aimed to create worthwhile Americans from what would have been seen as the unlikeliest of material. Likewise, the Kamehameha Schools sought to assimilate and Americanize students by teaching them English, and American-style morality and virtues. According to Kamehameha Schools president from 1923-1934, Frank Elbert Midkiff, they sought to do this by way of:

...a well-balanced selection of...vocational training; useful science and mathematics; health education, including habits of recreation; English, including habits of extensive reading, concise writing, and effective speaking; and citizenship problems...and a functioning respect for the institutions and constructive customs of our nation, including attractive homes, and happy families...³¹

The aim of the schools was to develop "...a well-rounded member of society."³² This, too, was the goal of Hawai`i's public schools.

The 1920 *Survey of Education in Hawaii* was deeply concerned with not only expanding academic opportunities; it was, likewise, focused on expanding industrial skills, and lessening the stigma attached to them. On this point, the architects argued:

³⁰ Ibid., 117.

³¹ Frank E. Midkiff, "Discussion of the Educational Policies of Kamehameha Schools as Adopted by the Trustees April 6, 1920, with Amendments to January 1925" (Honolulu: Kamehameha School Archives, 1925).

³² Ibid.

Men who work in occupations deemed unworthy, and who do so only because driven to it by the biting lash of necessity, are in reality not free men. They work in the spirit of the slave. There is no place in America for such, and it is as much the business of education to teach men this as it is to make them literate.³³

Likewise, they asserted that:

Children in Hawaii should realize there is service in cutting cane just as in other jobs. Reciprocally, they should likewise recognize that they have a right to follow such occupations under fit and tolerable conditions and to receive as a tangible reward for service rendered a wage that is more than an existence wage...in fact, that it should be a cultural wage, one which may be defined as a wage which not only brings relief from worry but provides a margin sufficient for recreation, self-improvement, spiritual uplift.³⁴

As enlightened as this sentiment was, of course, these were not the kind of labor conditions that the Territory of Hawai'i was willing to ensure for all at that point. And in this sense, like the promise of the American Dream on the mainland, it would not always be easy to achieve just by hard work and determination.

The 1920s on the mainland were defined by fundamental conflicts that marked the period (the many manifestations of the struggle between modernity versus tradition, and religion versus science, for example), and the Islands also saw similar struggles. Exacerbating these tensions was the influx of foreigners, whose mere presence was often perceived as being a threat to the further development of the American way of life. The reaction on the mainland, to limit the arrival of non-Western and Northern European populations, came in the form of the passing of the Immigration Act of 1924, which effectively ended the immigration of Asians to the Islands. Beyond this

³³ *A Survey of Education in Hawaii*, 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

legislation, the most obvious example of how these tensions played out on the Islands were the various English Standard schools, which aimed to offer refuge for Standard English-speakers from the corrupting influence of Pidgin-speaking children. As has been previously discussed in regard to the widespread opposition to and action against the proposed legislation aimed at monitoring and controlling the foreign language schools, and, to a much lesser degree, the various protests against the English Standard schools, the 1920s and 1930s would prove to be a dynamic period on the Islands.

Politically, one result of the nationwide turn towards the Democratic Party in 1933 with the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the increasing popularity of the party on the Islands. For many, this would usher in not only a period of increased identity with the mainland, but also a period of clearer focus on desires and expectations for Hawai`i. On this point, one public school teacher of Japanese descent remarked:

I identified myself as a Democrat--I was enamored of FDR and his idealism. I tried to point out to my students some of the inequities in the Hawaiian society--the political, economic, and social structure was so controlled by a small group that I felt that the American dream of a free, democratic society was the thing we should try to achieve in Hawai`i.³⁵

And, of course, the existence of a segregated school system was not an appropriate feature of such a society, whether on the mainland or the Islands. Still, Hawai`i's segregated school system stands as a much more cautious and subdued response to the perceived threat of non-white, non-Standard English speaking peoples. When compared to the virulent racism and strictly segregated schools of the American South, for example, Hawai`i's English

³⁵ As quoted in Bell, 104.

Standard schools seem far less menacing. And, of course, they were. In other ways, too, the system of segregation employed in Hawai`i in the period stood in sharp contrast to others employed on the mainland. First, according to the Hawai`i Legislative Reference Bureau in 1941, the Territory was alone in its practice of sequestering Standard English speaking students from non-Standard English speaking children.³⁶ The investigation, which focused on states with large populations of non-English speakers, found that while a number of school districts had established separate classrooms for such children, Hawai`i was alone in maintaining separate schools for them.³⁷ Indeed, the notion that guided the move--that English could somehow be threatened by speakers of other languages--was unique to the Islands. Instead, the focus in the mainland classrooms was to get all children's English skills up to speed as quickly as possible via remedial education, not to protect Standard English.³⁸

Similar to the realities on the mainland, though, was the fact that the Island's public schools often satisfied conflicting goals in society. In the starkest, most simplistic terms possible: capitalists, including plantation owners and other businessmen, sought to protect their interests and money-making capabilities by seeing to it that young people be equipped with the skills needed to be successful employees and little more. In contrast, laborers, their children, and some school officials sought to make progressive and democratic changes to the system. The English Standard schools, it

³⁶ Territory of Hawaii, Legislative Reference Bureau, *Hawaii's English Standard Schools*, Report 3-48 (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i, 1948), 4-19.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

could be argued, were caught between these two competing forces. On one hand, they were created to appease haole parents, who presumably stood little to gain from the long-term education of Asian American children and teens. In fact, the prospect could be a rather costly one. Still, with the findings of the 1920 *Survey* and the resulting focus on creating more schools and opportunities for Hawai`i's children, children of all backgrounds entered the schools at a rate previously unknown on the Islands.

Ironically, these institutions gave children in Hawai`i some very concrete experience in how to apply the tenets of Americanism in their everyday lives. As a result, according to one prospective University of Hawai`i student at the time, "the public school system perhaps without realizing it...created unrest and disorganization."³⁹ Armed with a sense of civic duty and steeped in the ideals of democracy, these students would embrace the opportunities the newly expanded educational system on the Islands had to offer. Indeed, this collision of changing expectations and the continued force of Americanization on the Islands would work together to ensure that it would be impossible for these children to live the same kinds of lives as their parents. No longer would they accept working in the fields for low wages, and, because this was true, they were active consumers of every educational opportunity that came their way, whether that meant simply attending school because there was the possibility to do so, or through dedicated efforts to gain admission in an English Standard school.

³⁹ Quoted in Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), 265.

But it was not just education that seemed to offer a direct route to the coveted American Dream. The impressive degree of loyalty displayed by Hawaiians during wartime is indicative of just how willing many were to show their allegiance to the United States, and just how much they were willing to sacrifice even before Statehood. Though not yet a state during WWI, Hawai'i was, "subject to all taxes and other general obligations imposed upon the states."⁴⁰ In addition to financial support, approximately 9,600 Islanders either volunteered or were inducted into the various branches of the armed forces. And despite often disparaging and certainly racist sentiments expressed by the press in which the loyalty of those of Japanese descent, in particular, was questioned, it was this very population, the Nisei, or second generation Japanese, who would adamantly assert their unwavering loyalty. The real test, of course, would come with the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Just as on the mainland, the attack galvanized widespread support, and the Japanese on the Islands were certainly no different. Their experiences on the Islands, however, were different from the experiences of Japanese Americans on the mainland. Because the industries on the Islands would have suffered dramatically, the Japanese were spared large-scale internment. Given that their numbers were so great on the Islands, it could be argued that it would have been impossible to vilify them to the degree necessary to allow non-Japanese Hawaiians to accept their wholesale

⁴⁰ Ralph S. Kuykendall and A. Grove Day, *Hawaii: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State* (New York: Prentiss Hall, 1961), 218.

imprisonment. Instead, the Second World War offered great opportunities for the Japanese in Hawai'i to prove their loyalty.⁴¹

Their dedication was made very evident by their sacrifices on the battlefields. The 100th Infantry Battalion, or the "Purple Heart Battalion," which was comprised of over 1,400 Nisei, fought with admirable ferocity, despite the bigotry and discrimination they had been shown on the mainland during their training.⁴² Likewise, the men of the 442nd Regimental Combat team,⁴³ which was made up of Japanese Americans from both the mainland and Hawai'i, were awarded more medals than any other army unit in the war.⁴⁴ Their dedication and determination to show that they were worthy Americans, of course, did not stop there. Six months into the Korean War in 1950, on December 14th, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* reported that there were 14,307 troops from Hawai'i compared to 2,200,000 soldiers from the mainland. While this might not seem like a striking number, the paper went on to clarify that the numbers of troops from Hawai'i represented 2.9 percent of the population on the Islands, which was, "better than twice the rate of the nation as a whole." Like African Americans and Native Americans on the mainland, these wars would offer the opportunity to demonstrate one's dedication and the United

⁴¹ As previously mentioned, in the chapter entitled, "The Push Toward Americanization," abandoning the Japanese language schools would be one very concrete way of displaying ones dedication to the U.S., its culture, and its language.

⁴² "Welcome." *100th Infantry Battalion Veterans Education Center*, August 23, 2012, <http://www.100thbattalion.org/>.

⁴³ The two, the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, were combined in 1944.

⁴⁴ "442nd Regimental Combat Team." *Go for Broke National Education Center*, August 23, 2012, http://www.goforbroke.org/history/history_historical_veterans_442nd.asp.

States, with the obvious hope that respect and equality would be their reward. In the case of Hawaiians, as with other marginalized groups, it was clear that as they made their way within American society, they were very eager to make their contributions.

But the young men of Hawai`i were not the only group on the Islands to be deeply effected by World War II. Historians Beth Bailey and David Farber's study, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawai`i*, is concerned with the huge influx of nearly a million servicemen and war workers in Hawai`i after the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.⁴⁵ Through a number of oral history interviews, the authors expose the servicemen's movie-created expectations of Hawai`i versus the less glamorous reality they found there, particularly in the seedy parts of Honolulu, which were dominated by servicemen and prostitutes. The authors argue that by housing nearly a million U.S. servicemen and women (although it should be noted that the vast majority were men), Hawai`i wound up serving as a sort of training ground where Americans from the mainland would sort through issues of race and sexuality, which, of course, necessitated the abandonment of preconceived notions and stereotypes. So while Hawai`i was "the first strange place" for nearly a million Americans leaving home for the first time, it likewise served as a "strange place" where a new American society began to be forged. But that society was not without serious growing pains, as is evidenced by the existence of the segregated school system there.

Hawai`i, by virtue of its racial and ethnic diversity, was a significant setting for such a project because, according to Bailey and Farber, it was a

⁴⁵ Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawai`i* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

place where “whiteness’ was not the natural condition.”⁴⁶ The influx of (predominately white) war workers changed the existing boundaries of race and class forever in Hawai`i. The class barriers broken down in this period are especially significant within the context of this study because prior to the war there had been no white working class to speak of on the Islands. And that, of course, is important because it ensured that Hawai`i, already incredibly diverse, would become even more so.

World War II also brought great change to the economic structure of Hawai`i. From its inception in 1835 until the eve of World War II, the most important and lucrative industry on the Islands was the cultivation of sugar. In fact, “King Cane” would be the sole focus for industrialists until the pineapple industry took root in 1901. The two provided approximately 36 percent of the total employment throughout the islands as of 1939.⁴⁷ By 1941, however, both the sugar and pineapple industries were surpassed by the federal government as the leading employer throughout the Islands, as they geared up, in this most strategic of areas, for World War II.⁴⁸ This development, however, was not always beneficial for Hawaiians as the shifts in military expenditures in Hawai`i meant that the workforce was not stable. To give a sense of the magnitude of the fluctuation, federal civilian defense employment fell from 65,069 during World War II to 17,384 prior to the Korean War, but then increased to 24,152 during the conflict.⁴⁹ Likewise, there was a massive

⁴⁶ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁷ United States Department of Commerce, Office of Business Economics. *Income of Hawaii*. Washington D.C: Government Printing Office, 1953, 12.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 20.

reduction in the number of troops stationed on the Islands after World War II. The number dropped to 21,191 in 1950 from 300,328 in 1945. Again, though, following the same pattern as defense employment, that number jumped to 47,070 by 1955 then reached its postwar peak of 49,000 in 1957, only to go down to 42,000 by 1960.⁵⁰ The shifts in civilian defense employment had an obvious impact on local people, and, likewise, the constantly shifting numbers of troops and their families stationed in Hawai`i also affected many aspects of life there. The events of WWII, between Pearl Harbor, the declaration of martial law, and the sheer number of troops who came and then went, would forever alter Hawai`i.

While authors Bailey and Farber's focus was on the various ways that the United States' acceptance of multiculturalism was encouraged as a result of so many troops from throughout the mainland being stationed in Hawai`i, in Martha Noyes' book, *And Then There Were None* (which is the accompaniment to Elizabeth Kapu`uwailani Lindsey Buyers' documentary by the same name), she focuses on the impact those troops had on the Islands. In the study, she asserts that:

The war was cataclysm and catharsis; not a harbinger of change, but change itself. Now Hawai`i was irrevocably American, and we who were Hawaiian became American first and Hawaiian second."⁵¹

In the three years following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, of course, the U.S. military governed every aspect of life on the Islands. And with that control, in conjunction with the near universal feelings of patriotism that resulted from the

⁵⁰ Hawaii State Planning Office. *Military Personnel and Dependents in Hawaii: January 1961, Staff Research Memorandum 41*. Honolulu, February 9, 1961.

⁵¹ Noyes, 85.

bombing of Pearl Harbor and the ensuing involvement in WWII, it could be argued that the period saw the final realization of the Americanization project that had consumed the energies of missionaries, lawmakers, and educators since Contact. Still, while the U.S. sought to recreate itself through the establishment and firm control of its institutions in Hawai`i, the fact of the matter is that many Hawaiians did not recognize themselves there. Indeed, some, like Noyes, were troubled by the developments:

The war brought soldiers and sailors by the tens of thousands. It also brought prosperity, and it brought photographers, writers, reporters, and filmmakers. Suddenly the entire world knew where Hawai`i was. But we, the Hawaiian people, were not in the stories or photos or films. It was as though we were invisible, except as hula dancers and ukulele players to entertain the troops on leave."⁵²

Despite these concerns, though, Hawai`i did become fully American in the post-War period when it became the 50th state in 1959. Still, while American, it was clear that the Hawaiian was a different kind of American. In the way that historians Beth Bailey and David Farber argue that Hawai`i was the "first strange place" for nearly a million young Americans from the mainland stationed there who had never experienced the kind of racial integration that Hawai`i embodied. Indeed, for America as a whole, Hawai`i, offers a fascinating example of how different cultures can, and sometimes do, come together to create something entirely new and unique.

Transformation on the Islands since Contact in 1778 had always been quick and all-encompassing, as though the balmy air served as an incubator for change. By looking at the example of the English Standard school system, however, one can see that change was not always seamless and commonly

⁵² Ibid., 87.

agreed upon. Sometimes there were disagreements or moments of ambivalence as it was consciously or unconsciously decided what being Hawaiian was going to mean, and how being an America might differ whether one was on the mainland or the Islands. Throughout the period under examination, it is clear that the Islands were not just far-flung bits of land that were only acted upon, and which had little influence on the mainland. Instead, it is clear that Hawai`i was, in fact, deeply connected to the mainland. From the lessons learned there about vocational education to multiculturalism, it is clear that the mainland gained more than just lucrative plantations, highly strategic land for its military bases, and some of its most sought after tourist destinations on the Islands. Likewise, Hawai`i gained a lot from its relationship with the mainland. But it is when we examine the importation of the mainland's most pernicious of educational customs that the true character of the Hawaiian, what they would be willing to accept from the dominant culture and what would simply turn out, in the end, to be too foreign to accept, would be put to th

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

In many ways, what this study has done is trace the shift not only from monarchy to Statehood, but from a ruling system guided by paternalism and racism to one that would grow to be inclusive and representative of the various peoples who inhabited the Hawaiian islands. The years following annexation would see improved educational opportunities, which would ensure more choices and opportunities for Hawaiian children. As the middle class grew and local people began playing a larger role in politics, more and more, the rights, interests, and concerns of Hawaiians replaced those of the oligarchy, which was best represented by the Big Five (the handful of companies that had come to dominate Hawai'i's economy) and their ilk. As this study has shown, though, the example of the English Standard schools illustrates the complexities of such a move. While it was clear that these schools were initially segregated by race (despite their stated goal of simply segregating children based on linguistic skill), and that the system certainly had its critics, the fact that they were allowed to exist as long as they did and that their phasing out was a relatively anemic effort that spanned the school careers of an entire graduating class shows that the reaction to the system was very complicated. Indeed, even those who attended English Standard schools often recognize that the schools were a divisive force, but they likewise recognize that they feel grateful and privileged to have attended them.

The period discussed throughout the span of this study was marked by rapid change--change in politics, opportunity, and identity. It should come as

no surprise that in this period Hawaiians, many of whom had arrived relatively recently, were just settling into the hybrid culture and language of Pidgin that arose from the dynamic interplay of cultures and ethnicities there, and would not immediately reach a consensus about what they would expect and demand for their children as they headed to school. The English Standard schools, of course, required a certain level of English proficiency to attend--a level that more and more children were coached and trained to achieve. So while the schools started off being dominated by haole children, they eventually represented the complex intermingling of peoples that epitomized the Hawaiian Islands. Regardless of the fact that they did become more inclusive over time, the English Standard system was often seen as being unfair and elitist, which resulted in the dismantling of the program beginning in 1947, though the schools were allowed to operate until the last English Standard class graduated in 1960.

When asked, many people who had graduated from English Standard schools took offense to the use of the word "segregated" to describe their former schools, but there can be no doubt that this school system was for a time. What is ironic, though, is that this shifted through the years as more and more non-haole children were admitted. Still, by the time this shift had occurred, it was clear that Hawaiians were no longer comfortable with the existence of such a system of segregating children, and it was well on its way to being phased out. In another sense, though, the graduates were right to find the word "segregated" to be so jarring. Hawai`i was and continues to be incredibly multicultural in thought, custom, and lineage. The result, of course, was a complicated and challenging notion of self, which often culminated in

the simultaneous existence of pride and shame in the resulting identity and language (Pidgin), both of which were born on the plantations. Likewise, the mechanism employed to cope with such rapid change and influence from so many seemingly disparate cultures and traditions would work together to create something entirely new in the form of the sense of Hawaiianness that permeated the period. On one hand, many saw the openness and adaptability that resulted as a talent and virtue, but, unfortunately, some were also steeped in the rhetoric, expectations, and ideals of the mainland which dictated that Standard English, for example, was the only acceptable language for Americans in Hawai`i.

While tracing the march to Statehood, this study has illuminated some major shifts in the perception of the peoples of Hawai`i, and the evolving ideas about how they should be educated. As was discussed in the first chapter, in the 19th century, Native Hawaiians were commonly seen as being particularly suited towards education, and a great deal of effort was put into their literacy, especially, by the missionaries. But as more and more immigrants arrived on the Islands and, more importantly, as the sugar and pineapple plantations proved to be incredibly lucrative and the haole population on the Islands grew as a result, there was a shift in the perception, and Hawaiians came to be seen as being in desperate need of not only Americanization, but segregation from the haole minority, which was the focus of the second chapter. As has been clearly illustrated in this study, language became a powerful tool in this effort. Between the suppression of native languages and the Pidgin that resulted from years of contact, it was made quite clear to Hawaiian children that the path to success in their new American context was a firm grasp of

Standard English and the adoption of American ways, which was, in part, the focus of the third chapter. But it was clear that segregation would always be at odds with the rich diversity of the Islands and the sense of collective belonging to them, epitomized by the sense of Hawaiianness that developed in the period. And so, though it was tolerated for a time, in the period between the official establishment of the system in 1924 to the beginning of its dismantling in 1947, Hawai`i moved from relatively quiet acceptance to the consensus that state-sanctioned segregation was simply too unseemly to exist in its schools, even as enrollments shifted and they were no longer dominated by the haole minority. What all of these themes have shown, of course, is the process Hawaiians went through in deciding what it was going to mean for them to be the 50th state, how being American and Hawaiian was going to play out in their everyday lives. The special focus, in chapter four, on personal recollections of former students of the public schools in the period, their role in society and the lives of individuals, has made clear the way these issues were internalized by Hawaiian children and their parents, and help us to better understand the past.

Since the beginning of the process of dismantling the English Standard schools, Hawai`i has changed immeasurably. While still a Territory, the president appointed the Hawaiian governors, and the delegates to Congress had no vote. In 1959, President Eisenhower signed the declaration that made Hawai`i the 50th state, and all these years later, some Hawaiians are still unsure whether it was a good idea or not. Regardless of the debate, there can be no question that Hawai`i is no longer the far-flung, exotic dot in the middle of the Pacific it once was in the imaginations of mainland Americans. As was

explored in chapter five, there was a great deal of influence back and forth across the sea. While it certainly retains important elements of the Native Hawaiian culture and the multi-ethnic sense of Hawaiianness that developed there, there can be no question that Hawai`i is part of the United States, and that the Americanization projects so fervently undertaken there have largely achieved their desired goals.

Still, following the trend of other marginalized groups on the mainland who'd been inspired by the Civil Rights movement, the 1960s and 1970s were notable for the renewed interest and pride in both the Native Hawaiian language and the customs of the people who had nearly been driven to extinction. Since then, revitalization efforts have manifested in an increased interest in Hawaiian Studies, the Hawaiian language, and the growing sovereignty movement. Before this period, the symbols used to sell Hawai`i to tourists and the popular imagination, including certain aspects of Hawaiian culture such as hula and luaus, were reduced to little more than promotional tools that trivialized and commodified the culture for tourist's and/or business' consumption. Simultaneously, though, aspects of Hawaiian culture that were not of use to the agricultural or tourist interest, such as the Native Hawaiian language, were banned or otherwise penalized. But, again, in recent decades, there has been a move to turn this around by way of attempts made to reclaim Hawaiian culture, to ensure rights, and there are many who actively call for the reinstatement of Hawaiian sovereignty.¹ Not surprisingly, though,

¹ In addition to Haunanu-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai`i*, which was listed in the introduction, for more information about the sovereignty movement, please also see J. Khaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham, SC: Duke University Press, 2008) and Michael K. Dudley and Keoni Kealoha Agard, *Call for Hawaiian Sovereignty* (Kapolei, HI: Na Kane O Ka Malo Press, 1990).

the process has been fraught with controversies and disagreements about the best ways to proceed at every turn.

Less tumultuous has been the reclaiming of and revitalized interest in Pidgin that has followed. More and more, the stigma attached to the use of Pidgin is changing and there is a growing movement to legitimize what is a perfectly functional language, one that often captures the heart and soul of what being Hawaiian means to the people of Hawai`i in a way that few other things can. Though it is still sometimes a divisive force in Hawaiian society, it is clear that Pidgin has experienced a revival. As part of that effort, the Bible was translated into Pidgin in 2000, and was called *Da Jesus Book*.² Two years later, the Charlene Sato Center for Pidgin, Creole, and Dialect Studies at University of Hawai`i at Manoa was established as part of the Department of Second Language Studies. By 2005, Hawai`i Pacific University in Honolulu offered the first college class taught entirely in Pidgin. These academic efforts to legitimize and revitalize Pidgin are particularly significant because, as this study has shown, schools were a most unaccommodating place for Pidgin in the past. Now, though, public opinion is shifting, and Pidgin is increasingly being recognized as a very important part of Hawaiian culture and history.³ Still, it was very clear in what was said and what was left unsaid by the former public school students consulted for this study that Pidgin continues to be a very complicated aspect of Hawaiian identity.

² Joe Grimes and Barbara F. Grimes, trans., *Da Jesus Book* (Orlando, FL: Wycliffe Bible Translators), 2000.

³ For more information about Pidgin, please see *Pidgin: The Voice of Hawai`i*, directed by Marlene Booth and Kanalu Young (2009; Harriman, NY: New Day Films, 2009), DVD.

While it is certainly true that this study does not definitively resolve all aspects of the issue of the establishment and existence of the English Standard schools, it does broaden the discussion by examining the ways that Hawaiians would reconcile the notion of the contaminating nature of Pidgin, the existence of segregated schools on their shores on the eve of Statehood, and by highlighting what they saw for themselves as citizens of the 50th state. Hawai`i's unique place in not only the United States' history, but also the larger narrative of the postcolonial world and the formation of identity for its inhabitants, despite racism and the use of stereotypes, is illustrative of the experiences of many around the world. For these reasons, it is hoped that this study will not only enrich the growing fields of the History of Childhood and the History of Education, but that it will also be a valuable contribution to the postcolonial narrative.

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