

Educational Perspectives

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Educational Perspectives

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*Cover Photo: Harlan Cleveland being interviewed
by Warren Nishimoto at his home in Minneapolis,
Minnesota in 1996.*

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*Cover layout by Joy Hakoda
Cover photo courtesy of Center for Oral History, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa*

Contributors

Warren Nishimoto
Guest editor and interviewer

Nishimoto is director of the Center for Oral History (COH), College of Social Sciences, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He has directed dozens of oral history projects focusing on people, cultures, communities, occupations, and events in the Islands' history. He also teaches classes in the UH-Mānoa Department of Educational Foundations.

Hunter McEwan
Narrative editor

McEwan is professor and chair in the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He is also editor of *Educational Perspectives*.

Cynthia Oshiro
Narrative editor

Oshiro is the Publications Specialist at the Center for Oral History. Among other responsibilities, she is editor of COH's newsletter, *Oral History Recorder*.

Joe Rossi
Interviewer

Rossi is a former researcher at the Center for Oral History. He currently works as a writer and editor in San Francisco.

Introduction: Oral History In Educational Research

Warren Nishimoto

“To study education is to study experience and life. . . . Experience is the stories people live.”

—John Dewey

Educational research has traditionally been dominated by positivist and behaviorist experimentation designed to explain, in essence, how students learn, how they should be taught, and how schools should be structured and re-structured to achieve the goal of an educated society. Quantitative research methods have, for generations, provided educators with data and analyses with which to implement, maintain, and curtail controversial policies relating to learning and schools. Such policies include standardized testing, multicultural education, vocational education, charter schools, and No Child Left Behind.

Recent educational scholarship has questioned traditional reliance on quantitative measurement and analysis indicated by surveys, questionnaires, and empirical, deductive approaches to inquiry. Irving Seidman (2006, p. 8) refutes the notion that educational research should be primarily scientific: “At the very heart of what it means to be human is the ability of people to symbolize their experience through language.”

Researchers’ growing skepticism of using mainly quantitative methods to address critical educational issues led to an increase in the development of methods designed to ask and answer questions relating to individual, humanistic perceptions of learning, teaching, and the role of schools in society. Qualitative methods, such as ethnography, focus group interaction, narrative analysis, biography/autobiography, case studies, in-depth interviews, and oral history, have helped diversify educational research methods, encouraged researchers to confront issues relating to human experience, and provided more lenses with which to examine the impact social and cultural forces have on learning, teaching, and school structure (Seidman, 2006, p. 2).

Qualitative research methods, unlike quantitative strategies that are deductive in nature, often take an inductive approach to inquiry and derive conclusions and theories by means of a thorough analysis of particular experiences. For example, life history researchers Ardra Cole and J. Gary Knowles (2001) employ methods of inquiry that recognize the potential individuals possess as “windows into broader social and societal conditions” (p. 12). Qualitative methodologies are playing an increasingly prominent role in educational research. By providing opportunities to examine educational issues through individual lenses, they offer important insights into diverse perspectives on important societal issues. They also offer access to the meanings behind

and contributions made by particular individuals.

Oral history, defined as the collection, preservation, and dissemination of historical data obtained through planned in-depth, life history interviews, was first developed and popularized in 1948 by Columbia University historian Allan Nevins as he collected spoken reminiscences of political leaders, statesmen, and academic scholars for “future historians, for research, and as a tool for orally based biography” (Dunaway, 1996, p. 8). Nevins recorded and archived historical data often not found in traditional written records (Moss, 1974, p. 9). He did this by collecting spoken data with a tape recorder and producing near-verbatim transcripts that preserved the resulting narratives.

Nevins was the leader of the first generation of historians to utilize oral history in their research and teaching. However, oral history was slow to gain recognition as a legitimate scholarly method, in spite of the increasing usage among groups of researchers. Many historians, archivists, and other academics adopted a skeptical stance and questioned the validity and reliability of individual memory, as well as the role memory plays in the interpretation and writing of history.

The decades of the 1960s and 1970s, a period of widespread social, political, economic, and cultural change, brought out a new generation of scholars who rejected much of the elitism inherent in traditional history-writing. Oral history began to play a significant role in empowering and “giving voice” to ordinary people, viewing them as contributing actors in the process of change and continuity on the historical stage. A new generation of scholars, who pursued history from the “bottom up” rather than from the “top down,” began writing and rewriting history from the perspective of those who had been excluded, rather than the perspective of the elite (Griffin, 1989, p. 4).

Historian Paul Thompson (2000) echoes the opinion of his generation of reform-minded historians by asserting that “oral history is a history built around people” (p. 23). By expanding the scope of history to include the perspectives of ordinary people, oral history “offers a challenge to the accepted myths of history, to the authoritarian judgment inherent in its tradition. It provides a means for a radical transformation of the social meaning of history” (p. 23–24).

As oral history methodology gained legitimacy and attracted converts among historians and social scientists as both a legitimate data-gathering tool and a means to democ-

ratize the interpretation and writing of history, it advanced to a third stage. Researchers began to examine many of the methodology's theoretical underpinnings by acknowledging a shift in emphasis from an "interest in the object to an interest in the description of the object and the observer" (Grele, 1999). Leaders of this movement claimed that the theories and processes involved in oral history *themselves* represented key epistemological components of the discipline of history. They saw oral history as being "compiled within a historical frame negotiated by the interviewer and the narrator, within contemporary trends, within certain definable conventions of language and cultural interaction" (Dunaway, 1996, p. 8). These advocates regarded oral history not only as a method of primary source *documentation*, but also as a *process* for constructing and transmitting history from oral sources (Dunaway, 1996, p.8–9). No longer interested only in *what* knowledge is accumulated, oral historians increasingly sought answers relating to *how* knowledge is acquired from individual memory; how interviewees make sense of and find meaning in their life experiences; what role interviewers play in the process; and how, why, and in what forms this knowledge is preserved, presented, and passed down. This emerging, reflexive viewpoint of oral history has been accompanied by an increasing skepticism toward the notion of universal truth. Recent historical and social science scholarship reflects an emerging subjectivity associated with oral history—a subjectivity emphasizing the analysis and interpretation of meaning in people's life experiences. According to literary scholar and oral historian Alessandro Portelli, this subjectivity has generated a form of scholarship that departs somewhat from the traditional fact-based notion of history, and moves toward a more reflexive and phenomenological explanation of why we study history in the first place:

... memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings. Thus, the specific utility of oral sources...lies not so much in their ability to preserve the past, as in the very changes wrought by memory. These changes reveal the narrators' effort to make sense of the past and to give a forum to their lives, and set the interview and the narrative in their historical context. (Portelli, 1991, p. 52)

This construction and interpretation of meaning from individual life experiences can best be accomplished by examining the intersection of human experience and social context. Educational sociologist Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot stressed the importance of context in documenting human experience:

By context, I mean the setting—physical, geographic, temporal, historical, cultural, aesthetic—within which the action takes place. Context becomes the framework, the reference point, the map, the ecological

sphere; it is used to place people and action in time and space and as a resource for understanding what they say and do. The context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting. We have no idea how to decipher or decode an action, a gesture, a conversation, or an exclamation unless we see it embedded in context. (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 41)

Central to the discussion of meaning and context in individual lives is the need to study the interaction between interviewer and interviewee in creating an oral history document. Historian Ronald Grele (1985) has said that oral history interviews are collaborative, "joint activities, organized and informed by the historical perspectives of both participants" (p. 136–37). Grele referred to oral history interviews as "conversational narratives: conversational because of the relationship of interviewer and interviewee, and narrative because of the form of exposition—the telling of a tale" (p. 135). According to Grele,

When we interview someone, he not only speaks to himself and to the interviewer, but he also speaks through the interviewer to the larger community and its history as he views it. This is a dialogue, the exact nature of which is difficult to define. There are seemingly two relationships contained in one—that between the informant and the historian, and that between the informant and his own historical consciousness. (p. 136–37)

Psychologists Ruthellen Josselson and Amia Lieblich (1995) place stress on the collaborative relationship between interviewer and interviewee that is vital to obtain useful historical data as well as a coherent historical narrative. Emphasizing a relationship built around empathy, they see the need for the interviewer to be "sensitive to the problems of dealing with human complexity and contradiction," stressing that it is always important to consider "how much one needs to know about someone else to feel that one can understand something about them" (p. xi). Historian Jan Vansina (1985) views oral history as representing an emerging form of collaborative subjectivity, where interviewees and interviewers collaborate to construct and transmit human observations, interpretations, and emotions in the form of narrative:

Eyewitness accounts are always a personal experience as well and involve not only perception, but also emotions. Witnesses often are also not idle standers-by, but participants in the events. Furthermore, an understanding of what happened cannot occur through mere data of perception. Perceptions must be organized in a coherent whole and the logic of the situation supplies missing pieces of observation. (p. 4)

The underlying premise of the collaborative nature of oral history was that interviewees, above everyone else, are the center of attention. Without them, researchers would have nothing to present or interpret. In oral history, data and stories are not so much *extracted* by the interviewers so much as they are willingly *given* by the interviewees for posterity. The researcher, in turn, accepts the gift, contextualizes it, and transmits it for the benefit of future generations (Kline, 1996, p. 39).

The Center for Oral History at the University of Hawai'i

The Center for Oral History (COH) is a unit of the Social Science Research Institute in the College of Social Sciences. It was established in 1976 by the Hawai'i State Legislature and is the only state-supported center of its kind in the islands that conducts and publishes oral history interviews focused on Hawai'i's past. Since its inception, COH has researched and conducted forty-six oral history projects, interviewed more than 800 individuals and deposited in archives and libraries a collection of over 36,000 transcript pages.

In addition to providing researchers with primary-source documentation centering on individual life experiences, COH has produced educational materials including journal articles, newspaper features, books, audio/visual presentations, dramatizations, and websites based on the interviews. COH has also presented lectures and facilitated discussions on local history, conducted classes and workshops on oral history methodology, and served as a consultant to community groups conducting their own oral history projects.

Introduction to the oral history narratives

The seven narratives contained in this issue are edited from transcripts of oral history interviews conducted by the Center for Oral History. The interviewees are educators who witnessed and participated in the many developments that occurred in public education in Hawai'i in the twentieth century. The interviewees' personalities and cultural values, along with the choices they were faced with and decisions they ultimately made, and the historical circumstances that shaped their perspectives on their lives and careers in education are reflected in the narratives. The interviewees are

Albert Nawahi Like, teacher, Hawai'i Department of Education, 1927–1965;

Amy Lum Fern, teacher, Hawai'i Department of Education, 1933–1972;

Laurence J. Capellas, teacher, principal, and administrator, Hawai'i Department of Education, 1935–1977;

Marion McGregor Lee Loy, teacher, Hawai'i Department of Education, 1935–1974;

R. Burl Yarberry, superintendent, Hawai'i Department of Education, 1962–1966;

Andrew W. S. In, professor and dean, University of Hawai'i College of Education, 1951–1984; and

Harlan Cleveland, president, University of Hawai'i, 1969–1974.

Prior to holding the taped interview, researchers conducted an untaped preliminary interview with each of the interviewees. The preliminary interviews helped establish rapport and enabled the researchers to obtain biographical data on the interviewees. In addition, the researchers were able to assess each interviewee's depth and breadth of knowledge, clarity of memory, ability to articulate life experiences, and willingness to participate in the project.

Center for Oral History researchers/interviewers Warren Nishimoto and Joe Rossi conducted interviews at the interviewees' homes. Because interviewees were asked to comment on experiences and incidents oftentimes specific to their own lives, no set questionnaire was used. Instead, a list of topics tailored to each interviewee was developed, creating biographical case studies centered mainly on the families, childhoods, education, and professional careers of the interviewees and the events that shaped their lives.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim by COH-trained student transcribers, audio-reviewed by the interviewers to correct omissions and other errors, and edited slightly for clarity and accuracy.

The researcher/interviewers then collaborated with each interviewee to review the transcripts. The interviewees were asked to verify names and dates and to clarify statements where necessary. In some cases, interviewees made wholesale changes to their transcripts; in others, minimal alterations were required and made. The researchers then incorporated the interviewees' changes in the final version—the version that included all statements that the interviewees wished to appear in the public record.

The interviewees read and signed a legal release allowing the University of Hawai'i Center for Oral History and the general public scholarly and educational use of the transcripts.

The aim of oral history interviews is the creation of truthful narratives reflecting interviewees' life experiences. To achieve this end, the researchers conducted extensive research, selected interviewees carefully, established and maintained rapport, listened carefully and with empathy, asked thoughtful questions, collaborated with the interviewees over the transcripts, and, when possible, corroborated interviewee statements with available written documents.¹

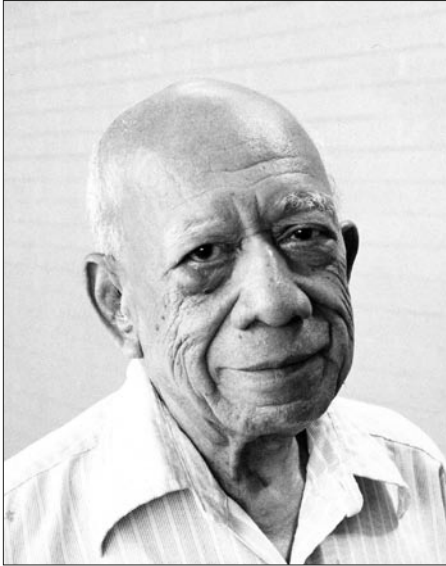
The interview transcripts were then edited into narratives by removing interviewers' questions, moving sections for readability and coherence, and deleting sections due to space limitations.² In some cases, words were added for clarification and transition purposes. Added words are bracketed [].

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ For a practical guide to the oral history process, see Center for Oral History, *How to do Oral History*. 3rd ed. (Honolulu: Center for Oral History, 2000).
- ² Readers wishing to view the transcripts in their entirety should consult the following COH publications: *Kalihi: Place of Transition* (Albert Like); *Public Education in Hawai'i: Oral Histories* (Amy Lum Fern, Laurence J. Capellas, Marion McGregor Lee Loy and R. Burl Yarberry); and *Presidents of the University of Hawai'i: Harlan Cleveland* (Harlan Cleveland). Andrew In's transcript, yet unpublished, will be part of a future COH oral history publication focusing on Hawai'i-born University of Hawai'i faculty.



Albert Nawahī Like

*Interviewed by Warren Nishimoto (1984)
Narrative edited by Cynthia Oshiro*

Albert Nawahī Like was born 1900 in Honolulu's Chinatown. When Like was eight years old, his family moved to Kalihi. After the death in 1912 of his father, Edward Like, who was editor of the Hawaiian-language newspaper *Ke Aloha 'Āina*, and the remarriage of his mother, Like returned to Chinatown and attended school at nearby St. Louis, then located on River Street.

Upon graduation, Like enrolled in classes at the University of Hawai'i in 1924. Three years later, after taking classes at the Territorial Normal and Training School, Like began teaching young patients at Kalihi Hospital, the Hansen's disease facility also known as the Kalihi Receiving Station.

With the closing of the school shortly after the start of World War II, Like transferred to Central Intermediate School, where he taught for over twenty years until his retirement in 1965.

At the time of these interviews in 1984, Like was devoting much of his time working and doing research at the genealogical library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Kalihi ward.

Growing up

I grew up in Chinatown, right in that 'A'ala Park district. From *mauka* [inland] of Beretania Street, that was all tenements. They had many little lanes, little alleys. Chinese were all living there. They had *manapua* [pork cake] stores, they had tailor shops, all around that area. Then the market, of course. That Kekaulike [Market].

And then, there was also opium smoking. All those little dens along Pauahi Street and Maunakea. It was not only men but women were smoking opium at that time.

Right across, they had the Chinese opera house. That's where Chinese shows, operas, used to come and perform.

I was born [in] 1900, just across the old [O'ahu Railway & Land Company] railroad station. My father was the editor of a Hawaiian newspaper, and that's where the print shop was. We lived above, and downstairs was the print shop.

My father was *hānaia*ed to [i.e., adopted by] Joseph Nawahī. Joseph Nawahī was [an] activist during the time of Queen Lili'uokalani. Joseph Nawahī started this paper to support the love for the native peoples. That's why they say *Ke Aloha 'Āina*—A Love for the Land. That's the translation of the paper.

St. Louis School was not too far away from [where] we were, because it was just at River Street. I went to have my early first grades at St. Louis. Prior to that, I went to the Pālama Settlement kindergarten.

My education was in a Catholic school, although I didn't join the Catholic church. But most [students] were converts to the Catholic church when they went to St. Louis, the Chinese boys were. And also, we had a few Japanese

boys. The Japanese boys, they used to give 'em English names. They call them "Gilbert" or "Joseph."

In 1908, '09, we moved up to where the Pālama Fire Station is. The newspaper print shop was still there [at 'A'ala], but the family moved over to this place. There was a lane they called Alapa'i Lane.

While there, he [father] bought this place here in Kalihi. It was close to a half an acre. He bought it for about \$250. Well, it was taro patch land at that time. So, in 1909, we moved to Kalihi and settled there.

We used to hike up into Kalihi Valley. As you go up toward Wilson Tunnel, there were two pools on the right side, which is now [a] water reserve. That's where the boys and girls would go swimming.

Our means of transportation, the transit, was way down at King Street. The means of getting down to King Street, we had what they call a "coach." Horse-drawn. We used to pay twenty-five-cents fare to go down and catch the transit to go to town or go to Waikīkī.

He [father] died in 1912. We [moved] to the corner of Maunakea and Pauahi [streets, in Chinatown]. We lived in the tenement there. That's when we moved over. We needed the money, so we rented [out] the [Kalihi] home.

My mother raised us, took care of us. And then, my mother got married again to my stepfather who was Chinese. My stepfather was a butcher at the Kekaulike Market there. That's what he was until he retired.

After 1912, I had an attack of polio. So I was hospitalized for over a year until I got back my mobility. Then I went [back] to school. I was in St. Louis until my freshman year.

March of my freshman year, I was hospitalized [again]

because 1919, there was an epidemic—Spanish flu.¹ That took me out for quite a while. So when I came back, I was twenty-one at the time. I went right back [as a] sophomore. So, I only spent three years and a half in high school, and I finished and graduated.

Then, I moved back to Kalihi here. My mother and them were staying down in Chinatown. But my stepfather was up with me at the home here.

One day, I happened to meet some of my neighbors. They said, “We saw your stepfather selling bananas and papayas.” Of course, he was retired, [but] he couldn’t just sit around. He had two dollars when he started, [and] he earned a little something.

University of Hawai‘i

I was able to register in there at the U [University of Hawai‘i], 1924. But I had no money. I had to borrow somebody else’s book to know my lessons for the day. So when it came to test time, I didn’t have any book to review.

So, came Thanksgiving recess, I had a note from the admissions board. The review board told me I either have to make up for this or I’d be dismissed. So, I borrowed a book and I got down to business and I passed [the course]. Then, I was able to stay in school.

While there, I began to get a little money here, little money there, to carry on. On the days when I really didn’t have any money, I’d just take my shoe-shine box around [Chinatown] and [work as a] bootblack.

Then, after that, I did a little extra sales work. You know the American Savings [Bank] now? Well, when they first came [to Hawai‘i], they came as American Mutual [Building

& Loan Company]. [They] asked me if I’d like to go and sell some shares. That helped me out during my sophomore year to take care of some of my expenses.

In my junior year, I had to make a decision. That’s when the dean called me in the office [and] said, “You want to come back to school in the fall or you want to go to work?” I dropped two of my subjects, Spanish and physics. And then, I went to [Territorial] Normal [and Training] School and took education courses in how to teach arithmetic, simple reading, and also how to conduct myself as a teacher in a classroom.

They made arrangements for me to come back [later] to finish up my subjects so that I could get my bachelor’s [degree]. In ’31, I got my bachelor’s [from the University of Hawai‘i].

Kalihi Hospital

Do you know Pu‘uhale Road? At that time, the whole back area was one big, open space. There were very few homes along that road. It was more *kiawe* [algaroba] trees. That’s where that [Kalihi] Hospital was. The whole hospital was for leprosy patients.

They had a little store there, which accommodated the patients within the hospital. So, if you want anything, you would call over to the storekeeper. Then, they’d get it for you.

Not very far from the hospital was a crematory. It was a Japanese[-owned] crematory. If any of the patients in the hospital passed away, they would take [the] body out there. The bodies were cremated, and the ashes were sent home.

My first teaching job, I was assigned down to the Kalihi Hospital. They established a school to take care of these chil-



Mount Happy School at Kalihi Hospital, 1932 (Bernard Punikaia Collection)

dren. At that time they had close to about twenty children. These were children who had contracted the disease. They were separated from their parents. So, they were confined at the hospital there.

They had named the school “Mount Happy.” They couldn’t get anybody to go down there [to teach] at the time. So, I got my certification to teach, and I became what they called a teacher-principal for the school. I organized the curriculum, which was a simple program—reading, writing, and arithmetic, and a little history and other things.

When I went down there they told me some of the precautions. The precaution is to see that you wash your hands. You got to wear a gown. Well, not this long gown, but just like a coat. But after I got acquainted with them [patients], there was no more fear.

In that school, they had a big, wide-open building. So, they partitioned that, and they had a workshop. The Department of Health at the time provided all the tools, their little lathe, and everything for them. So, we had part of our times spent in the workshop making little lamps, making book stops. Some of their work—like lamps—parents or friends took them home.

Then, on top of that, the doctors were interested in the recreational program. So, [a] doctor got some of the organizations—the Rotary Club, the Elks Club—interested. They bought baseballs and bats, and other things. They built swings.

Then, we also had a [Boy] Scout program. The scouting group became interested in this group of youngsters because they had no outside activity. They could not go outside of the compound. Soon, the youngsters had their uniforms and scout equipment. They were Troop 12.

Many of them met their [qualifications] for badges, but they couldn’t go out for hiking—fourteen-mile hike—to qualify for the first-class badge. But we had outside scout leaders come down and demonstrate calisthenics and all that.

At the upper end of the compound, there was a pavilion. Outside organizations who wanted to entertain, churches, would come on the other side of the fence and conducted their church services or whatever program they had.

Then, in return, the school would put up skits. They used to have a minstrel show. They would have *hula* and singing. They would have this program to entertain their parents and guests and whoever came to watch the show.

Every six months there, they would have a [physical] examination. This way, they determined what patients needed to go to Kalaupapa.² That is always a sad event, when your name is called that you were going to Kalaupapa. Because at that time, the feeling was that once you went to Kalaupapa, you never returned.

They would transfer these patients on the *Hawai'i*. That was a cattle boat. The front part of that deck, the lower deck, where the animals [usually] were, would be cleaned up. And

that’s where the patients were put.

Some of them went into hiding until the boat leaves. When the boat leaves, they know they’ll be there for another six months until the next—they call it “shipment”—when there’s a next transfer.

World War II

[On December 7,] 1941, came the bombing of Pearl Harbor. From the hospital, you could see Pearl Harbor quite clearly. It was a front seat for that event. You see all these battleships in flames.

Fortunately, over our school [i.e., on the roof]—I don’t know who thought that up—was a big red cross. So, naturally, [in case] the enemy’s planes flew over, they would not disturb that section.

From that time on, the whole hospital was under strict security supervision. The school continued until the latter part of May ’42. Then they decided to transfer everybody to Kalaupapa, fearing that there probably would be another attack, because we were just in the war zone.

Before we left, they had a submarine circle the ship to see that there was no enemy. When we left the harbor, the destroyer was ahead of us. We slept on the upper deck because the patients were down in the hold.

We got to Kalaupapa late that afternoon. Disembarked the kids, took them out, and then left them, said good-bye.

The commissioner of the school board came and [asked] me to prepare a course of study for these children. They had two patients up at Kalaupapa who were former certified teachers. So, I prepared the curriculum for those youngsters, and flew over to Kalaupapa, and then made all the arrangements.

During the war, the whole city was blacked out. So, each area had their own block wardens. These block wardens at night would patrol the area to see that all lights were turned off. They wore steel helmets marked “W” and carried gas masks and identification passes signed by the chief of police. Every night they would patrol. They would look up at the skies [hoping] that nothing would happen.

In those days, every home had a little trench dug out [in their yards]. In case there was a raid, they would go into this. The bigger places, like the schools, they had their bomb shelters.

Prior to World War II, that whole area just *mauka* of School Street was an open pasture land, which was formerly taro patches. And there, the soldiers were trained to operate these [military] equipment during World War II. In the meantime, they also had built barracks up there where these men lived.

My house was just off School Street. And the boundary line of the military reservation came right down to our fence there. So he [stepfather] had an idea if he build a lean-to and had a little store, he might provide some snacks.

He bought crackers and sardines. Then he bought [Chinese preserved] seeds. His store was a twenty-four-hour store. He never bothered about blacking out his windows or anything.

One night, he was quite sick. So, I called my nephew. We took him to Kuakini Hospital. The desk [clerk] said to me, “Well, to keep your stepfather here, you’ll have to put down a deposit of \$100.”

My nephew said to me, “We better go and see his box, if he has any money.” And lo and behold, he had [silver] coins. It came to about a little more than \$495.

He got well. We brought him home. He pulled out his Chinese book. And there stacked in between those pages were all his tens and five dollars. We got the silver dollars, but we didn’t get this other money, see?

I told him how much the hospital was and that was all paid. Then he told me, “Ah, this [hospital expense] too much money. If I go Pālama Settlement [for treatment], I no pay money.”³

He died in 1960. We took all his leftover groceries, we sold it. And then, we demolished that little lean-to. On the floorboard, you know, there’s all those cracks? My grandchildren, they had a great day. There, they were finding nickels, they were finding fifty cents, they were finding quarters because they all fell through.

Anyway, before he died, he had made better than \$10,000 out of [his original] two dollars.

Central Intermediate School

When the [Mt. Happy] School closed [in 1942], I went to Central [Intermediate School]. I was in the office of the supervising principal, Robert Faulkner, when a telephone call came saying that they wanted a substitute at Central Intermediate.

This was a science class. When I walked in the room there was on the blackboard a formula. So, what I did was complete the formula, and [I] taught the class. Chemistry was down my alley.

[Then] there was [another] vacancy, and I was available at the time. [That] was the finishing of an agricultural

garden class. Since I did a good job, when the new school year began, I was called as a permanent teacher. I went into teaching math.

I went back to [another Hansen’s disease treatment facility], Hale Mōhalu, in 1955, I think. I taught a whole year. They had a certified teacher [who] wanted to go on a sabbatical leave. They knew that I knew these boys. I had the teenagers. Some of them were already doing their senior work. We had a grand program that night [of] graduation.

That was the last time I was there. I came [back] to Central till I retired. I stayed at Central for twenty-three years.

Mr. Frank Loo came and said to me—he happened to have seen me one evening after I retired—to come over and take over his business. He was in the [debt] collection business. So I went in the collecting business for five years, and it was a tough job.

See, I’m not a hard person. When you have these [delinquent] guys, what can you do? You garnishee them because of failure to pay. I was with Frank till I sold the business out.

In the meantime, I had this other work that I’m doing now. So, today, I not only work with genealogies, I do translations. I work with the attorneys to do land searches.

I went into these other businesses, which was different entirely from teaching. [But] education was in my field, you see. Every day I meet one of my students. They come up and say hello to me. Of course, within the twenty-three years that I taught at Central, I had couple of thousand youngsters pass through.

Well, the Good Lord’s been good to me, so I’ve enjoyed my life these many years. I’m just grateful that my mind (chuckles) is still active and alert.

ENDNOTES

¹ The worldwide influenza epidemic, known as the “Spanish flu,” killed several millions of people.

² Hansen’s disease settlement on Moloka’i. The Kalihi Hospital was a holding compound for patients prior to their departure to Kalaupapa.

³ Pālama Settlement, established in 1906, until 1943 offered free medical and dental care at its clinics.



Amy Lum Fern

*Interviewed by Joe Rossi (1991)
Narrative edited by Cynthia Oshiro*

Amy Lum Fern was born in Honolulu in 1909. She received her early education at Central Grammar School and later attended McKinley High School. After graduating from McKinley in 1928, she entered the University of Hawai'i, where she earned her teaching degree in 1933.

Fern spent her first two years as a teacher at Waimea High School on Kaua'i. She then taught for eight years at Farrington High School, eight years at Kūhiō Elementary School, and twelve years at Dole Intermediate School. She retired from full-time teaching in 1972.

Her interests included gardening and volunteer work. Fern won the Frank Gardner Memorial Award in 2001 for her service to Meals on Wheels. She also was active with the O'ahu Retired Teachers Association [ORTA].

Parents

My father [Ong Lum] worked in a Chinese dry goods store. When he came from China, I understand, he used to be a salesman going to the neighbor islands. He was much older than my mother. I was in high school when he decided to go back to China. You know, the Chinese people always wanted to go back to the homeland to die. And I think he wasn't well at that time, so he went back to China, and he died there.

My mother [Mary Akahiakuleana Lum] was born in Lahaina, Maui, of an old-time Hawaiian family. My mother was a housewife in the beginning, then later on, as we grew older and able to take care of ourselves, she worked for the playground [i.e., parks and recreation department], like a supervisor. And then, later on, she went back to normal, teacher-training school [Territorial Normal and Training School], to become a teacher. She was an ambitious sort of person, and she wanted to improve herself, so she never gave up on that. She finished in 1924. She taught at 'Aiea School, that was her first school. I was in about the eighth grade or a freshman in high school at that time. By that time, too, she and my father had separated.

Central Grammar School

I went to Central Grammar. It was, at that time, first to eighth grade. It was a big school and it was a really cosmopolitan school.¹ I think that was the grammar school that many of the Caucasian kids came to, so I had many Caucasian classmates. Each one of my grammar school teachers was a Caucasian woman originally from someplace else. And then we had all the other ethnic groups.

At Central Grammar, once a month we'd have a flag ceremony out in the open. And I remember my music teacher in the fifth grade, Mrs. Bowen, would lead the singing of the whole assembly. That was my first introduction to singing Hawaiian songs.

At that time we worked in the cafeteria, too, once a month maybe. We used to like that because we had free lunch then. We could eat whatever they served. Otherwise, we'd have just plain bread-and-butter sandwich or bread-and-jelly sandwich for lunch.

But I remember the occasions when we did have a nickel or so to buy lunch. There was a corner store near the school that sold *chow fun* [Chinese fried noodle-and-vegetable dish], two packages for five cents. And oh, I remember they had more bean sprouts than anything else, but it was so good you'd practically eat the package, too.

Princess Ruth [Ke'elikōlani, 1826–1883], who was one of the wealthiest among the Hawaiian royalty, had this beautiful home that they used as a school.² The rooms were so large, enough to house a class of students. And I remember the room that I was in [in] fifth grade had a high ceiling, and there was a seal on the top of the ceiling. Once a week, on Fridays I think it was, during the long lunch recess on the *lānai* [porch], one of the girls would play the piano, and it was like a social time.

Our eighth-grade graduation picture was taken on the steps of that building, and then shortly after—I don't know what year it was, but I think when I was at McKinley—they demolished that building.

Cunha Lane

In the later grades, like around the fourth grade and fifth grade, my mother was working at the playground as one of the playground supervisors. I used to go to one of the parks where she was and then play there with some other friends that I made. Otherwise, you know, where we lived there was a lane. I had a younger brother, and I had Japanese girlfriends across the street from our house in this lane. And we used to play marbles; we used to play *peewee*,³ which they don't play nowadays.

My recollection of growing up was in the Cunha Lane where Foster [Botanical] Garden is now, the extension to River Street in that area. We had a two-bedroom home. And we had a nice yard. My father used to do the yard work, and I would help him. I remember doing it on Sundays. I think that's where my love for growing things started. I used to have a little garden. I planted cosmos, which I liked, and we had some roses in the yard.

I think the owner of the place, Cunha, must have owned that whole piece of property, and he must have planted different kinds of mango trees. Every yard had a different kind of mango tree. So I grew up climbing mango trees during mango season, eating all kinds of mangos. In one of the neighbor's yards there was a huge plum tree. I think they call it the Java plum. And during the season, my mother used to have my brother collect the fruit, and she'd make plum jelly.

There was a Hawaiian neighbor in one of the houses, and several times during the year they would have a *lū'au*. So I remember hearing squealing pigs early in the morning when they were slaughtering. That was my first exposure in seeing a pig being cooked underground in the *imu*. Of course, the neighbors used to just rubberneck. There would be the music. We'd watch them doing the *hula*. No paid entertainers, it's just the ones who came to the party provided their own entertainment. I don't know whether it was *'ōkolehao*⁴ or whatever, but it always ended up in a fight. It was kind of exciting, and yet it didn't get too violent. (Laughs)

I used to go to Kaumakapili Church. And that's quite a distance from where we lived, but you never thought about it at that time. There was a Kauluwela Lane where a lot of old Chinese families and part-Hawaiian families lived. I had a girlfriend from grammar school, she lived in Kauluwela Lane. She came from the big Yap family. We used to go to Kauluwela Mission in the afternoon, and it was an extension of Sunday school.

Easter and Christmas and Mother's Day, they'd have little exercises. We were always given little verses to memorize and recite, so that was kind of an exciting time. And I remember at Christmas time they always had little boxes of candy that they passed out to us, just a small amount of candy. And that was great, too.

Once in a while I guess I had a spare nickel. They had these wax candies that looked a long candle. And you chewed it just like gum. But around this long cylinder they had a ring, and that ring was just like a million-dollar ring to us. It had a little imitation stone, tiny little stone. Oh, that used to be the biggest treat. You know, it's good fun to think of little things bringing you so much joy.

And yet, we didn't waste it, we didn't throw it around, and we didn't keep on accumulating. Just one, maybe, in the whole year, that was sufficient for us.

McKinley High School

At that time, [Dr.] Miles E. Cary was the principal. Everybody remembers him well. He got involved within the community. He was such a nice person, and he treated everybody so well. He remembered students and their names. I think he stood up for the local kids. And he followed his students' progress.

In those days, I think, we all respected the teachers. And even if a teacher we felt was too strict or too stern, I don't remember anybody answering back or cutting up in class. We were really serious about our studies.

I don't remember being sick from high school, staying home for any reason at all. I went regularly. [But] I remember the one time playing hooky from school. (Laughs) And I don't know how we had our swimsuit, but we cut class and went to Waikīkī to swim, had a good time, and never thought [too much about it]. I mean, we didn't have to serve detention or anything. They just chalked it up to your absence, that's all.

I had good English teachers, and they made English fun. My senior English teacher was a very strict teacher. And she mentioned one time that she worked hard to see that we passed the exam to get into the University of Hawai'i, because—I don't understand what the reasons were, but evidently it must have been difficult for the so-called local kids to get in. So she worked hard to give us all the background, and she always was so pleased when she found out that certain ones had been accepted.

I took French for three years. And it was just a textbook kind of French. My third-year French teacher was a male, Mr. Victor Ligda. He was also the coach of the swimming team. And some of the fellows in the class claimed that he was partial to girls because he always gave us the high grades (laughs). But that was just reciting what he wanted us to recite, so it wasn't difficult at all.

Another favorite class of mine was orchestra. Mr. [Walter] Maygrove started the school orchestra. I learned to play the cello under him. I think when she [i.e., mother] was working at the playground she had some of her own money, so she started me on piano lessons. And because I had had piano—I could read notes—it made it easier. And then he invited me to come to band classes. I learned how to play the trombone.

At that time they used to have oratorical contests among the high schools, and we'd play for the program in the beginning or in between. A full symphony orchestra. And then he also started a fife-and-drum corps, so I took up the fife, too. That was an extracurricular activity—after-school kind of thing. Never got very good at it, but we were exposed to that, too.

One of the band boys who was a good trumpet player formed a little dance orchestra, so I used to play the piano for them. Some of it I played by ear or some from music. "Five

Foot Two, Eyes of Blue” and stuff like that (chuckles).

The four years I was in McKinley we had a pretty good basketball team. When I was a junior I started dating one of the basketball players, and he became my husband later on.

ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] was a big thing during high school. And the boys would elect a [female] sponsor to represent their battalion. It was just an honorary kind of position. I remember I was a sponsor for three years, and each year it was for a different group. And not that I was going with any of the boys. In my senior year, the captain of the band said, “You were Mr. Maygrove's favorite, so that's why you became the band sponsor” (laughs).

We felt very special, because when the boys had to march in, like the Armistice Day Parade, we used to march with them. And then when they had a field day, we'd be there to represent the whole ROTC unit. Every boy [attending McKinley High School], I think, was part of the ROTC unit at that time. It was not an elective.

But it was fun, because we had our uniform. Dressmakers were not too expensive in those days. So because we had to have all the same type of uniform—and it was always the gold-colored material, rayon or something like that, with black bands—each of us had ours made.

But we didn't dress up fancily, I don't remember. Many of us sewed our own dresses. No slacks, all dresses.

We had to take physical education—we called it PE—but that was one of my weak points. I wasn't very physically active. And for PE we'd have the big black bloomers and the white sailor tops.

The big hall for one of the proms was at what they called Waikīkī Park. And it's, I think, [across] where the [Hilton] Hawaiian Village is now. And we had little cards where you signed up for dances. Then there was Young Hotel Roof Garden, where one of my classmates says we had our senior banquet. And he remembers giving me a *lei*. I don't remember that part. But anyway, we had our senior banquet followed by a dance.

My class—the class of '28—by that time the McKinley High School auditorium had been built, and so we were the first class to graduate in the new auditorium. So it was quite special. I remember one of my mother's first cousins, she was always good to us, and she gave me some money to buy a graduation dress. And in those days they didn't give so many *lei*, but they had little bouquets of flowers—pretty little bouquets—and friends and relatives would give us these little bouquets for graduation.

University of Hawai'i

In the general courses at the university, we never had any [education] methods course. It was later on, when we finished all of the general courses. We had a course in literature for children. I had an excellent geography teacher, Miss

[Lorna] Jarrett—who taught us how to present a subject. We'd choose our own title and prepare for it and then present it to the class.

Then we had to do our practice teaching. If I remember correctly, I [taught] a few weeks in the first grade. That was held at the old [Territorial] Normal [and] Training School. They had the regular elementary classes there. And I remember my supervisor then, Miss [Florence] Avison, she was thorough. You had to have everything organized, what you're going to start off with, and what you're going to teach every hour of the day.

And then I went to [teach] the fifth grade, and I had a Miss [Mary] Engle, who became a principal. And there again, the unit was a little bit different from what you taught in the first grade. After we finished that year, the following year we went on probationary teaching, and that's when I was sent to Kalākaua Intermediate School.

There was a Mrs. [Ivah] Feiteira. She was my immediate supervisor. She was very thorough, too. She'd come in and look over your plans. And I had a seventh-grade and eighth-grade English/social studies class, and that's where I taught for a whole semester. We earned \$44.88 a month.

I got married at the end of my sophomore year at the university. I had my first baby, and then when she was two I lost her. She just died overnight. When they performed an autopsy they found that one of her lymph glands had just enlarged and suffocated her. So that was a big loss to me. And then I had my second child, Robin. She's my only daughter now.

So I stayed out of school, and then I went back for my fifth year. And it was after my fifth year that I got my certificate to go and teach.

Waimea High School

I met a former classmate of mine who had been teaching at Waimea High School [on Kaua'i], and when she saw me, summertime, she said, “Amy, you got a job?” “No.” “I got a job for you. Teach my band class up in Waimea High School.” And I said, “I can't teach band. I don't have a background for band.” She said, “If you can read music, you can teach band.”

She convinced me to take over the class because she wanted to teach in town [i.e., Honolulu]. She couldn't leave that position unless she found her replacement. Because I needed a job, I said, “Okay, I'll take it.” In those days they took the teachers wherever they could get them, whether you had the major in that particular subject or not.

So I had a band class, and I had a chorus class, and then I had what they called a core studies class, that's English and social studies. So the English and social studies class was no problem because I had had training for that. The chorus class—well, I really had no training for it except that I could play the piano, and I could read music. We had a songbook.

We just let them choose the songs and they sang the songs.

Then the band class—at least I could keep time. And the kids were so good. There were some boys who were excellent musicians in that class. And they told me afterwards, yeah, once in a while they'd play off on their own, but I would never catch on. So they had a good time, and I had a good time, and we got along fine (laughs).

We used to play for the football games. And we had band uniforms. Today some of those kids are good friends of mine. We played for the county fair, and we got first place because I think I was the only female bandleader (chuckles).

Mr. [Dallas] McLaren was my first principal. He was really an idealist, I think. He had high objectives. And if we had any questions, we'd go and talk to him, and he'd give us all his reasons. We'd never get anything resolved, so we'd do it the way we wanted to. But he was a gentleman.

There at Waimea we had a yearly money-raising project—we called it the Waimea High School Festival—to raise money for different kinds of equipment. The first year I was there he made me chairman, so I had a lot of leeway. My roommate was the physical education teacher. She had a lot of good ideas, some of the cute little dances that she had with her girls and some of the boys. So we put on a good program in this school—we had a school auditorium. And we raised enough money. The second year he also put me in charge of the Waimea festival, so I had two years of that.

We lived in the teachers' cottage the first year. There were eight of us, two to a room. And, oh, I never had it so good. We hired a girl in the community, a Japanese girl, who was our maid. She did the cleaning every day, she fixed our beds, she fixed breakfast, lunch, and dinner for us every day. We were right on the campus, so we'd just go home for lunch. She had Sundays off, so Sunday we either had breakfast out or prepared our own, or sometimes we went on picnics.

[President Franklin D.] Roosevelt had these camp[s], where they reforested areas. And there was a CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] camp up at Kōke'e. And so every Monday evening, this young Baptist minister would drive my roommate and me, because I played the piano for his services, and we'd have dinner there with the boys. And then he'd conduct the service, and we'd have songs, the hymnals.

And then every Sunday I would play for him at the Waimea Christian Church and at another community church, so I would play for them there.

Waimea was a nice community. They had a community association, they had a community hall. We even put up, with the community, an operetta. And there were basketball games in this community hall, and there were lots of places where you could go hiking safely on that island. So I really enjoyed my two-year stay there.

My husband and daughter lived in Honolulu. So my husband stayed with my mother, and his mother and his

sisters took care of Robin. And then weekends he'd either come up, or I'd go [back home] by boat. And then the plane started, so on long holiday weekends he'd come up or I'd come home.

Farrington High School

From Waimea I came to Farrington [High School]. One of my friends there—my mother's friend, really—had started the Hawaiian instruments class. And her classes were so popular they needed another Hawaiian instruments class. She knew I was out teaching [at Waimea], and she knew I could play the *'ukulele*, and so she got permission from the principal to have me come in. And at that time, well, you couldn't get to Honolulu otherwise. That's why so many of my own classmates at McKinley who went out to teach from normal school, they stayed out in the country seven, eight years. They got married and made their homes on the neighbor islands. But I came back to town.

I had a sophomore English/social studies class. They called it core studies at that time. I had one class of that, and the rest of the classes were in Hawaiian instruments.

At Farrington, you had all the local kids, no Caucasian kids. You had Filipinos, Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiians, part Hawaiians. And I didn't have any disciplinary problems within the class, but I remember one year one of the kids was gambling under one of the bungalows, and so I turned him in for that. But that's the most serious problem I ever had with anybody, I think.

Later on at Farrington they started the big carnivals. We had about at least four carnival shows going on besides all the side concessions. And the kids were so talented—musically and vocally and dramatically—that we could put on these. I remember the first year I had a Wild West show. The second year I had like a Carmen Miranda show. I had one girl who later on became a professional singer, and she was so good. And I think I had only two years of carnival, because then [World] War [II] came on.

You know, there used to be a Princess Theatre on Fort Street. They've since demolished that building. But every Saturday night they would have different groups put on a show. They were paid for putting on the show. One way of, I guess, organizations to earn money. And so my carnival segment—we were going to put on a show on the Saturday night, and Sunday morning they had that bombing of Pearl Harbor. Our show went on, and then that was it.

War years

I worked in an identification section down at where Jefferson [Elementary] School is, fingerprinting the citizens. Everybody had to have an ID [identification card], and that's where we fingerprinted them.

Some of them [i.e., teachers], were sent out to the rural areas. Some people went to Pearl Harbor to work as clerks. Some people went to work in the pineapple fields to supervise students who had to work in fields, but I never had to do that.

At Farrington we went into double schedule. We had classes in the morning and then another group of classes in the afternoon. We couldn't use the whole campus because they [i.e., U.S. Army] were using the cafeteria to take care of the wounded. They set it up as a hospital. I taught the afternoon shift, and Mrs. [Lorna] Burger, who had the other Hawaiian instruments classes, taught the morning shift. That's when I had to teach a class in commercial training, even though I didn't have a background in that. That was just simple commercial business. And we had a textbook for that, so that was okay.

I remember during those years, they had dug out trenches, and there were practice air raids where we had to go into these trenches for protection.

That was an interesting time, staying months through blackouts. We lived in a small cottage in Kapahulu, and there were not too many windows to black out. Right next door was a Japanese-language school, and they had national guardsmen on duty right over there, just to supervise the building or to man the building.⁵ So we felt pretty safe where we were.

[There was] rationing for different kinds of staples. We had to stand in line so we could buy a bottle of liquor for somebody else, maybe, because we didn't use it ourselves. Standing in line for buying *poi*, I remember doing that. And then one of my teacher friends, her husband belonged to the national guard unit, and he had to serve. But he could get Hershey bars, and oh, you couldn't buy that in the stores. And that was such a treat to get one Hershey bar.

Many of the boys enlisted in the army. Later on they had the GI Bill, so they were able to get whatever further education they needed [at no cost].

Kūhiō School

Then my husband got into the contracting business. And he was doing pretty well, so he said, "Oh, maybe you should take a year off." So I took a year off. And then, I think maybe I got bored, not having anything regular to do during that year off, so I went back. I did some substituting first, and then I was offered a permanent position at Kūhiō School. I had the fifth grade there. I stayed there for about eight years.

Miss Weatherbee, I think, was her name. She was a good, strict principal who had standards to follow, even in report cards. She would go through the report cards, especially the comments that teachers wrote, and she would make comments on the report cards. She went through our plan books, too. It's good to work for people like

that, because you know what you're aiming for, and you know what is expected of you, and you carry out those expectations.

Then we had a Mr. Shimizu. He was allergic to fresh flowers, and he'd get deathly sick when he got a fresh flower *lei*. So when we found that out, we used to give him paper *leis*. He was a very nice person. I got along with every one of my principals.

I had the fifth grade there. One year we'd have the good class, the upper section, and then one year we'd have the lower section. In a way, I think that's good, because you can set your plans up for that particular group of children. But I tell you, when you have the lowest, you really have to have a lot of patience to work with them because they were mentally very slow. And then if you were used to a group of accelerated youngsters, you'd feel frustrated at times. How are you going to help these kids?

There was one little boy, such a nice kid. When I think about it, he really should have had better help than I could give him. He couldn't read. But he could put things together. He gave me a little parakeet, and he knew how to put the cage together. How did he do it? I've never seen him [since then]. I don't know what he finally did. You read about kids now being so frustrated, they get into trouble later on.

Then I had a combination fifth- and sixth-grade class. I had the accelerated group. They were such a pleasurable group to have. The principal let us have a cottage, so it was a self-contained room. They chose their own teams, they had captains, and they worked for credit, for scores, who could amass the greatest number of scores. The ones who set up a little garden outside were given extra credit. One group made curtains for the room, because this was like a cottage. The kids would keep the classroom clean, floors swept and mopped, and our sink clean. We even had our own little restroom. They kept that clean, too. Their parents didn't object. They felt that they were getting some training.

They put up a nice puppet show. I was so proud of them. One of them is now teaching art at McKinley. I used to see another one who played the flute. When she was in junior school she would play the flute, and I knew her mother and father. I had one friend who—well, she knew how to help them, I guess—preferred having the slow kids. But I liked this rotation bit. It was fair for the other teachers who didn't want to be with the slow kids the whole year. But it was a pleasure to have the top kids. I could have had them forever (chuckles).

Then another time, at the same Kūhiō School, the teachers in the upper level—I had only the upper-level fifth and sixth graders—they didn't want to teach music. So they asked me if I would take their classes and teach their classes the music that was required. And I said, "Sure, I'll take them." So they would take care of my class while I took their classes for music.

Dole Intermediate School

After Kūhiō School, I took another year off. When I went back the openings were in the intermediate schools, so that's how I got to Dole Intermediate. When I went to Dole, I stayed there until I retired [in 1972].

I've had a good relationship with parents. I'll give you one instance with one of the parents I had there. This little kid, he was a sassy little kid. And he was in my last-period class. He was supposed to come and get his books by a certain time, and he didn't come. I couldn't keep on waiting for him so I locked the door.

The vice-principal came to me and said, "I've got some problem with one of the parents." So I talked to her over the phone, and I said, "You know, what would you do if your boy came back to you and sassed you," because he had sassed me on something. So I said, "Well, tough. You're not going to get your books."

And so she said, "Oh, I'm so sorry. He didn't tell me that." And the next day she brought a little gift to me, and that kid behaved himself the rest of the time. (Laughs) The kids will go home and tell one story, and if the parents believe 'em hook, line, and sinker, they don't get the teacher's point of view. So I always feel that when somebody tells me anything about somebody, I want to hear the other point of view, too.

I required discipline in the room. I set up the rules in the beginning, for example, no gum chewing in class. And some of the rules helped me to decide what they could do and what they couldn't do, so we worked things out like that. And at least one of the things that they mentioned was that I was fair with them. I could be strict, but I was fair with them.

At Dole I had some of the top kids for the news-writing class. So these would be the top ninth graders. And it was good to work with them, because you'd just give them a suggestion and they'd go right ahead and do it on their own, to put up the school newspaper, to go out and get the news.

The kids had the opportunity to spend two nights at the Kāhala Hilton [Hotel] paying only twenty-one dollars. They had their competition there. I said, "Ask your parents if you can have the money to attend this conference." And so I had, I think, about twenty kids that signed up for it. And then, being the advisor, I was also invited to be there, because you had to be there with your kids. I had a room all to myself—a big room, pineapple on the table, an orchid on the bed with a piece of chocolate. Oh, it was really nice, and the kids enjoyed it.

I had one boy whose father had a photography business. He was a little rascal. We had our little Polaroid camera, so he used to do the pictures for the paper. In fact, we won one award at one conference. So my kids always did very well. But they were good kids, not because of me, but they were good kids. They had the ability.

You know, in the newspapers you hear only about the negative things about Kalihi kids being from such a bad area, from the [low-income] housing, always getting into trouble. And people used to feel sorry for me when I said I was at Dole. They'd ask, "Where is Dole?" I said, "Up Kam[ehameha IV Road]." [They said] something like, "Poor thing, you." And I said, "Not poor thing, me. I got good kids there. I'd rather have those kids than some of the sassy kids in some of the other areas."

Retirement

I retired in 1972. I remember that date because I keep referring to it. Some dates stand out in my mind, others don't.

I enjoyed my teaching, [but] I didn't miss it because I did substitute for two years after I retired. I know what substitutes have to go through when they go to a strange school. I said, "I'll go only to Dole. I know the program, I know the setup. I'll feel comfortable there." I think if their regular teacher has a good program in the class—they know just what to do, they know what is expected of them—they will do the work regardless of who comes in.

At the end of the year, when we retired, the O'ahu Retired Teachers Association [ORTA] invited us to a luncheon. And I signed up right away, and I paid my life membership dues. They needed somebody to do the newsletter, and nobody would do it. And I said, "You relieve me of the membership chairmanship, I'll take over the newswriting of the newsletter." So I've had it ever since.

Somebody said one time, "Why don't we have an obit column?" I said, "It gets too depressing because we lose so many." In April we have our memorial service, and that's when we print all the names of the deceased. But we don't write up anything personal on them. The only personal things that I've really put in the paper is when somebody gets married at this late stage. And that's interesting, because life goes on. We don't want the endings of lives.

I do Meals on Wheels every Monday. I've been doing it for the last, I'd say, about twelve years. I do the driving. I have a partner who delivers the meals to the client. Right now we have the Kapahulu-Kaimukī area. And I feel that as long as I can drive, I don't mind doing that because they really need people to help.

I can tell you, our retired teachers, the ones who belong [to ORTA]—and I know them personally—they are baby-sitting—grandbaby-sitting, you know, or niece- and nephew-sitting. And then I have friends—retired teachers—who are taking care of spouses or relatives.

Then I have friends who volunteer for the Foster [Botanical] Garden regularly. There's another one who volunteers weekly for Bishop Museum in the botany department. There are those who work for their churches. There's one who works at the St. Francis Hospital Gift Shop. She's done that for almost twenty years. There was one that used to work at

the Kaiser Hospital volunteer desk for information. We have people who are docents at 'Iolani Palace.

We have teachers who may not be active in the retired teachers association but they are members. They join the senior citizen club within their area. The others think that—I guess they feel intimidated or they feel that they are not qualified, so they expect the former teachers to assume the leadership roles. And they are very active that way.

For me it was a satisfying profession. You have to like children. You have to be able to work with them. Some may not have the patience. My daughter never wanted to teach. My granddaughter never wanted to teach. That's fine. They fit into their own niches. So whatever they feel comfortable in, whatever they are good at, too, whatever they want to do.

We've had exchange teachers from the Mainland in our schools. And of course, in the beginning some of the [local] kids would try to see if they could put one over on them. But

if they were strong teachers, they got along well with the kids. So it depends on the person, himself or herself, I think. You can go anyplace, and if you know what you're doing, and if you like working with young people, I think there can be an understanding, there can be mutual respect. But the first thing is to like your job, to enjoy it.

ENDNOTES

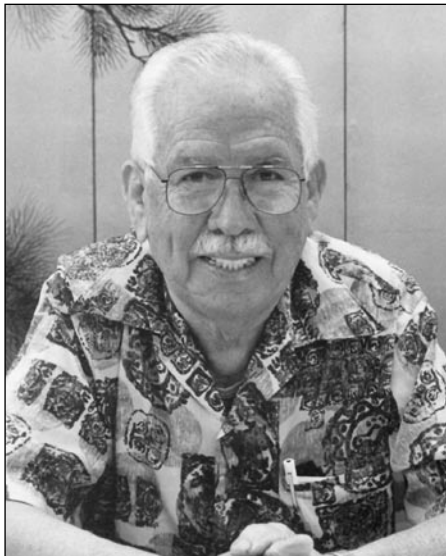
¹ In 1917 Central Grammar School began enrolling students based on their English oral proficiency.

² The site of historic Central Middle School is the location where Princess Ruth Ke'elikōlani had her palace built in 1878. In 1908, the building was converted to Central Grammar School.

³ Childhood game played with a peg and a stick.

⁴ Liquor distilled from ti root

⁵ Japanese-language schools were closed or dissolved during World War II.



Laurence J. Capellas

*Interviewed by Warren Nishimoto (1991)
Narrative edited by Cynthia Oshiro*

Laurence J. Capellas was born in 1913 in Hakalau to two Hawai'i island school-teachers. After attending Hakalau School, St. Mary's School in Hilo, and St. Louis College in Honolulu, he went on to the University of Hawai'i Teachers College, graduating in 1935.

Capellas taught vocational agriculture at Waimea High School on Kaua'i for eight years before being appointed principal of Pā'auhau School on Hawai'i island in 1943. In succeeding years, he served as principal of Pa'auilo Elementary and Intermediate, Pāhala High and Elementary (later renamed Ka'ū High and Pāhala Elementary), and Hilo High schools. In 1966, he joined the Hawai'i island district office as a secondary curriculum specialist.

After completing a forty-two-year career in the Department of Education, Capellas served as president and chairman of the Hawai'i County Economic Opportunity Council. He also served on the boards of the Hawai'i Education Association and the Hawai'i State Retired Teachers Association.

He and his wife, Elsie Schumacher Capellas, raised two sons.

Hakalau

My father [Eugene S. Capellas] was principal of Hakalau School, and my mother [Eliza Reis Capellas] was a homemaking teacher. There were nine of us [LC was the fifth-born], plus a cousin, an aunt, and a nephew who lived with us.

We lived in the principal's cottage in Hakalau, and as our family grew, they kept adding on and adding on to that same house until finally it was housing fourteen people.

I took care of the [family] garden, and we had chickens, of course, and I would raise one or two pigs a year. Whenever we killed a pig, [Mother] explained to us about the heart and the lungs and how they operated, and the spleen, all the different parts.

My dad and mother both taught school for forty-nine years and would have made their fiftieth except that the war [World War II] was on and my dad wanted to retire and run for the [territorial] senate. He served forty-two years of his career as principal of Hakalau School.

He believed in education as the most precious thing that you can give to your children. All of us, except two of my sisters [and a brother]—six of the nine anyway—ended up in the field of education.

I think that our family, especially the three boys, suffered a lot more than the other kids in school when it came to corporal punishment. And if some kid was paddled or scolded by my dad and the kid was bigger than I, this boy would pick a fight with me after school. I had to form my own gang for protection.

The entire [Hakalau Plantation Company] sugar plantation was my territory or turf. For example, maybe on a day which was a holiday, in the morning I might be having

breakfast at some Japanese boy's home, and then maybe lunchtime we'd be at some Hawaiian boy's home, and then in the evening maybe we'd be down in the Spanish Camp where they were making homemade soup and Spanish bread in stone ovens.

I remember as a kid, with my gang, we used to get in all kinds of trouble, but not necessarily of a destructive nature. For example, the plantation [workers] would cut sugarcane, and they had mules to pull their cane cars up to where the cane was stacked. At the end of the day they'd leave the cane cars up at the tops of a hill, wherever they were cutting cane.

In the evening, especially on a moonlit night, we'd go up and we'd take the brake off the cane car, and we'd go riding down to the bottom of the hill, jump off and go back up for another cane car.

We [also] would jam the flumes, especially the main flume, where all the cane was coming in [to the mill] from different fields. The cane would then back up and the mill would have no cane to grind. Then we'd hide in the cane field and the *lumas* [overseers] would come up on their horses, swearing, looking for us.

Hakalau School only went up to the eighth grade. I skipped the fifth grade, so when I finished the [eighth] grade, I was only twelve years old, and it made it very difficult for me to go to high school at that early age. You had to take an examination to go on to Hilo Intermediate School. Those who didn't pass usually went to work on the plantations. I thought I should repeat the eighth grade under a different program, and selected St. Mary's School [a parochial school] in Hilo.

To save money to help with educational costs, I worked on Saturdays on the plantation. When we first went to work,

at age twelve, we got fifty cents a day, and we worked ten hours. That's five cents an hour!

They called that [job] *huki lepo*, where you pull the weeds and the grass all up [at] the base of the cane, using a hoe. As I got older I cut seed [cane], *pulapula* they called that. And then later on I worked with mules. I had pack mules with which we would move flumes.

Later I became a water boy, which was a prized job. (Laughs) You didn't have to work with a *luna* standing over you. I'd have to take water to the [laborers]. At that time, there were streams that were not polluted on both sides of the cane fields. And there were springs, too, in different places. I had a pole and two buckets. And then you had a long guava stick, at the end of which there was a can to make a dipper.

The hard part about being a water boy is you had to carry all the [laborers'] *bentōs*, or the lunch pails, from one place to the other.

Honolulu

I had graduated from the tenth grade of St. Mary's [School]. I wanted to go to St. Louis College¹ [for high school], because my brother had gone there. It was 1929 when I went up there to school. Of course, in those days, to go to Honolulu, we'd travel steerage. They were all like the *Hualālai*, they're medium-sized boats [i.e., inter-island steamers]. It only cost us seven dollars each way. And those days, when you got to Honolulu you could catch a trolley for ten cents. So from the wharf [i.e., Honolulu Harbor] up to St. Louis [College], that's all it cost.

St. Louis doesn't have a boarding department now, but then they did. I played on the boarders' basketball and bare-foot football [teams]. I was on the St. Louis track team.

[Capellas graduated from St. Louis in 1931 and began attending the University of Hawai'i that fall.]

I wanted to become a veterinarian. But while I was a sophomore at the university, my mother became ill, and so I had to forget about that and go into teaching. Since I had most of the courses that were needed to go into vo-ag [vocational agriculture], I decided I better try that field.

There were no jobs. It was during the [Great] Depression. [In the summer of 1934] I started digging cesspools for the County [of Hawai'i]. So when I graduated from the University of Hawai'i [in 1935], I figuratively had my diploma in my back pocket and I was digging cesspools!

Waimea

Out of the eleven graduates in our vocational agriculture class, I was the first one to be hired. In June [1935], I started the ag [program] in Waimea, Kaua'i.

I had to recruit a class who would be the nucleus of those taking vocational ag. During that first summer these

students worked with me on the [sugar] plantation [i.e., Waimea Sugar Mill Company]. I [also] took about eleven or twelve kids who would be labeled MRE now, mentally retarded kids. They agreed to help at the school farm. In exchange, the ag students tutored them.

The Waimea High agriculture farm was set up on plantation property under an agreement between the plantation manager and me. And he and I, together, borrowed \$1200 to buy all the fencing and plumbing supplies, and materials to build the pigpens,

The farm had to make a profit. We used the money [from the sale of produce] for our ag students to go on excursions and to attend conventions. We paid students who worked on Saturdays and Sundays,

We worked on Saturdays and Sundays because of the size of the school farm. The piggery had about thirty breeding sows. We had about 1,000 birds [i.e., chickens] and 200 ducks. And we had a small orchard, and we produced vegetables on about four acres of prime land.

Every Saturday morning, [the produce would be sold]. On Friday afternoon we'd take two pigs to market. We had taken orders during the week for Saturday delivery. We sold turkeys and chickens that we dressed.

There was income also from two sugarcane contracts. We harvested one field this year and then harvested the other field the next year. The kids would fertilize, weed, and irrigate the cane.

Being an ag teacher, I was paid twenty dollars more per month than regular teachers because we worked twelve months a year, making my total salary \$140 a month. In the beginning I got ten dollars additional in the form of car allowance.

When [World War II] broke out, I was given a 4F rating. When I tried to get into the armed services—although I had a wife and two kids—the only place that would take me was the [U.S. Coast Guard]. All they were going to do, I found out later, was to give me a uniform and I would do the same thing I was doing as a volunteer in the home guard. We concluded that I could be serving the government more profitably as a civilian.

One of my duties was [to] visit farms [on Kaua'i] to see whether they actually needed to be buying imported feed for their livestock. I would approve the amount of feed that they could buy and ask them to market surplus animals and birds that were not producing.

During the war, we were hauling garbage—or slop or whatever you want to call it—from the army camps around there, which helped. Our pigs were really fat and so was the big watchdog that we had down on the farm.

[At the time], I only had a four-year teaching certificate. So I had to save my vacation days to go to summer school every third year. It took me three summers to get my fifth-year certificate.

When I was in Honolulu in my last summer to get my fifth-year certificate, I ran into one of the district superintendents, and he told me, “Hey, Larry. A DPI [Department of Public Instruction] committee is doing interviews this week. They’re looking for principals.”

I said, “Ah, I don’t want to be a principal. I’m happy where I am, even though I work twelve months.”

He told me, “No, no, go ahead, just for fun.” And he was one of those people screening. Webling was his name, Gus Webling. He was the district superintendent in Honolulu.

I must have [passed], because in August [1942], I got a letter from the school department offering me ‘Ulupalakua School [on Maui], which made me laugh because my dad had [once] been [principal] there. But I couldn’t go because we had such a big farm program going [at Waimea High School] and a very active Future Farmers [of America] set up.

[Then] the DPI sent a young UH ag graduate [to Waimea]. He worked with me the whole school year, 1942–43. So then I felt free to leave Kaua‘i.

Pā‘auhau

The DPI offered me Pā‘auhau School [on Hawai‘i island]. Pā‘auhau was strictly [a] sugar plantation [community]. This was that old Scotch type of operation near the Hāmākua Coast.²

To accept the principalship meant that I would leave in August. The war was still on, 1943. I didn’t want to leave, because my wife was from Kaua‘i and my two boys were born there. But my family was over here [on Hawai‘i island] and my father had some property in Honomū, about thirty acres, which I was interested in buying and farming.

We only had seven on the [school] staff, including the kindergarten teacher, and me. I had to do the payroll for the teachers, the cafeteria reports, bank the money, and all kinds of other “dogcatcher” jobs.

That community was really interesting, because the kids there, the boys and the girls, were playing hopscotch. (Laughs) I got the boys to play touch football—of course, it wasn’t always touch. I also taught them how to play basketball.

Being a teaching principal, I was in charge of the seventh-grade class. I pushed those kids to the limit as far as their education was concerned and tried all kinds of novel ways to teach them. We’d use mental arithmetic, different types of art. For the first time the school had a May Day program, but a Hawaiian-type May Day program. We taught them some Hawaiiana.

Pa‘auilo

So from Pā‘auhau, they sent me to Pa‘auilo School³ [in 1944]. The Second World War was still on. I heard that the community wanted to make some changes at the school. I talked it over with my family and we decided to move.

They didn’t have a kindergarten until I got there and then I got one going. The [plantation] manager’s wife helped get it started. In fact, I think the plantation manager’s son and my son attended kindergarten in Pa‘auilo. The plantation carpenters made all the furniture and most of the items that we needed for a kindergarten.

When I was at Pa‘auilo, the school burned down on a Sunday. The whole school went down, except for three classrooms. I was having lunch with the [territorial] auditors. I had gone to school with some of them. We were sitting down eating lunch, and I’ll be darned, the school started to burn. I think it was faulty wiring.

Within one week we did start school. We had four classes going in the plantation gymnasium. The Japanese[-language] school had a building, and they gave us the four classrooms to use. The basement of the Buddhist church housed our kindergarten. The Episcopalians loaned us their hall, which wasn’t very big. The Filipino association loaned us their hall. The cafeteria was set up in another building. It was actually the basement of a classroom. So we⁴ were able to prepare food.

Then the county came out and put up some canec⁵ buildings in a hurry.

Ka‘ū

[In 1946] the manager at Pāhala [sugar plantation] at that time, Jack Ramsey, who was a good friend of my dad, insisted that the DOE [Department of Education, formerly the Department of Public Instruction] send me there [to be principal of the school], which, in a way, was a good thing, because I worked well with plantation people and we had good rapport.

While I was there, we changed the name from Pāhala School to Ka‘ū High [School]. But the Pāhala people, being very proud, didn’t want to give up the name Pāhala. So they insisted that the name be “Ka‘ū High and Pāhala Elementary [School],” which was kind of funny, but the Board of Education bought that idea.⁶

It was all the way from first grade through the twelfth. The youngsters came from Nā‘ālehu⁷ and Pāhala to the high school section. There was a lot of rivalry between those two plantations. I guess that was the way they got more sugar per acre. The managers got after the employees, starting the real rivalry, which in a way made it more difficult to run the school when you had kids from two communities that were always competing. On the other hand, it also gave them a reason to try harder, to show that their community was tops.

When I got there, I ran into other problems. The ILWU [International Longshoremen’s & Warehousemen’s Union] was getting ready for a strike. You know, the 1946 strike.⁸ And so the unions were trying to stir up anti-plantation [management] sentiment. The trouble there was that the manager [Jack Ramsey of Hawaiian Agricultural Company, Ltd.] was such a nice guy, they really didn’t want to picket him.

While they were on strike, I got the union [members] to come up and help us at the school, the carpenters and so forth. There was an unused boxing ring. We cut up the boxing ring and we set up a portable stage, a platform running up to the main stage.

All of the elementary playground equipment was up near the high school now, because we had exchanged buildings. We got the plantation to loan us bulldozers, and over the weekends we [built] a brand-new playground for the elementary kids. The fellows who were plumbers and so forth came up and helped us install the metal-pipe swings.

When I first went there, we had, I think, twenty-one teachers. About eighteen of my staff were Mainland people and people who had come in from O'ahu or someplace else. So we had to kind of build camaraderie. We worked together that way because we were isolated way out there. It was difficult to get into Hilo. We didn't have that nice highway now going all the way from Ka'ū.

One big problem was that our commercial buses cost so darned much money to rent. At that time we had to finance many things ourselves. We bought surplus buses and had them remodeled and repainted. We then had buses to take our students into Hilo, to the Volcano area on excursions.

We ran summer school for the elementary students. We got the youngsters who had a lot of reading problems and we got teachers to volunteer. At that time, we didn't have a teachers' union. So teachers did not mind helping with these youngsters on their own time.

We added a kindergarten [class], which was another new thing. We got Kapāpala School closed and used their buildings. We got the teachers and the plantation head carpenter to help us draw the plans for a different type of classroom. It's still standing; it's still being used.

I laugh now because they're talking about the schools being more independent. I was a pretty independent guy. In fact, my district superintendent told me, "You know, Larry, you keep bending that school code, and one of these days you're going to break it. I'm going to get you!" That was said in a friendly manner, of course.

We tried a lot of innovative things. I believe that if somebody gets an idea, don't discourage him. A science teacher comes to me with some idea or English teacher comes to me with some idea, go ahead! And we'd help. We used our PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]. We worked as kind of a community team. They call it today the school-base program [i.e., school/community-based management]. We were already doing that. It's nothing new.

Hilo

I was offered [the principalship of] Hilo High School [by district superintendent Ralph Kiyosaki in 1959]. I had to first get acquainted with the whole school. And the best

thing is to first get to know your secretary and get to know your vice principals, and your custodians, and your cafeteria manager.

That was a rough year [1959–60], because 1960 had the tsunami. We had the lava [flow] down Kapoho, which wiped out Kapoho School.⁹ And Pāhoa was having a hard time.

[Meanwhile], I had a student strike. A small group set the whole thing up. Hilo High still allowed hazing. A girl came in my office, somebody had taken an egg and smashed it on her permanent. Some upperclassmen [were] trying to get this sophomore girl to push a peanut with her nose. The bell rang, and the kids didn't go back to their classes.

I went into my office, got on the PA system, and told the kids that they had not followed the rules that we had set, and so they were all to go back to their classrooms, that the hazing was over.

Well, the kids that started the strike—they had already called the newspaper. I told the kids I wanted each class to send their representatives to the conference room. When they got there, I talked to them. [Schools superintendent] Ralph Kiyosaki talked to them; Dr. Goo [of the school board] talked to them. We agreed that we weren't going to have that kind of nonsense.

I told the [students] that if any of them had any ideas, send somebody up to my office to talk to me.

So I guessed it was a time to make some changes in the school. Some teachers, some department heads, who were more or less leaders in the school, were getting new books all the time. We organized our faculty and set up a curriculum committee. The curriculum committee would now make the decision as to whether they needed new science books, new English books, and so forth.

Then we talked about some of the courses that we had that we should change, drop; some new course that we could bring in. So as a result, while I was there at Hilo we dropped about thirty of the courses that we had and instituted courses that were more adaptable to the changing times.

In Ka'ū, you could always depend on the plantation in case the county would not bother too much with you. But in Hilo, you didn't have a plantation, you had many plantations. So we reorganized. I believed in a strong PTA, and a strong alumni. We got 900 parents to join Hilo High School for the first time.

I believe that if you can explain to your legislators what's what, [you can get their support]. You take the PTA president and the Hilo High School alumni president [with you]. The PTA gave us some money. So we took the legislators to dinner, we lay the cards on the table, and got [more] funding for the school.

We got money to construct a brand-new library and a brand-new cafeteria, a new band room, and a new ag and art building, because those were the worst buildings on the campus.

The first year I was there, I tried to get a carnival going to start a swimming-pool fund. I figured, Hilo, you surely ought to be able to—with that many people—get a swimming pool. We raised \$9,000. The teachers and the staff signed a petition—I think eighty-some-odd signatures—telling me, “No more carnivals, please!”

I laughed to myself. I said, “That’s okay.”

Well, in the meantime, Mrs. Carlsmith heard that we had tried to raise money for the swimming pool. I explained to her why we needed it. I said, “We don’t have a lot of big kids, but maybe our kids can learn how to swim, and the better swimmers, maybe they can get scholarships.”

And so she said, “I tell you what, when can you go with me to see John Dykes?” John Dykes was head of a trust [company] in Hilo, First Trust [Company of Hilo, Ltd.].

I said, “I’ll go right now.”

[At the meeting], in his Scotch brogue, [John Dykes] says, “Well, laddie, Mrs. [John M.] Ross¹⁰ has some stock in Honolulu Oil. Her husband bought it for five dollars a share, and now it’s worth about seventy to seventy-five dollars a stock. We understand that you need money for a swimming pool. Well, how much do you need?”

I told him, “The Ka’ū High School swimming pool cost about \$60,000. Maybe if we can get about, oh, \$90,000 then we can build a little bigger one in Hilo.” He said, “I’ll talk to the members of the trust who are handling her money, and I’ll let you know. Come back on Thursday.” So Thursday I was right there. He told me, “Well, we agreed that we can give you the money.”

I went down to the county building department, public works. I knew a fellow there who used to do some drawings for us. He [is] a Hilo High School graduate. So he drew up the plans.

That pool can hold 2500 students on the bleachers. It’s all concrete. And it’s got steel beams and thick pipe. I don’t know how many hundreds or thousands of kids have learned how to swim there. So it’s really been a godsend.

Hawai’i district office

In 1966, along with Bob Omura of the University [of Hawai’i], we wrote two projects for students. One was for intermediate school students who were potential dropouts. It was called Hukilike. *Huki* in Hawaiian is to pull, and *like* is everybody [i.e., together]. We figured that the parents pulling together with kids and the teachers could end up helping the kids.

Another project that we wrote up was Holomua. And there were federal funds for that. *Holomua* in Hawaiian means to forge ahead and to try to achieve your best in whatever you’re doing. The idea of that [was] that it would be based on the concept of community education. For example, if a girl says she wants to be a nurse, we could then give her a chance to visit the Hilo Hospital and have her

actually work with a registered nurse, to learn as an observer what is involved in such a career.

I was really interested in trying to get federal funds for all our schools to help kids. The DOE asked me if I would leave Hilo High—that was my seventh year [there]—and handle all the federal programs for the district. I was also to handle vocational-technical education, and also the project for underachieving youngsters. I was working with Title I programs. I [even] had something to do with the cafeterias, because we had a large amount of surplus federal food coming in.

Under Title I, we developed a project over in Kona, which we called Operation Live-in, which received national recognition. These kids lived in Miloli’i. They had to change buses about four times just to get to Konawaena [School]. By the time they got to school, they were half asleep. We took the two-classroom building [at ‘Ala’ē School] and we converted one part of it to a library and a study and the other part into a dormitory for the boys. These were only kids about third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, up to eighth grade.

We used VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America] workers. We also had a VISTA worker over on the girls’ side in a teachers’ cottage. Right across the street we had the *kupuna* [elder] idea, where this couple came down and helped with the kids and told them Hawaiian legends and gave them love and comfort. We got the kids to go to the dentist and tried to see that they got a better diet. The kids had a garden.

Most of the parents were fishermen. We brought the parents up from Miloli’i and taught them how to cook low-fat foods and taught them how to sew. We got the youngsters to learn quite a bit, and their parents did, too.

Retirement

I retired in ’77, but I still stayed on in the general field of education. I was with the Hawai’i County Economic Opportunity Council as president and board chairman. It’s a non-profit, quasi-public community-action program. The low-income, handicapped, and elderly are covered by twenty-eight projects run by a staff of 140.

Some of the projects and the ideas that I had as a school administrator, we were using there and are still using. Last year, for example, we had a hundred kids in our dropout program in the Hilo area. We hire our own counselors, we have our own teachers, and we work with these kids. And out of that hundred referrals, ninety-eight kids stayed in school or came back to school, and, more important, finished the year.

I believe in giving the local kids a chance to move. They’ve got the brain power.

I believe that you can do anything that you want to. You got to realize that, for example, if you’re digging a tunnel, you’re going to hit a big rock, okay. That’s going to be one of the things that you’re going to have to conquer. Because you’re going to hit some more rocks and some more rocks,

but at the end you'll get through, and you'll see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I had a girl come in my office once at Hilo High School. Because she had had a fight with her boyfriend and with her parents and everything else, she tried to take pills to kill herself.

I said, "How old are you?"

She says, "Fifteen."

I said, "I'm sixty. I've been in this world four times as long as you. I would be happy to exchange with you. You take my place, you take my salary." I talked to her for a long time.

She finally graduated from school. Maybe I had a little bit to do with it. If I see her on the street now, with her kids and all, she always [says], "How are you Mr. Capellas?"

I think she realizes as she gets older that that rock is nothing compared to life itself.

ENDNOTES

¹ Today known as St. Louis School, a Catholic high school in Honolulu.

² Pā'auhau Sugar Company, as well as other sugar plantations along the Hāmākua Coast, imported managers and skilled workers from Scotland.

³ Also located on the Hāmākua Coast

⁴ Hawaiian Agricultural Company, Ltd. was the name of the sugar plantation in Pāhala.

⁵ Canec was a cheap building material made in Hawai'i from sugarcane stalks treated with arsenic and used in the early to middle decades of the twentieth century.

⁶ The name change was probably the result of the Territorial Board of Education's attempt to broaden the school's community reach. Ka'ū is the name of a district on Hawai'i Island; while Pāhala is the name of a town in that district.

⁷ Hutchinson Sugar Plantation Company

⁸ The 1946 sugar strike, the first by sugar laborers represented by the ILWU, lasted seventy-nine days.

⁹ Lava from the January 1960 eruption of Kīlauea destroyed the entire village of Kapoho.

¹⁰ Her husband was manager of Hakalau Plantation Company.



Marion McGregor Lee Loy

Interviewed by Joe Rossi (1991)

Narrative edited by Cynthia Oshiro

Marion Frances Kaleleonalani McGregor Lee Loy was born in 1911 in Honolulu. She attended Central Grammar and Lincoln Grammar schools before entering Kamehameha School for Girls in the ninth grade. Lee Loy graduated from Kamehameha in 1929 and enrolled in the University of Hawai‘i, where she received her fifth-year teaching certificate in 1934.

Her first teaching job was at Huelo, Maui. Later, Lee Loy taught at Hawai‘i island schools in Kohala, Honoka‘a, and Hilo. In 1951 she returned to Honolulu, where she taught at Ali‘iōlani, Ka‘ahumanu, and Kapālama elementary schools. She spent the last fourteen years of her career at Farrington High School before retiring in 1974.

Lee Loy raised one son from her first marriage to William Flazer. She and her second husband, Samuel Kanu‘uhiwalani Lee Loy, raised two daughters and a son.

Growing up

My father [Daniel Pamawaho McGregor, Sr.] originally came from Hau‘ula, O‘ahu. That’s on the Windward side. Since his father died when he was a year old, he was brought up by his grandfather, who was a *konohiki* for that area. *Konohiki* in the Hawaiian term means a lesser chief [i.e., headman of an *ahupua‘a* land division under the chief]. In this case, [grandfather] was a tax assessor of the area.

I recall my father telling me that once a year people would come up [to their home] to pay what they call ‘*auhau*, which were the taxes for that area. Maybe they’d bring so many pigs and so many this and that.

My mother [Louise Aoe Wong-Kong McGregor] was born in Maui. She was half Chinese and half Hawaiian.

My father met my mother because he was a substitute teacher, and she was the teacher at a one-room school in Hau‘ula. But when they got married, teaching didn’t pay too much. I think she said when they first started, it was thirty dollars a month or something like that. (Laughs) But, you know, bread was only five cents a loaf.

I remember him telling us that he sent away for this La Salle Extension University lessons in accounting. And then when this paymaster’s job opened and they gave him an accounting test and he passed it, he became a paymaster.

When I was about five years old, my Aunt Lani, my mother’s sister, died in childbirth. She was married to a doctor. Somehow they split, and he had gone back to the Mainland. The sisters said, “Well, let’s divide the kids up.”

My mother said, “No, that’s not right. The children, if possible, should be all brought up together so they’d know their brothers and sisters.”

Since they didn’t agree, they went to court, and my mother was awarded all six children. So you can imagine,

we had six of our own at the time. My youngest brother had not been born yet.

So Mom and Dad brought up the six Hutchinson children. And of course, after a few years, my brother Prince came along. He’s the baby of the family.

My mother and father were very close friends of Prince [Jonah] Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole. He [Prince Kūhiō] said, “Aoe, if it’s a boy, will you give the boy my name?”

So she said, “Oh well, all right.” But she worried, because his name is Jonah, and she thought it was such a jinx name. But she did tell him yes, [and] it was a boy, so that’s why she gave the name Prince to him.

It was a large family, and yet we seemed to get along pretty good most of the time. Every Sunday night we would have church service at our home. My mother would get on the piano, and she would play, “There is beauty all around, when there’s love at home,” and we had to sing that song.

We had to go around the room, and everybody would say a [Bible] verse. Well, we had taught Prince to say, “God is love,” because it’s the shortest one. And then one of my cousins took “God is love,” and he [Prince] said, “That’s not fair, that’s my verse!”

There are a lot of things you learn in a large family. We were given just one serving of food, and that was it. When your dish was clean, you didn’t ask for seconds, because you knew there were too many. Or if somebody didn’t want to finish or somebody didn’t like carrots, they’d say, “Well, I’ll take your carrot,” or, “You can take my something.” We would exchange.

At that time, we lived on Kukui Street. Later on, most of the Chinese [there] moved out to Bingham Tract when they opened the tract. So we were wanting to go there, too, because we’d be near the University [of Hawai‘i] where

eventually we'd go to school. But my parents said no, that wasn't to be, because my father had some land over in Kalihi down here. There's a little lane, still there today [off of North King Street, near the present Farrington High School], it's called McGregor Lane.

I [first] went to Central Grammar [School]. At the time, it was the English-speaking school.¹ And then Lincoln was designated the English-speaking school,² so my mother had us take a test, and we all landed at Lincoln Grammar School, which [was later known as] Linekona School. I graduated from the first class there, 1925.

The test they gave us, oh, a lot of it was oral. Mostly they asked questions about your family, like how many children were in the family, what did your father do, and things like that. And so they said, "Oh, you speak English very well." So we knew when they said that we were going to get in.

Well, the ones that didn't get in, I think, were the ones that felt very bad, because they said that it was just like we were an elite group, and that education was for everyone and there shouldn't be that. But I could see why the [Department] of Public Instruction wanted to keep as many students who could speak well together so that the [English] language wouldn't be diluted.

My parents both spoke Hawaiian fluently. But they didn't speak Hawaiian to us, and they didn't want us to learn Hawaiian, because my mother said that if we learned Hawaiian, we would begin to speak a kind of pidgin. Especially being a teacher herself, she didn't want any of her children to speak pidgin.

In my class I don't remember any Japanese or Chinese [students]. It was just White and Hawaiians and Portuguese. Later on, there were some Chinese, but in my particular class I didn't have Chinese.

At Kamehameha, of course, we lived [i.e., boarded] at the school. There was a Preparatory Department for young boys,³ and there was a school for girls that ran from seventh grade to twelfth, and then the [older] boys' was seven to twelve like ours, the girls' school.

We were under a strict schedule. We began at 8:00. Of course, we had devotions, which usually ran for about fifteen minutes, and they gave announcements for the day. This was [in] this large assembly hall that held everybody. And then we left to go to our various classes.

The ninth-grade class had the longest day, because we took all kinds of things. We took the regular math, English, science. [And] they taught us home nursing.

On Saturdays, if we had no demerits, we could go out for the day. They usually let us out about 9:30 [a.m.], and we had to be home before 5:00. If you didn't get back in time, well, then you lost your following Saturday to go out.

Our class, I think, was the naughtiest class, because I remember Miss [Maude] Schaeffer, who had [later] become

our principal at junior year, said that we were the most undignified seniors she ever saw. We know we didn't win ribbons with her.

Our junior year we had biology class, and we were divided into groups. We had an aquarium and took care of the aquarium. We'd say to our teacher, "Oh, Miss Catlin,"—she was our biology teacher—"can we go down and try to catch some minnows?"

There was a stream that ran along the edge of the school.⁴ But we weren't going to catch minnows, we wanted to go and eat green mangos, because it was mango season (laughs).

I then went to the kitchen, because the Chinese cook was very nice to me. I went in and I asked him to give me a cup of *shōyu* [soy sauce]. We would eat the [green] mangos with *shōyu*. When I started walking down the steps out of the kitchen, who should be coming from the dispensary building, but Miss Schaeffer!

I grabbed a hibiscus leaf. And I put it over there [i.e., over the cup]. And then she says, "Oh, Marion, where are you going?" I said, "Oh, I am going to join my group. They went down to catch minnows for the aquarium."

And she said, "Oh, what do you have there?" I said, "I have a butterfly. If I show you, it might fly away." She said, "Oh, oh, I see."

So I went on down. Kehau was on the tree still picking mangos, and Alexa and Edith, all the rest of the gang, were out sitting there. They had brought a knife, and were cutting, eating.

Then we heard, "Kehau, what are you doing on that tree?" And she was so nervous that she dropped some of the mango, I think, on the head of Miss Schaeffer (laughs).

Cecilia Arnold was the president of the class. She said, "Oh, Miss Schaeffer, you should taste some of this green mango. They're delicious." Then my cousin Edith grabs that *shōyu* thing. She says, "You can dip it in *shōyu*, it tastes better."

Miss Schaeffer looked at me, she looked at the cup. She said, "Oh, that's your butterfly, is it?" (Laughs) I looked down. I felt so ashamed of myself, getting caught. My gracious. "Okay, girls, you come with me." She marched us to the dispensary, and we were each given a tablespoon of castor oil. So you can imagine, that afternoon we were running to the toilet all the time (laughs).

We were on the punishment list. We were to go to the dispensary and work for two hours each. If you're not going to mop and sweep, then they have you take boards, and they have these big, wide plasters, and you cut it in different sizes, and then you strip it on the board. So there we'd sit for hours, putting things on boards till our two hours were up.

[Senior year], there were twenty-one of us, so we were divided into [groups of] seven. There were seven that

lived in our cottage. And there were five bedrooms in that cottage. One [bedroom] was for the house mother, that was the teacher. The second one was for “Baby D” And then the other six girls were two in a room.

“Baby D” meant baby director. We took care of a live baby. His name was Edmond Austen, but we called him Denny. For one week we washed all his diapers—we stayed home from school—the work was given us to catch up—and we made his formula, fed him, and so on.

When you lived down in senior cottage, you took turns. You were a hostess one week, then you were with Baby D, then you were housekeeper. Then, of course, there was a cook. And then there was the dishwasher, and what else? I think we had assistant cook[sl, two people to help.

University of Hawai‘i

At graduation they had given me the scholarship to go to the [Territorial] Normal [and Training] School. The truth of the matter was I actually did not want to be a teacher; I wanted to be a nurse. I got interested in nursing because we nursed at school, and I thought, gee, this is so nice because you can help people who are helpless. So I told my mother I wanted to be a nurse.

She told me, “See, they know you’re going to make a good teacher, that’s why they awarded you that scholarship.” But she said, “Too bad you can’t take the scholarship, because I want you to go to the University of Hawai‘i instead of going to this normal training school.”

When we were seniors at Kamehameha, everybody had to take Hawaiian [as a second language]. Our teacher was Professor John Wise, who was also the professor of languages at the university. So naturally, when we were there, we went on, took more from him. So I took all the Hawaiian that I could.

In my junior year [at the University of Hawai‘i], they closed the normal school,⁵ and all those that graduated from normal school became juniors with us [at UH]. I finished the university in February 1933. And then I went back for my fifth year [teaching certificate].

When we did our fifth year, one semester you go out to Kalākaua Intermediate [School] or, I think, also Washington Intermediate [School]. Over at Kalākaua, I had [to teach] English. When we had our study period, they had us go and work in [either] the [school] library or dispensary. And I was assigned to the dispensary. So I would go with the nurse, Miss Westendorf, into the community. They had a list of those who didn’t come to school.

I remember there was one that they suspected—she told me, “Don’t touch anything.” They discovered she [the student] had leprosy [i.e., Hansen’s disease] when they made the test. It was from the father, he had leprosy, too.

First teaching job— Huelo, Maui.

After doing fifth year at Kalākaua, I felt like I was ready for anything. But first they told me that Mr. [Oren E.] Long—he was then the superintendent of [the Department of] Public Instruction—assigned me to an eighth-grade class over there [Maui]. So I got on the boat.

I got there Monday morning, and the principal said, “Well, the eighth grade sits here and the seventh here and the sixth grade here.”

“Oh,” I said, “three grades. Well, I suppose I should juggle them around.” But I didn’t dare tell her I was shivering in my boots.

Shizuko, the girl who taught that [class] before me, wrote me a note because she knew me. She told me what she did. She [busied] the two classes that she was not going to [address] with work to do, make sure they got started, then she would work with the [other] ones. So that’s what I did.

I said to Mrs. Watson [the principal], “On Fridays, I’m going to send the boys out to play, and I’m going to teach the girls to sew.” She said, “Oh, that’s fine.”

You know, [S. H.] Kress [& Company] used to sell little blocks that you could eventually join and make a quilt. They cost only about fifteen cents, so one weekend I took off and went home [to Honolulu] and bought enough for all the girls to have at least one and enough of the embroidery thread and embroidering needles.

I would teach, “Now, this is how you make the French knot; this is called running stitch.” And they all had a different pattern, so no two had the same.

I imagine Huelo was maybe only one of a few schools where they don’t feed in too much [resources] there, because of the small enrollment. But for what little they had, the youngsters were very keen about learning there. It was so funny, they wanted to stay after school. We wanted to shoo them out of the classroom, because we wanted to go back to the [teachers’] cottage and do things for ourselves.

Hawai‘i Island schools—1935–51

I taught from 1935 to 1951 at various schools on the Big Island. The first was Kohala High and Grammar School. I was [also] the school librarian part-time. I had one class in English, and in the afternoon I had the girls’ physical education classes from ninth grade to twelfth grade.

The [teachers’] cottages divided the elementary school, where they had this great big yard, and the school buildings for the high school and intermediate on the other side of this roadway.

I liked living in the cottage. We had a nice group. And then we also had the other cottage mates visit us. Sometimes we would have potluck dinners together. I would have stayed there, but when I had that visitation from that ghost army, that was the end.

I woke up [one night] with these dogs crying. It was a

wailing more than a barking, you know. And the Hawaiians used to say when you hear that kind of bark, that means there's going to be a death in the family. I could hear, at a distance, drums—boom, boom, boom, boom. And then it sounded like a lot of people walking. It was like people coming toward our cottage, and it was getting louder and louder.

Right next to my room was a bathroom, and then the second bedroom that Miss [Tsuruyo] Yamamoto occupied. And what should I see but this white figure, all sheeted—I was so frightened. Somehow I couldn't scream, but I looked and I said, "Who is that?" And she said she was Tsuruyo. And she said, "I'm going to come and sleep with you for a while." I could hear her heart beating, and I knew she was frightened. It sounded like the army was going down to the playground of the elementary school. So I finally said to Tsuruyo, "I'm going to get up and see who that is." We had these old-fashioned shades, you know, that you pull down by string. I opened the windows and looked out. Suddenly there was no sound at all. No laughter, no Hawaiian words, but it was absolutely calm, and the yard was clear of anybody. But there was this late misty moon shining into the yard.

Well, the next morning I thought I would ask Doris [Kotake], our roommate. And I said, "Doris, did you hear the dogs barking last night?" She said, "No."

About that time, Tsuruyo interrupted. So I went to the kitchen where she was, and she said, "Don't say anything more because Doris is going to think you and I are crazy because we're hearing armies and people marching and people talking."

We came out to eat breakfast and nothing was said. Then I went to open the library. And Mr. Harlan Roberts, the principal, said to me, "Good morning, Miss McGregor. How did you sleep?" I said, "Oh, just fine." He said, "Then you didn't hear the drums?"

When he said that, I was so astounded. I said to him, "Did you hear the drums?" He said, "Yes, I've heard them for the last thirteen years. The first year I was frightened. But now, I just take it for granted. They come right through."

I said, "Look, Mr. Roberts, as much as I love to be here at this school, please okay a transfer for me next year, because I'm Hawaiian, I'm scared of those kinds of things."

In the meantime, I wrote home to my father and mother, telling them about this experience. My father wrote back and said, "You heard the ghost army. It's called *huaka'i pō*." He said that where they're very strong, they come back all the time.

Anyway, I got my transfer out of there.

Later on, they moved the cottages to a different area of the school so that this wouldn't happen.

Hilo was the only intermediate school [on Hawai'i island] at the time. And they took in everybody from that area: Waiākea, Hilo proper, Kaūmana, wherever. Elementary schools fed right into it. That's why it was a very large school.

[During World War II], we had to every day go to school with our gas mask slung on the side. Every so often we would have parades, right around the school grounds. We had competition in the classrooms to buy [war] stamps. You'd get this big chart that's out there in the library where everybody can look to see what classes are 100 percent each week.

We had one boy in our class whose family belonged to a religion that did not believe in [war]. Because he didn't buy stamps, I told him, "Well, let me buy a stamp for you." He said, "Oh, no. If my parents find out that you bought a stamp, I would be in trouble." So I said, "Okay, Lloyd, that's all right."

They [the other children] were the ones that were grumbling, right where he could hear it. So I told them, "Look, I don't want to hear anything more about this. He cannot help it. You know, we have no right to change a person's religion. That's why we have the Bill of Rights."

I told the [vice] principal about my class being very unhappy never making 100 percent because we had one of these conscientious objectors in our room whose parents have not allowed him to put out one cent for it. I said, "I know the boy is very uneasy. He's such a nice boy. Can't we make it a rule that if you have students whose religion forbids them to buy stamps that we put them in a different category?" She said, "Oh, I think that could be arranged." So then we did that.

I had a very slow class. I knew that it would be almost impossible to teach more than writing a few sentences. But I just didn't want them to feel not successful. So I told them, "Once a week we're going to have Radio Station Day." Because in those days, they didn't have television, see.

And I said, "You can come up, and if you want to sing a song, you can sing a song. If you want you can tell us something that happened at your house or at the beach or whatever, so long as you come up and say a few sentences. Shizuo [a student in the class] is going to be the station manager. He is the one who's going to call you folks up." I felt that way I could also grade them on oral English.

And one day, I didn't know the principal [Lorna Desha] was going to walk in. Shizuo was here on this broom, singing away. The broom was supposed to be the mike. And I thought, oh, god, she would have to walk in. I said, "Oh, good afternoon, Mrs. Desha. We're having a simulated radio program. Would you like to sit down?"

So immediately, the kids clammed up. Well, you know, the boy [Shizuo] is smart enough, he picked the kids he knew who loved to talk. So he called Richard Farias up first. Richard said, "Oh, I'm going to tell you about going on a fishing trip with my father." And he spoke so well.

What I didn't know was that Mrs. Desha, before becoming principal of Hilo Intermediate, was principal at Waiākea Kai [School], where the boy was going to school. And this

little boy used to speak [only in] pidgin English, so she was amazed.

Return to O‘ahu—1951

I started out at Waipahu High School, and then I had difficulty getting my children to the day care and getting to school on time. So they arranged to have me transferred to Ali‘iōlani [Elementary School].

The following year, I transferred to Ka‘ahumanu [Elementary School] because it was very near to where I lived on Mott-Smith Drive.

And when we bought [a home] here [Kamehameha Heights] in ‘53, I moved to Kapālama [Elementary School], and I was there till ‘60. And in the fall of ‘60, I went to Farrington [High School].

I started off teaching English for about, I imagine, six years. And then I was changed to world history and Hawaiian language.

The last four or five years before I left, the big thing, big hue and cry, was to go back to Hawaiiana. They had been teaching Hawaiian history, I think, in the fourth-grade year. But they felt that it wasn’t enough. So I was asked to head and write a curriculum for it.

So I called on my dear friend, Dr. Donald [Kilolani] Mitchell at Kamehameha Schools, and he gave me a course of study that they had there. And from there, of course, I adjusted. It covered a whole array of subjects, [such as] Hawaiian religion, the gods, and [cultural] practices.

Since we were [located] so near to Bishop Museum, [we were] making trips. I’d give them something to do before they go. Like if we’re going to study feathers and cloak-making or something, I’d have them go to the library and identify certain cloaks and so on. When we studied feather work, we [observed] *kahili* [feather standards].

At Farrington, it seemed with my slower classes, there was a different attitude from my top classes that I had. You had these slower-learning youngsters, they’re in school because they have to be there till [age] eighteen. Maybe ten won’t turn in their homework papers. And I’d say, “Why didn’t you do your homework?” “Oh, I had to go drive my mother to Ala Moana [Center].” They’d give an excuse like that.

I said, “You weren’t in class last Thursday, but I heard you were in school.” So they said, “Oh, we were so hungry, we decided to go have early lunch. Excuse us.”

What are you going to do when they tell you that? (Laughs) I said, “If you don’t make up your work, I’ll give you a nice dandy grade.” They knew dandy, I meant *F, D*.

[But] I have only given one or two *F*’s in all. Because I felt that if you gave an *F*, you were a failure, too. You’re a failure because [the student] didn’t get anything out of you

Retirement—1974

My sister Louise, who was teaching there at Farrington, had just retired at sixty-five the year before. So I said to myself, “I’m just making sixty-two, then I’m eligible for social security if I want.” I still had enough fight in me to teach to sixty-five if I wanted to. But I decided, no, that with the shortage of jobs, that if we hang on to the jobs, then the younger ones can’t get a chance. I once had this student, [Barbara] Kim. She was the valedictorian [at Farrington]. She came back to tell me that all she could get [as a novice teacher] was substitute work.

So with that I retired.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ In 1917, the Department of Public Instruction (today known as the Department of Education) in Hawai‘i designated Central Grammar School as an experimental school, requiring students to pass an oral English examination for entrance.
- ² In 1924, the Department of Public Instruction designated Lincoln Grammar School as the first of a set of schools as “English Standard.” By 1937, there were ten English Standard schools, most located in Honolulu. In 1960, Roosevelt High School graduated its last class of English Standard school students, thereby ending the controversial practice.
- ³ The Preparatory Department at Kamehameha Schools was an educational and boarding program for boys under the age of twelve.
- ⁴ The Kamehameha Schools for Girls, dedicated in 1894, was located on the *makai-Koko Head* corner of King and Kalihi streets. In 1941, the girls’ school moved to its present location at Kapālama Heights.
- ⁵ In 1931, the Territorial Normal and Training School was moved to the University of Hawai‘i and became known as Teachers College. Today, it is known as the University of Hawai‘i College of Education.



R. Burl Yarberry

*Interviewed by Warren Nishimoto (1991)
Narrative edited by Cynthia Oshiro*

R. Burl Yarberry was born in 1920 in Pueblo, Colorado. He attended public schools in Pueblo and graduated from high school in 1938. After a year attending the Colorado School of Mines, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and served in the Pacific during World War II.

Following his discharge, he earned a BA in English from Western State College of Colorado and an MA in American and English literature from the University of Arizona. Between 1950 and 1954, Yarberry was teacher and principal at Ouray High School in Colorado.

In 1956, Yarberry received a PhD in English from the University of New Mexico. Shortly thereafter, he arrived in Hawai'i as an English instructor at Hawai'i Vocational School, today known as University of Hawai'i at Hilo. He soon became the college's director, a position equivalent to chancellor today.

In 1962, at the age of forty-one, Yarberry was selected by the state Board of Education to be superintendent of schools.

After a four-year tenure as state superintendent, he became coordinator of secondary education and boys' school principal at the Kamehameha Schools. Two years later, he was named commissioner of education for the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands [TTPI]. Beginning in 1972, Yarberry was involved in various federal and private projects focusing on educational reform.

Yarberry married Bethel Faye Hagemeyer in 1949. The couple raised four children and eventually made their permanent home in Hilo.

The following narrative focuses on Yarberry's early life in Colorado, education, years as head of UH-Hilo, and tenure as state superintendent of schools.

Steel-mill hometown

My father [Arthur Hollis Yarberry] was a rancher and farmer early on, and then a steel worker during the [Great] Depression, then he worked for the city highway department until he retired years later. My father was not particularly oriented toward education as such.

My mother [Maude Jane Dunn Yarberry] probably went through the sixth grade—I'm not sure. When she was maybe seventeen, she had saved her money and went down to the little railroad station near Greenville, Missouri. Her money finally took her to Pueblo, Colorado.

She had a very difficult time early on, but eventually she became friends with the nuns of a Catholic hospital there. She worked hard for them as a charwoman and so forth, and they eventually worked her into nurse's training, and she eventually became a registered nurse.

She had the dream of having my brothers and me go on to school. And each of us earned at least one [college] degree.

We had had a solid school system in Pueblo. A good elementary system. The high school, Central High School, was, in retrospect, a fine one. I think that it was largely a matter of the teachers. The teachers were in teaching because they loved teaching, yes, but also because they had the opportunity in those times to be themselves. Little cultural islands in this steel-mill town, if you will.

This was a steel-mill town and racial tensions were rampant. Mexican field workers, southern European mill workers, et cetera. You can imagine my mother and father with their backgrounds resisting [southern] Europeans, Blacks, and Spanish Americans even though Colorado is traditionally and historically a Spanish American land-grant state. When I was in kindergarten I just didn't come home one day, and they found me in the home of a Black family, because I just loved this little girl. My teacher, a *Haole* [Caucasian] lady, thought that was just marvelous. She just said to my mother, who called her in concern about where I was, "Well, I think, the last I saw him he was with so-and-so." And of course my mother flinched, I suspect. The color lines and the racial lines were very strong, and they were strong in the high school and in the hierarchy of the high school.

A difficult transition

I went to [Colorado] School of Mines because that was the cheapest [college]. I got a hundred dollars at the beginning of each semester from my mother, and tuition per semester was about ninety dollars.

I got a job cooking in what was called Professor Douglas' Penthouse. An old English professor ran a small boardinghouse for the boys and let them work their board

and room out. He'd been wounded in World War I, and he died soon after I went [overseas during] World War II, about the first year of the war, I think.

The only liberal arts or humanities course there was, I think, one semester of literature. There were three semesters of English and that's absolutely all. Everything else was engineering and ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps]. So I took my plane surveying the first summer, and the next summer mine surveying, and so on. But I didn't like mining, and I didn't like that kind of mechanical intellectualizing.

I changed [course and] took a degree at Western State College [of Colorado after the war]. My mother had said, "Burl, I've always thought you would be a good teacher." Well, it rang right to me, so I went to Western State to get my credentials as quickly as I could.

My critic teacher, when I did my practice teaching at the high school, just thought I was terrible. But eventually I cornered her into seeing what she was doing wrong—if I may say—and I got an A for my practice teaching. But at one point she had said that she wouldn't [supervise] me anymore. The president of Western State, whom I got to know as a friend over the years, later, said, "You are either the worst or the best teacher we've ever turned out here" (laughs).

I went on to University of Arizona and made the switch—I mean, in an educational sense—and took a master's degree in American and English literature.

I began to write papers for seminars and course work, and, it was just hilarious to fellow students to see this interface when I would analyze a poem in a mathematical way or in an engineer's way, you see.

There were a few other World War II veterans with me, and we had developed a coterie of fellow sufferers. One of those, who was a navy pilot in World War II, is Will Bryant, who has been a marvelous novelist for many years. Another of my friends there who helped design the space capsule (laughs) took a master's degree in English and was an incredibly sensitive poet.

So we were on that sort of ragged edge of ignorance and it was a very difficult transition. We had been toughened to another approach, you see, but hopefully we became more sensitized to beauty and to intricate thought based upon skills in language.

At Arizona I was taking a seminar in literary criticism. One of the wonderful literary critics of that day and time was Joseph Wood Krutch of the *New York Times*. He came to Tucson for a winter and was invited to our seminar. There were probably ten people in the seminar, and maybe six or seven of them were World War II veterans. And Dr. Muir had warned us, "I'm talking, Yarberry, to you and to Bryant and to Goodenough. You guys lay off of this man and don't get smart. You keep your mouths shut." He had had a neat page of notes, and he was going to pose questions for Joseph Wood Krutch to talk toward.

We just turned that seminar into what for him [i.e., Krutch] was a brilliant performance. It was three hours of one of the most exciting encounters intellectually I've ever had. And Muir was furious. It had gotten beyond this man and his sheltered little world, you see.

This is why, in an educational system, the teacher must be very, very sensitive to not roil the reservoir that they're all drinking from, couching things in one way or another in his or her own biases. Because learning is too exciting for that.

This, I'm sure, must seem like a kind of a shotgun, unorganized way of having developed. But somehow I became imbued with the idea of thinking more and more largely. This idea appeals to children, if they haven't been coerced or threatened or—or [told to] keep the seminar in order for Dr. Muir.

A teaching principal

Upon my finishing at University of Arizona, I looked for a job in Colorado and had an interview in Ouray, Colorado. And Bethel had taken her degree at what is now [University of] Northern Colorado, in Greeley, and she'd taught at Steamboat Springs in Colorado. So, the way it worked out, both of us had jobs.

And I think it was in that first year, my science room, and where I also taught journalism, was downstairs and away from the main flow and activity of the school.

One day the superintendent came and said, "Burl, I want you to take over as principal of the high school." His name was A. J. Cotner. I said, "A. J., I can't do that, I don't have any experience." He said, "You were in the marine corps, weren't you?" I said, "Yes, I was in the marine corps." He said, "Well, the kids have taken over the school." And I said, "Really? I didn't know that. My own classes are just going really well."

I went home to tell Bethel and she said, "Well, you don't know anything about school administration." (Laughs) She told me that [same thing] right in this very room, right here, when the Hawai'i state superintendency came up, too. And so my wife's always been my toughest critic. But a good one.

And so, anyway, I became principal. The first morning, Monday morning, I went up, walked through the halls, and I suspended seventeen students. "Get out, and don't come back until you bring your parents." Fairly quickly we restored order, and so I continued as a teaching principal.

I was there four years [1950–54]. My ideal was, in those days, to be a Mr. Chips and be there forever. But we moved on, you see. I think it's fair to say that we've tried in our lives to see and to keep growing, keep growing. And so I got this senior fellowship at [University of] New Mexico and went there. The University of New Mexico was what we called the "Harvard of the West" in English, at least, in those days. Very strong graduate program. And many of my peers did not pass the orals. But I was in things I liked and did well.

Building Hilo campus

In those days, I was a viable instructor candidate. I had agreed to go to the University of Washington. And then at the last minute in Albuquerque, I had a cable from Hawai'i, Mānoa campus. Charlie Bouslog was the chairman of the English department in those days and offered me a job. And so, I begged off at Washington.

I came to Hawai'i and I taught summer school at Mānoa that year. And Charlie Bouslog said, "They need somebody in Hilo because they're closing that [Hawai'i Vocational School]¹ down, you know. I'd like to have you go over there and help them close it down."

That was the marching orders I got, because there was a strong feeling with the people in the liberal arts, and it was a strong feeling with the people in the College of Education and the College of Agriculture, that Hilo was a dead pigeon.

But it wasn't too long before I found, oh, about four or five guys of high caliber. Maurice Tatsuoka, still a world-class mathematician, and Jack Easley, one of the best American scholars on Japanese education anyplace. So there was just a sprinkling of these big caliber guys who, for one reason or another, largely emotional, were here.

Another thing that happened was that I began to make connections with and have rapport with some of the local [Hawai'i island] Japanese American businessmen. The fact was that there were Japanese American guys who—quite a number of them were in the 442nd [Regimental Combat Team] and [100th Infantry Battalion]. They were tough guys, but they knew they were lousy in English. So for several of the years I was here, on a volunteer basis, I taught them businessman's English. I even taught at chamber of commerce orientations in political involvement. Quite a number of times we had Dan [Daniel K.] Inouye come to tell us about his techniques on political campaigning.

And someplace along that line—because [Senator] Kazuhisa Abe was chairman of the [Territorial] Senate [Ways and Means Committee, Senator William] "Doc" Hill was the president of the senate, and [Representative] Stanley Hara was the chairman of the [Territorial] House Finance Committee—first thing you know, we had some political clout.²

And we worked on the theory that the neighbor-island folks could outclass the O'ahu guys and make some political trades and so on.

I remember witnessing that the Hilo campus should be one of the repositories for the Library of Congress. Each state got three, and when statehood came [to Hawai'i in 1959], we were going to get three. And of course, one would be [University of Hawai'i at] Mānoa, and another one would be someplace in O'ahu, maybe. But why not one here? We wrung that out of them, and this [Hawai'i Vocational School library] became a repository for the Library of Congress, long before it was much of a library. But the first thing you know, the next legislative session we got money for a new library up here.

It was at about the same time that we got the land grant for the new campus, and we were committed to help clear the land. And we had also said, rashly I suppose, that we would go down and cut those trees ourselves. We were ready to do that, and then the trees, of course, just at the time we were about to harvest them and put them up to cure, they were burned out by a lava flow, or fire.

So, all I'm saying is that little things like this seem fairly insignificant, but it shows that the faculty and the students and the community were swept up in support for this campus.

We did other things that were criticized by Honolulu. For example, one morning I was just sitting in my office up there and a phone call [came] from Peace Corps, Washington. And he said, "Are you in charge there up at the campus?" I said, "Yes."

And he said, "Would you be willing to take on some Peace Corps trainees?" I said, "Yes, we would." And we talked a little bit. I said, "The first year the kids would have to sleep in the gymnasium. That's all we've got. We don't have much in the way of facilities yet."

But Governor [William F.] Quinn was angry at first, because that got away from him or through him. It should have been at Mānoa or some other [place]. So we lost the first class [of Peace Corps volunteers] because the governor said I was out of line.

If I make any point with you, one of the strongest points I can make is that the educators, the people in the trenches, have never really been the ones who made the paramount decisions in this state. The governor did, the lieutenant governor, and the people in the legislature. And that's why we've slipped so much, because the political office holders don't have this excitement of learning and the empathizing with learners and with teachers, which is needed in order to make an educational system outstanding.

Hawai'i superintendent of schools

I just had the naiveté to think of my little office up there [at Hilo campus] as being kind of one of the focal points of the world, just seeing so many exciting things. And we seemed to be rolling.

Well, one day Dr. [Katsumi] Kometani, the chairman of the Board of Education, came over. And he said, "This is confidential. We have some really tough problems in the Department of Education, and we want you to put your name in as a candidate for the superintendent."

I said, "Well, I think the guy you really want to put in is Ralph Kiyosaki."³ He kind of brushed that aside for a moment, and he said, "But we'd like to have you put your name in, too."

He [i.e., Kiyosaki] was unassailable as the district superintendent here, was very creative, and he was receptive to ideas. He encouraged [Shiho] Nunes and Elaine Kono to

work with us, and we just had a great set of ideas going. We began to put together what later became the Hawai'i English Program, the HEP program.

These ladies were powerful enough in their own scholarship that they went on with that, and I encouraged them even after I went on to Honolulu. They came up with the HEP program, and the national publishers put this into textbooks. And the HEP program, I've run into in Africa, Indonesia, all over the world, in which the local language was moderated and meshed with excellence in English.

Well, anyway, I know in retrospect there was lots of intrigue. I lived in a Democrat community and I explained to them why I was a Republican, partly because my grandfather was a Republican and things like that. It wasn't that I thought being a Democrat would be immoral or anything like that. It was that I had a general political philosophy that fit the Republican general philosophy. You should perhaps remember that Dr. Kometani was one of the few [Japanese American] Republicans at that time.⁴ He and Quinn were close friends.

But anyway, Kome called me one afternoon. He said, "Burl, please do exactly what I tell you to do." He said, "Get on the plane, come over and go to the Princess Ka'iulani Hotel. Get a room and get some supper, but stay in your room."

I went over there and I did exactly that. And at about ten o'clock, the phone rang. It was Kome, he said, "Burl, don't talk to anybody. Are there any reporters around?" I said, "I haven't seen a soul. I don't think anybody knows I'm alive."

And he said, "Take a cab and come up to the Pineapple [Research] Institute [of Hawai'i]."⁵ They were meeting in a boardroom or something at the pineapple institute.

And he came and introduced me to the board [of education]. And I sat at the table with them for quite a while. I think it was maybe [until] midnight or so. And they grilled me pretty much. Anyway, they said, "Okay, you go on back to the hotel."

As I went out the door, there was somebody standing in the shadows. And I went on down a little hill toward the cab, and I looked back, and it was Ralph Kiyosaki standing in those shadows. Even though I stayed friends with him over the years, he never mentioned that to me, and I never mentioned it to him.

So I went back [to the hotel]. And then he [i.e., Kometani] called me in a while, and he said, "Burl, we have designated you as our new superintendent."

They told me that there were some serious personnel problems. And one of the major ones, of course, was the [assistant superintendent for curriculum]. He was actually running the show, I think. He seemed to have all kinds of deals, he had deals on things like textbooks, things like jobs.

We finally fired him, for cause. It was a very painful thing for everybody, because it wrenched and it threatened so many people. He intimidated people whose style here in Hawai'i is not to take something on head on, you know.

Many of the administrators didn't. And of course, we had a lot of mediocrity in this system, too, that had come up to the top as yes men and as toadies, things like that. So all of that had to be sorted out.

When I met the first time with the board as superintendent, they were just by way of appointing an assistant superintendent for finance. I don't mean to be racist about this, but there were no Orientals on the top list. They were [Caucasian] people from the big corporations, moneymen from the big corporations, and people like that. Way down, I saw Harry Tokushige's name. I read his vitae, and he was the man I wanted. He was the only CPA amongst them, for example. He turned out to be a sterling man and a guy who worked well with me, and was just a fine character in my book.

One of the first things—it was sort of silly and said just almost on whim—I said that I was going to visit every school in the state. And I did. I was at a school on Maui where there were two kindergarten classes side by side. And I went into this one first, and it was just jumping and alive. The windows were open and it was bright and the kids were just as responsive and that [teacher] was just having tremendous attention and excitement with these kids. Then I went right next door, and the [teacher] had the blinds at half mast, and there was lots of coughing, the little kids had jackets on, it was actually cold. And it was a dramatic illustration of the difference that the teacher makes with the same resources.

Teachers need to feel open and adjustable and they need to be learning all the time themselves. We just sat down one night, and [designed] parallel tracks for teacher training. We had the tracks prepared and the incremental advancement [for those who chose in-service training]. Well, my wife knows that I made perhaps hundreds of appearances before faculties all over the state to sell that dual track of in-service training. By the time of the deadline, 90 percent had opted for the in-service track.

Well, in-service training was an issue. And we went issue by issue, rather than having some grand plan that forced everything into conformity with everything else. Good administrators are creative. They may have a master plan, but it's got to be large enough and seeing largely enough so that the issues can be addressed one by one, as is politically or economically feasible.

Courage to be different

If we have the courage, as a society, to let the schools of Hawai'i be their own full selves, rather than adhering to the national testing system, then you're going to find all kinds of enriching and interchange in the academic, intellectual sense. The educator has to have that courage. He's got to say, "These are the reasons I've developed this strategy. We think we're weak in this. We don't think our kids are reading well enough."

And why do we know that? Well, access to the library, for example. Here's one of the best school libraries I've ever seen up here, and I'd say maybe 40 percent of the books that I thumbed through—and I went clear around this big library, opening books, and a lot of them had not been taken out at all.

If you're my principal, and I'm a teacher and a conscientious one, I am going to really exchange with you so that we can do our best to develop readers. But my fifth-grade class may be a little different. It will have the skills, but it may just be markedly different from the one next door in interests.

There are general skills and areas of learning that need to be for all students. But my teaching last year of U.S. history up at Henry O[pukaha'ia] School was like nobody ever heard before. Those kids really felt the Civil War, because they knew my grandfather was a drummer boy in the Civil War. They knew that my great-uncles, one had his leg shot off. The older boys joined the Southern army, and the Northern got the two youngest boys. And the kids—we looked at that whole Civil War movie [Ken Burns' *The Civil War* on PBS], and boy, they really came alive on that.

What I'm trying to illustrate here is that a set of creative approaches is needed. One of the last speeches I made to all of the school administrators [as state superintendent] was at Farrington High School, in the auditorium there. And as I made this speech, I heard groans, and I got poison letters about what I said. And this was only three months before I resigned [in 1966].

The only way a person could work his way into the system of accredited principals, we'll say, would be to start way out in Pāhala or someplace, and gradually work himself up to O'ahu, and then get into the city, instead of seeing this [i.e., Pāhala] as a marvelous full place in its own right.

And I said, "One thing I am going to advocate to you this morning is that a principal of a school should be elected from the faculty and given, say, a three-year term. And he or she should serve the faculty as a faculty member who's put in this position because of his or her relationships among the teachers. There's going to be a finance and capital person on the staff, but the principal is one of you, one of the teachers."

Years later, I got a letter from a principal up here, on this island, apologizing to me. He said, "I hated you, but I realize now what you were trying to do. You were trying to break this closed-mindedness, this anti-intellectualism of the administrators, this pettiness of administrators." He said, "It's taken me all these years to get the courage to write you and apologize."

Changing agenda

[Right after the 1962 election], my secretary said, "Governor [John A.] Burns⁶ wants to see you down at the

Alexander Young Hotel," his pre-office suite, "and would like to talk to you."

We talked about ideas. And he was open about that. He said he liked what I was doing and my ideas on education. And I said, "You let me know when you don't think that's true."

That first legislative session [as superintendent], I appeared in seventy-some testimonies regarding educational matters. Each of those legislators had a vested interest in something or other. And so it was a matter of my talking seventy-six times, I think, on educational matters to people who—well, I'll put it this way—who could have had a valid interest, but that was not the arena in which to sell that.

So, at that point, he [i.e., Governor Burns] made an effort to keep the legislature off my back. He was a very modest man, and he was really a man of the people. But the machine began to sway. And people pressured me to join the Democratic Party and—oh, I won't go into that, except to say that there was overt action.

The incidental mechanism of my [1966 resignation] was that there was an opening for a custodian in Kona. And the governor's people tagged somebody as getting the job. I wouldn't allow that sort of intrusiveness in the regularized process of filling a DOE position. But of course it was much more than that, it was a test to whip the lines back into place, and, pressure on me, I'm sure.

Around that time, the governor told me late one afternoon in his office that I should resign.

Well, [James W.] Bushong⁷ came and offered to [hire] me at Kam[ehameha] Schools. So I became principal of the boys' school and coordinator of [secondary] education.

I wasn't there over two years or so, when Bill [William R.] Norwood came to see me. Bill Norwood had been [Burns'] executive officer. And Bill then was high commissioner of the [U.S.] Trust Territory [of the Pacific Islands]. He came to me and said, "Burl, you've always said that you like tough jobs, I've got one for you." And this was commissioner of education for the Trust Territory.

So I take that to have been not a sop, but as a gesture of respect. Both of these administrative positions, Kamehameha Schools and TTPI, would not have been tendered to me unless Jack Burns put in his okay.

The ideal superintendent

It may seem surprising, but it seems to me that in a school system, the people who help it flower out must have a deep and abiding faith in humankind, avoiding the entrapments, such as cliques, power nexus, and things like that. And maybe keep certain management mobility. That is, not to develop an inside clique, not to develop people deliberately [just] who are loyal to you. Keep it open and consider oneself expendable.

I think if I drew a bill of particulars of an ideal superin-

tendent, it would be that he or she would be an intellectual, and a visionary. Those are the things that are hard to come by, and they don't come down the road very often. People are too cramped and warped by that time to have the courage and the vision to play with ideas and have the ability to sell those ideas and put them into reality.

But I still think that something like that is what the system needed and needs.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ In 1970, Hawai'i Vocational School was re-structured and became University of Hawai'i at Hilo.
 - ² Abe, Hill, and Hara were highly influential legislators representing Hawai'i Island in the 1950s and 1960s.
 - ³ Ralph Kiyosaki was district superintendent for Hawai'i Island. He later was state superintendent of schools and unsuccessful Republican candidate for Lt. Governor.
 - ⁴ Dr. Katsumi Kometani, a prominent dentist, was active in local politics and a leader in the Republican Party.
 - ⁵ Today known as Krauss Hall on the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa campus
 - ⁶ Democrat Burns defeated incumbant Republican William F. Quinn in the 1962 gubernatorial election.
 - ⁷ James W. Bushong was then president of Kamehameha Schools.
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(CRDG/MaPS Photo Archives)

Andrew W. S. In

*Interviewed by Warren Nishimoto (1998)
Narrative edited by Warren Nishimoto*

Andrew W. S. In was professor in the University of Hawai'i's College of Education from 1951 to 1979. He was named acting dean of the college in 1979, succeeding Hubert V. Everly. The following year, he became the permanent dean and served until his retirement in 1984.

Born and raised in Honolulu, In attended Royal Elementary, Central Junior High, and McKinley High schools, graduating from McKinley in 1938. He then attended the University of Hawai'i Teachers College (later known as the College of Education). His undergraduate studies were interrupted by World War II. Following five years of military service, In completed his education degree in 1946. He enrolled in the master's and doctorate programs at New York University, earning his PhD in 1951.

In returned to Hawai'i and began his professional academic career as an assistant professor assigned to the University Laboratory School. In 1956, he became principal of the school. He later served as the first chair of what is known today as the Department of Curriculum Studies in the College of Education.

In's administrative career path continued as he became dean Hubert V. Everly's associate dean for curriculum and instruction. After Everly retired in 1979, In was named acting dean. A year later, he was named the college's permanent dean. He served until his retirement in 1984.

In married Stella Lau in 1942 and they raised four children—two sons and two daughters. Stella In died in 1979. In married Jennie Lee, a social worker, in 1982.

Family and community

I was born in 1921 [at] 407 North Vineyard Street very near the Nu'uano Stream. My earliest recollection of that area where we lived was walking to church with my parents on Sunday mornings, which was located down on Beretania Street near Nu'uano [Avenue], very near where the old Tin Can Alley was. I don't know whether you ever heard of that term.

My mother, her name was Yan Ho Ching. Her father was also born in Hawai'i, also taken back to China when he was a young child, and educated in China. He was an imperial scholar having taken examinations in Beijing. When he returned to Hawai'i, his father was, at that time, the commercial agent for the Ching government. Today he would be about the rank of consul general. He had come to Hawai'i as a young man probably sometime around 1850 or thereabouts, and had grown up and worked in the businesses of his uncle. Later on, he became a leader in the Chinese community, was the first president of the United Chinese Society, and as I said, was the commercial agent for the Ching government. He had four wives (chuckles).

Socially, it was probably a fairly respected household because her father was a scholar, and in the community, he was a Chinese-language schoolteacher. He had students coming into the home and he taught them. But income-wise,

they were not in the merchant class. And so the income was very limited. But as I said, he was a scholar, and had beautiful calligraphy. So people in town, when they needed any kind of couplets painted on silk with calligraphy that would be used for weddings and opening up stores and so on, they would come to him. And I would help him rule the lines with the chalk string that he would hold, and then I would snap it for him and make the lines for him to square boxes, in which he would write his characters. So that was part of my upbringing.

My mother spoke very good English. Her English was better than her Chinese [i.e., Cantonese dialect]. So at home, she would speak to us in English, whereas my dad's English was not very good. So he spoke both languages and mostly Chinese at home. So that was how we learned our Chinese at home.

My father's name was Koon Ling In. He was born in Kahuku, [O'ahu] in 1895. His father had come from China with his wife. And my father had one sister. They both were taken back to China when they were very young. My father was seven years old, and the sister was two. And they returned to the village in the Chungshan district of Guangdong province, and he grew up there, going to language school and did not return to Hawai'i until 1912. And by that time, his father had died here in Hawai'i in 1903.

My grandfather came to Hawai'i as a storekeeper with his uncle, and they opened a store in Kahuku, where they sold [goods] to the [sugar] workers [of Kahuku Plantation Company]. That's about all we know about my [paternal] grandfather and great-grandfather.

My dad had a fairly good Chinese background in education. He returned to Hawai'i as a young man. He roomed with other Chinese young men in the tenements on Pauahi Street. My father learned his English at the night school at Beretania Mission taught by Elijah and Jessie MacKenzie. The Mission was near his boarding house. Later on, [Beretania Mission] became the Second Chinese Congregational Church. And that church played a very important part in my growing up because we spent a lot of time there, and my dad was very active in that church and served on the board.

The church was located in Chinatown. When I was about four years old, we moved up to where my grandfather lived on Leilehua Lane.¹ We [later] moved to another house right back of where my grandfather lived, but the address was on Lusitana Street. So most of my elementary school days were spent in that house on Lusitana Street.

That house was small, but somehow we accommodated lots of people there. It was one of several houses within a small compound. We were in the last house on this lane, and there were a lot of kids there, so we grew up playing all kinds of games like *peewee*.² That was one of the games we played in that lane there, and of course, we played softball and football. But that lane was a very narrow lane, you know, just enough for a car to come in. But that was our playground.

The stores that we patronized were Chinese-owned. There was a Ho family that ran a little grocery store there, and Ho Pui Kee was the bakery that we used to go down to. Back in those days, too, the one interesting activity that we were engaged in was passing out these campaign cards during election time. There used to be big rallies at that triangle park that was right across the street from where we used to live.

Chinese-language school

When I was attending [Central] Junior High School,³ beginning in the seventh grade, we would leave school in the afternoon and walk from Central down through Kukui Street to our church where our Chinese-language school was. Then Chinese-language school would start at three o'clock and ran to five every day. And then Saturdays, nine to twelve. The church served as a community center. Kids came from all over, Chinatown particularly. On Friday nights, we would get into our clubs. There were about six or seven of us, and we became the Galahad Knights. Actually, we started as the Beretania Knights, then we changed our name later on to the Galahad Knights. There must have been about six or seven of us, maybe eight, and we still meet today. There are five

of us left now. So the Galahad Knights have continued since 1934 (chuckles). Mostly socials, some service.

I loved Chinese-language school because I was a pretty good calligrapher from my background with my grandfather, having watched him and having done some of that under his tutelage. So I used to have beautiful calligraphy. Then our principal, Mr. Lau, also instituted an art class. So we used to do Chinese brush painting, pictures of birds and pictures of mountains and streams and rivers and stuff like that. I used to love that. And Mrs. Lau, who was one of the teachers in the school, was a great storyteller. I used to love listening to her stories of Chinese history and fiction, all in Chinese. She used to tell us stories about the monkey king and the whole series of stories during the three kingdoms period particularly. So my language school years were always a fun time as well as learning a lot of Chinese.

[The instruction] was more in terms of Christian ethics because of our relationship with the church, so the Ten Commandments was more basic to our learning. There were also some Chinese classics that dealt with human relationships and respect for your elders, respect for your parents, you know, that kind of [lesson]. But primarily, the morality that was given to us was mostly related to the church.

There are several classics that we used to memorize all the way through. One that I recall was made up of 1,000 Chinese characters, and those characters trace Chinese beginnings and history. So it was very interesting memorizing that and reciting that. Then of course, the writings of Confucius were difficult, but you didn't memorize, we just read them.

Public school

I went to Royal School from the first grade to the sixth grade. First I went to the Castle Kindergarten down on Hotel Street. I spent either a year or two at that kindergarten because my dad had a paint shop right across the street from the kindergarten. And we used to go over there to the paint shop to wait for him after preschool. He [first] became a painter painting automobiles and then later on, started his own shop, located right where City Hall is right now.

At Royal School, one of the real ambitions I had was to make a [model] clipper ship, a Viking ship, or a Spanish galleon. At one time, when Royal School had eight grades, every young boy made either one of these models before he graduated. But Royal School became a sixth-grade school when they started Central [Junior High]. So I never satisfied that goal of building one of those model ships.

From seventh grade, eighth grade, I used to detest math. I took algebra and geometry at the same time. That was a nightmare. Luckily my uncle was living with us, the engineer—down at Printers Lane there, and he helped me with my math. I would do the problems in the afternoon and when he came home at night, would check them for me before I went to school the next day. But that was a nightmare

because algebra leads into geometry and I didn't have any background at all. But I finally made it through and went into college and never took math after that.

[At McKinley High School], ROTC [Reserved Officers Training Corps] was my life (chuckles), especially junior and senior years. Back in those days, you had to take either physical education or ROTC. I took three years of ROTC, and as a senior, I was appointed cadet lieutenant colonel. We had a huge unit in ROTC; we had what was known as a brigade then, instead of just a regiment. There were two regiments in a brigade at that time, and I headed one of the regiments.

The first year I was there, we started into what was known as the “core program.”⁴ It was a combination of English and social studies. All through my high school years, I drew teachers who did not emphasize grammar. We had a teacher from Oregon the first year, sophomore year. He was more a history and social studies kind of person; language arts was not emphasized. Second year, I drew Mrs. Walton Gordon.⁵ He [i.e., Walton M. Gordon] was my principal at Central [Junior High School]. Mrs. Gordon was, again, more oriented towards the social studies area instead of language arts. My senior year definitely, Mrs. Ethel Spalding was a history major, not language arts. So the emphasis was not there, and so my grammatical ability was very poor in terms of being able to know what a verb and an adjective and a predicate or so on is. So from that standpoint, my language arts area suffered in college (chuckles).

[Much later], when we did a study of core programs [on O'ahu] and how they affected student [academic performance at the University [of Hawai'i]], we found that core programs didn't [negatively] affect [students] that much because the freshman classes at the university from four [O'ahu high] schools all scored just about the same grade point average. So I don't know whether you could knock the core program.

I had run to be senior class vice president. There was a fellow [running for president] by the name of Lum. He and I, and a gal running for secretary and a fellow running for treasurer, founded the first political party at McKinley High School. (Laughs) We ran as a party, you know. And we got defeated, so we lost the election.

And my senior year, my teacher, Ethel Spalding, was very key in my development because she was chair of the senior forum committee. I got elected as the chairman of the forum committee for the senior class. And that year was a tremendous year in activities for us in forum work because Ethel Spalding headed up the all-schools' forum committee. As chairman of the McKinley group, we were the leaders in trying to get the all-schools' forum work organized. During the fall of 1937 a group of [U.S.] congressmen came to Hawai'i to review this interest of statehood for Hawai'i. And it turned out that the senator from Iowa, Senator [Guy] Gil-

lette—Ethel Spalding invited him to McKinley High School to one of our forums on statehood. I was chairman of the forum that day presenting this big meeting to these visiting congressmen and senators. So forum work was a big thing and Ethel Spalding was very influential in getting me to go into teaching. She wanted me to be a history teacher. Well, I ended up in [University of Hawai'i] Teachers College in 1938.

Student years at the University of Hawai'i Teachers College

I remember that freshman week was a terror for us. We were all required to wear a beanie. One fellow I remember, who was on the football team, an upperclassman, guy by the name of “Airedale” Macpherson. Friends of mine were lined up for supper on freshman week, and I don't know what happened, whether we cut in line or what. (Chuckles) He nabbed us and he started marching us down to the swimming pool and threatened to throw us in. We were on the quadrangle and we had to climb up on the greased pole to get the flag and all that kind of stuff. Freshman week was a scary time. My first two years in college were mostly study. I didn't really do much socializing.

I thought I was a big man on campus at McKinley when I was a lieutenant colonel in ROTC and forum chairman for the senior class. But when I got to Teachers College I was required to take remedial speech without credit. It wasn't until my second semester in Speech that I'd get one credit. All I remember is that all of us who entered the College of Ed[ucation] or at that time, it was called the Teachers College, were required to have speech. And we all went through a speech test, and on what basis they graded us, I don't know. I guess it depended on who you drew as a tester. So that was one of the blows to my ego, I guess. My grammar skills were about like the way I speak now. Maybe it was more stilted, you know, because in prepared talks at the high school level, we were more formal. But I think it was depending on the instructor's concept of sounds and things like that. The other blow was writing. I drew Dr. Willard Wilson, who was really a taskmaster at English 100 and English 101. The first semester, I received a D. Second semester I struggled to get it up to C. So again, that was a real blow. Here I was writing speeches at McKinley (chuckles), but my papers in college would come back red penciled with all kinds of comments on them. My freshman year, I think my grade point was 1.7. But later on, I did a study of the entering freshman class from all the high schools and I discovered that the average freshman grade was somewhere between 1.5 and 1.7, and so it was not that bad. But, you know, to us it was, “Gee, that's almost like a D-plus.” So it was quite a blow and it took me a long time to bring it back up to a decent grade. And when I finished college, I guess it was only 2.7.

We would spend all four years in the Teachers College before [receiving] our bachelor's [BEd] degree. Whereas today, the students enter the university and they take their work in the College of Arts and Sciences for the first two years before they decide where they're going for their major. The very first semester, we had Education 100 with an old professor by the name of Dr. Tanner. Very kind gentleman. But there was very little work actually done in the Teachers College the first two years. I was mainly taking [courses] in the other departments over in the College of Arts and Sciences.

When we finally got into Teachers College kind of courses in the junior year, they were primarily methods courses. So we had courses in teaching music, for example, in which I received a D. (Chuckles) Mrs. [Dorothy] Kahananui taught us music methods. I didn't know one note from another when I first started, and furthermore I had a very difficult time with rhythm all through my social life. I never was a good dancer because I always danced to the first beat rather than the bass beat (laughs).

We were somehow grouped very early into elementary or secondary [student teaching], and many of us men in the group were placed in elementary education. I guess one of the reasons for that was they wanted men in elementary ed, and furthermore, at that time when I first started, there was only the elementary school and the preschool at the University Laboratory School. There was no secondary level. So most of us were channeled through that program. I was scheduled to teach music at the lab school on December 8, 1941.

I had already started [student] teaching a group of kids at the fifth-grade level. And I had another partner with me who was also male, and the two of us were assigned to student teaching for eight weeks. That was the extent of student teaching back in those days: eight weeks of student teaching. So we had started teaching two weeks prior to December 7. So December 8 would have been the beginning of our third week of student teaching. And we were to graduate the second week in February or thereabouts. But as of December 7 [because of the outbreak of World War II], they graduated our class, those of us who were mid-year graduates. So our diploma reads "December 7, 1941."

When my [first] wife [Stella H.S. Lau In] and I got married, it was wartime [1942], blackout. So our wedding had to take place at about one o'clock in the afternoon at our church. And after the wedding, we had a reception down at the basement of the church, where we had a gym. For our honeymoon, my teacher in the senior year at McKinley High School loaned us her home. So we spent three days at her home there, and she went to stay with her sister out in Wahiawa while we used her home for our honeymoon. You know, this is the kind of relationship that we had with her. And so these people were just tremendous in their relationship with others. So that kind of gave us a value system that

we tried to reciprocate in our relationships with students.

Prior to student teaching, we used to go out to the public schools to observe. I recall going to Kūhiō School. I was working with second graders and it was fun having those kids. You know, you go down there and they all gather around you as if you were somebody important. We had a good time observing those kids and working with them.

But when I started back into Teachers College after the war, I had decided I was not cut out to be an elementary school teacher. I went in to see Dean [Benjamin O.] Wist and said that I would like to become a secondary school teacher. He said that would be fine. He said, "But since you've not had student teaching, you need to pick up the student teaching program. And since you already have a bachelor's degree in education, we could allow you to begin your graduate work in the fifth year." So that semester I was on campus for the fifth year, I took some courses in methods of teaching social studies and basic courses in secondary education and then the rest were graduate courses in philosophy of education, tests and measurements, psychology, and things like that. At the same time, I was student teaching. I taught a seventh grade group at University Laboratory School English and social studies. They had actually [something] very much like the core program [at McKinley High School]. It was a program patterned after the lab school at the Ohio State [University]. It was a combination of English and social studies, so the student teacher who was involved in language arts would do the teaching in language arts, and those of us who were social studies majors would handle the social studies.

Graduate school

I had already started thinking about going to the Mainland to get my advanced degree because I was already seeing that my classmates who had not gone into the [military] service, with five years ahead of me, were already into vice-principalships. So I figured, well, if I'm going to catch up, I got to get an advanced degree. So that spring, I had already started writing to schools for admissions.

The Ohio State [University] had accepted me, and I had wanted to go there because there was Dr. Harold B. Alberty, who was outstanding in curriculum. And also the fact that most of our faculty members at the University [of Hawai'i] College of Education had been graduates of Ohio State. But when their letter of acceptance came, there was a paragraph that admonished "foreign students" that when you come here, you must be financially able to take care of your problem. I was kind of shocked that they referred to us as foreign students. So that kind of ruled Ohio State out.

[University of] California was a choice, but I felt I wanted something different from the West Coast. At the University of Minnesota School of Education, our former principal from [McKinley] High School, Miles E. Cary, was there. The unfortunate part was that the letter of acceptance

to be admitted to the school and also to be a graduate assistant to Dr. Cary did not get to me until after I had been accepted to NYU. That letter, instead of coming straight to Hawai'i, had gone out to Guam somehow, and didn't get to Hawai'i until three weeks later from the date it was sent. So, one of those twists of fate.

So I ended up at New York University. The letter that came from them was such a warm, friendly letter, that I said, "Gee, this is the place to go." My three years in New York were very, very, great years; plus the fact that the faculty was just outstanding in their human relationships from the dean down. That was a very excellent experience, and I had three years of real great learning and happiness there. For my master's degree, I completed a major in secondary education. For the doctorate, I went into educational administration curriculum supervision.

After my graduation from NYU in June 1951, I had two job offers: one from the University of Hawai'i, and one from my professor of administration, who was an adjunct professor at NYU, but superintendent of schools up at White Plains, New York. He offered me a job in the White Plains school system at \$5,100 a year. UH offered me \$4,500. And after long consideration, I decided I'd come home.

University of Hawai'i College of Education

The position I had was as an assistant professor with assignment to the University Laboratory School as a supervisor of student teachers [starting in 1951]. We were training teachers for the territory of Hawai'i. I don't remember the numbers we were turning out at that time, but it wasn't that large. At the secondary level, we had two groups of youngsters at each grade level in the lab school. That's six classes times two. So there were twelve classes of youngsters that could serve as the classes for the student teachers. And two student teachers were assigned to each of the groups. So I supervised two student teachers in what we called the general education class which was the sort of homeroom base and where the English and social studies classes were taught. So the total numbers would be two times twelve that we were turning out each semester. And I've forgotten what year it was now, but we went to the legislature and were able to convince them to double the output. So I think from two hundred students a year, we were then turning out about four hundred a year when I left the college [in 1984].

The criticism at that time was that our teachers were not well prepared in the subject fields, particularly the elementary teachers, who had very minor preparation in the subject areas. Most of the teaching that they were required to do had to represent many fields, so it was difficult for them to get in all the subject area concentrations. We had in place our professional diploma program which was a fifth year of training at the college, divided by one semester of academic work on campus, primarily graduate-level courses in educa-

tion such as advanced educational psychology, tests and measurements, and philosophy of education, with some work in the subject area, making a total of about fourteen credit hours plus the seminar. Then the second semester of the year was spent intern teaching. And this was out in the public schools. So our graduates then had both experience teaching in a laboratory school and then teaching in a public school. So we thought that was an excellent program.

We would work with the student [teachers] in planning. They had to have a lesson plan and a unit plan. In other words, they had to have the overall unit of study that they were going to teach for either the number of weeks that it was supposed to be for or the entire semester, depending on whether it was their subject major field. And then from the unit plan, they had to develop lesson plans. We would sit down with them on teaching how to develop lesson plans. After the plans were made, we had to observe them as they taught the lessons. Following the class session, we would again sit down with them and critique their experience.

So basically that's what the supervisor of student teachers did. In addition to that, we were supervising a group of pupils; they were our responsibility also. We had to work with their parents and counsel them when need arose. Similarly, we were helping the student teachers understand those kinds of functions and helping them with their counseling of the pupils. It was a gradual induction kind of thing for the student teachers. And attending PTAs [Parent-Teacher Association] for example, we would meet with the parents and the student teachers would be right along with us, getting to know the parents and understanding the role of the teacher in a parent-teacher conference. Developing report cards, all of those kinds of functions that a teacher would normally be expected to perform. That was our role, guiding these young people in getting the skills and the content for these kinds of activities. And then of course, the school would carry on athletic programs, social programs, and the supervisors were all involved in that also. We were the continuing thread, whereas the student teachers were there for one semester and they're gone. So the pupils of the classes looked to the supervisors as their counselors and guides throughout the years.

Then [in 1956], I was promoted to be principal of the University Laboratory School. The principal, as far as working with the student teachers was concerned, provided orientation. We had a seminar with all the student teachers. Every semester, the principal taught the seminar, which was conducted once a week where the principal worked with the student teachers in discussing general kinds of programs and activities dealing with school operation.

Now occasionally, when a supervisor had some difficulty with a student teacher, we would come in to try to resolve the problem. The pupils were a concern for us, the supervisors. We had to be assured that the pupils were learning. I think there was a balance there. I don't think we were

only concerned about the practice teachers, to the neglect of the pupils in the school. I think that the pupils received a good education. I think many of them learned in spite of the poor teaching that might have taken place sometimes (laughs).

We always joked about how the pupils were able to train these student teachers, because I think they were very helpful. In other words, they [pupils] knew that the [student teachers] needed help, and so they didn't really get out of line. Most of them were very cooperative kids. So I think the experience of the lab school was such that the student teachers had a much easier time than if they had been assigned right out to the public schools from the very beginning, which we had to do in our later years once we started expanding the college. We did not have enough room in the lab school to take care of the student teachers. So, half of them were sent out to the public schools.

In 1960, I moved over to be chairman of the Division of Secondary Education. It wasn't yet a department at that time. Following that year, the college was reorganizing to several departments. And the Division of Secondary Ed[ucation] became the Department of Secondary Ed[ucation]. I served as chairman of that department until 1965 or thereabouts. Then the Department of Elementary Ed[ucation] and the Department of Secondary Ed[ucation] were combined [in 1966] into one department called the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.⁶ And I was the first chairman of that.

The legislators, I'm not sure what their motivation was [in calling for the merger of the elementary and secondary education programs], but they really attacked our elementary program. I remember the chairman of elementary ed at that time, Roselyn Porter and myself, being chairman of the secondary ed department, were called down to the legislative hearing of the senate education committee on higher education. She was on the stand for about three hours. I was there all afternoon waiting for my turn. Finally, they broke for dinner. After dinner we came back and she was on the stand for another period of time. Finally, when I was called, I was on the stand for about fifteen, twenty minutes. So right off, you could tell they were after the elementary program rather than the secondary program. So we had these two departments combined. She was relieved of the chairmanship, and I think she retired after that. So that was a very unpleasant situation there at the legislature. Oh, it was horrible, the way they grilled her.

I think the [merger] made an impact on the college in terms of separating some of the faculty. This led to some hard feelings because some of the people in the college did not hold doctorates. And these people were all put into a division called the Field Services Division. They were relegated to being supervisors of student teachers in the field rather than being professors in the college's instructional program. And the sort of self-joke on themselves, kind of a

not entirely happy joke, but they called themselves the "field hands." So you know, that kind of feeling was generated as a result of the departmentalization in a college.

Around this time, there was also created the Department of Educational Administration, a department of history and philosophy of education [i.e., Department of Educational Foundations], and a Department of Educational Psychology. I think those were the departments that we had. Then eventually there were two other departments added: one was the Department of Counseling and Guidance, which was a split-off from Ed Psych. And then there was a department called Communications and Technology [i.e., Department of Educational Technology]. So those became the eventual makeup of the College of Education. In addition to that, a Department of Special Education was added. So today we have those departments.

I don't remember much of that tenure because I was in that office just one year. Then I went on sabbatical. So my recollection of that experience is very little and very vague. Then when I came back, I didn't go back into that department.

I was due [for a sabbatical] and I wanted to learn the Chinese language more in depth. I was also interested in taking my children to get some Chinese culture. So we ended up in Taiwan and lived very close to the campus of The College of Chinese Culture, located above the hills of Taipei City in what is known as Yang Ming Shan, which is a kind of resort area. Two of my children went to the college. I enrolled in a couple of classes at the college; one class was studying Sun Yat-sen's three principles. After one semester I gave up because I didn't have that much depth in the written language. We also took a class in Chinese calligraphy and brush painting, which we enjoyed very much. But the two kids that went to the college didn't learn much because they were being pumped by the kids who wanted to learn English, instead of the other way around. And our youngest went to the American school where she had a ninth-grade education, which was an American education. So she didn't learn much Chinese either. But we had a good year there. I really had a good tutor who came in and worked with me for an hour each day. And I learned how to read the newspaper and really got a good review of Chinese history.

Dean of the University of Hawai'i College of Education

[After returning from sabbatical], I was asked by Dean [Hubert V.] Everly to serve as assistant dean for curriculum and instruction. I was then promoted to associate dean. And in 1979, Dean Everly retired, and I was appointed as the acting dean.⁷ I was hoping to follow Everly. He gave me a good education when I was his assistant. And I felt that I could do a good job for the college. [Everly] was always my mentor. I felt that his strengths were in working with the legislature.

I didn't have that kind of entree into the legislature. I always admired him in that relationship that he had. When I say he was my mentor, he gave me all kinds of opportunities. He didn't care to go to the mainland to meetings, so I was sent in his place to all the deans' meetings, annually. (Chuckles) I made twelve trips to Chicago in the dead of winter. But that was excellent entree into what was going on nationally with teacher's colleges and colleges of education. And getting to know some of those people and being friends with them all through my career was an experience and an opportunity.

Unfortunately, after I got appointed as acting dean, my wife became sick with cancer and died. So that year was a very traumatic one for me. I was undertaking a new position and at the same time going through a lot of problems, getting adjusted as a widower and trying to get adjusted to a new job where the buck stops at your desk. So those first two years, one as acting dean and as dean of the college, were very difficult years.

In 1980, I was named the dean of the College [of Education] by then chancellor Durwood Long. I was instrumental in developing the doctoral program for the college. I handled all the discussions with the several [COE] departments. And they were all contending for a piece of the action. I had to negotiate with the department heads in the college. We also had a lot of trying experiences with the Graduate Division in trying to get that doctorate of education program through.

First, we were trying to get a PhD, and that didn't work. So finally, we went for the EdD, a doctorate of education. It was an educating job then because the graduate school people did not understand what a doctorate of education was. So once we got it through, it was almost like my baby that I helped to develop and bring into life. So when I took over as [permanent] dean, that was one of the things that I wanted to see established.

We started the movement to get national accreditation. The cost at that time would have been between fifteen to twenty-five thousand dollars to bring in an evaluation team to study our system and make recommendations for accreditation. But we never could get that kind of money. We didn't know what mainland professors and administrators on that team to evaluate a teacher-training institution would think of us. The people who came from the mainland as visiting professors on our campus knew our program and we had a good reputation. Accreditation on a national scale was something that needed to be done for our college. As far as foreign students are concerned, they don't understand what state accreditation is or Western Association of Schools and Colleges [WASC] accreditation is. All they know is national accreditation. So when they decide to come to the U.S. to study, they look at which schools have what is known as NCATE accreditation, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. So I think that it was important that our college have national accreditation.⁸

During the period of time that I was dean, our college was reviewed. This was going on throughout the University [of Hawai'i] and our college had decided that we would like to be evaluated. We were evaluated by a committee called the Task Force C. It was headed by people who were mainly in the College of Arts and Sciences. The review had to do with the number of students we had, the quality of students we had, the number of graduates we were producing, and the need for teachers in the state at that time. The review was made over a period of months. When it was finally reported to the college, both the senate of the college and I wrote rebuttals to the report, citing the information that we had which was contrary to the findings of the task force. Our reports, I think, totaled sixty pages or more, including a lot of statistics and information from the state Department of Education. But it was to no avail. Although the chancellor at that time, Marvin Anderson, had promised that we would have a hearing, it never did occur. He had made his recommendation to the [University of Hawai'i] president that the College of Education be cut by 50 percent, which was the task force's recommendation also.⁹

The state Department [of Education] administration supported our position: that although there was a list that showed there was a large waiting list for teaching [positions], many of those people were no longer seeking teaching positions and that the true number who were seeking was not an accurate one. So this was the position we took. But evidently, the chancellor's office and the president's office did not agree with that position.

At that point, I tried to see the president to convince him that this was a wrong move. But I felt that the recommendations was pretty much set. The university was looking for position counts that they could move to begin other kinds of endeavors at the university, particularly in the area of the computer sciences. So I felt that I needed to go to the [Board of] Regents. In order to do that, I felt that I had to resign my position [as dean] and be free then to go above the people who were my superiors, which I finally did. I approached the regents and the conclusion of all this was that the college was not cut by 50 percent. Evidently, the report finally was such that they accepted the position of the College of Education

And I think the college was vindicated five years after that. At the end of five years—this was about 1989, I guess it was--there was a tremendous shortage of teachers, due to the fact that administrators were retiring, and teachers were moving up to become administrators. So the state had to recruit from the mainland in order to get teachers. Even before this, the state still had to recruit teachers from the mainland. But had we been cut by 50 percent, the need for recruitment from the mainland would have been even greater. So I felt that what we had done, even though it had cost me my job in taking early retirement, was a correct move.

I felt that the only way I could really make an impact was to resign and then I was free to act. Once I retired I felt that I could go to the regents and lobby, which I did. And I'd like to think that my lobbying at that point helped to stop the action of the regents in accepting that report. There was no cut at all.

That's the ironic thing. We thought it would help the college to be evaluated so that they could begin to see the need for resources in the college. But it kind of boomeranged on me. I don't know where they got those findings [indicating an oversupply of teachers in Hawai'i], but they were all inaccurate. It was very easy for us to defend the college because we had the facts. But when the facts didn't make any difference, then I knew that going through discussions was fruitless. And drastic action had to be taken.

Retirement and reflections

I was a full professor by that time and so at my retirement I became emeritus dean and professor of education. I retired [in 1984] at age sixty-three. [When Dean Everly] retired [in 1979], he left completely. He didn't stay around; the faculty had no problem with loyalties. So when I left, I did the same thing for the person who took over from me, so that no one should be having loyalties to me after I leave. So I did the same thing for Peter Dunn-Rankin who took over as acting dean, [followed by Dan Blaine], and then John Dolly, who finally became dean [in 1986].

After my retirement, I led several groups to China. I also did a lot of traveling on the [U.S.] mainland, visiting my family and getting elected to our national church's board for homeland ministries. In addition to that experience, I served as chairman of the C. K. and Soo Yong Huang Foundation. For years, we administered the estate of these donors, devoted to setting up scholarships and grants to institutions like Queen's [Medical Center], the art academy [i.e., Honolulu Academy of Arts], University of Cincinnati, and University of Hawai'i, that dealt with projects about China or Chinese culture and in particular, Beijing opera.

In addition to the arts, in the more recent years, that was expanded to include other fields of study. Education, law, American studies, library science, where Chinese students coming from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, would be given scholarships to study at the University of Hawai'i or mainland universities to get training in these fields with the inten-

tion, our intention at least, that they would go back and help their country. So over the years, we had a hand in helping to train resources for China.

So that was how I spent my retirement, working with the United Church of Christ and the Huang Foundation. So we've been pretty busy.

I think my University of Hawai'i experience has been a very rich one. I had mostly happy years there. In my retirement, I regret that I didn't follow up on some things, particularly in the art field. I sometimes wish I had gone into the field of art. I'm still looking for the time when I can really sit down and paint and follow up on the talents that I had at one time, where I was very much interested in watercolor and oils all through my schooling.

I love teaching. Working with students was always a thing that I really enjoyed doing, primarily because when I was a student, I was always treated well. I had people who really were interested in me all through my schooling and career. From my very first grade, I had good teachers and really enjoyed classes. I still do a lot of reading. In fact, I guess I spend too much time reading instead of getting into these other things.

ENDNOTES

¹ Leilehua Lane is located a few blocks from Chinatown and Downtown Honolulu.

² Childhood game played with a peg and a stick.

³ Today it is known as Central Middle School.

⁴ First introduced in 1931 by McKinley High School principal Miles E. Carey, the core program integrated English and social studies classes.

⁵ Mrs. Gordon was the wife of Walton M. Gordon, the future superintendent of schools.

⁶ Today it is known as the Department of Curriculum Studies.

⁷ Hubert V. Everly served as dean of the College of Education from 1956 to 1979.

⁸ The College of Education received accreditation from NCATE in October 2001, seventeen years after In's retirement as dean, and three years after this set of interviews was conducted.

⁹ A major justification given by the task force was a statistical indication that the Hawai'i Department of Education was to experience an oversupply of teachers; therefore, fewer students and faculty were needed in the College of Education in coming years.

Harlan Cleveland

Interviewed by Warren Nishimoto (1996)

Narrative edited by Hunter McEwan and Warren Nishimoto

Harlan Cleveland, political scientist, diplomat, public executive, author of dozens of articles and books, and eighth president of the University of Hawai'i, was born in 1918 in New York City. He was the son of Stanley Matthews Cleveland and Marian Phelps Van Buren Cleveland. His father, an Episcopal chaplain, died prematurely in 1926. Nursing his father during a long illness had taken a toll on Cleveland's mother, and the family was recommended to move to a warmer climate. She took Harlan and his siblings to southern Europe where she had spent a part of her childhood—first to the Basse Pyrénées region of France and later to Geneva in Switzerland. Harlan Cleveland's schooling there gave him a strong foundation in French, and he also picked up some Italian and German.

In 1931, the family returned to the United States. Cleveland attended Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. There, he learned to value the connections between the disciplines, laying the grounds for his later abilities as a generalist: "I was always struck with the contrast between a situation in a school or college or university, where all the organization and all the power structure, too, is built on disciplines—and the communities surrounding it, where everything is organized by problems."

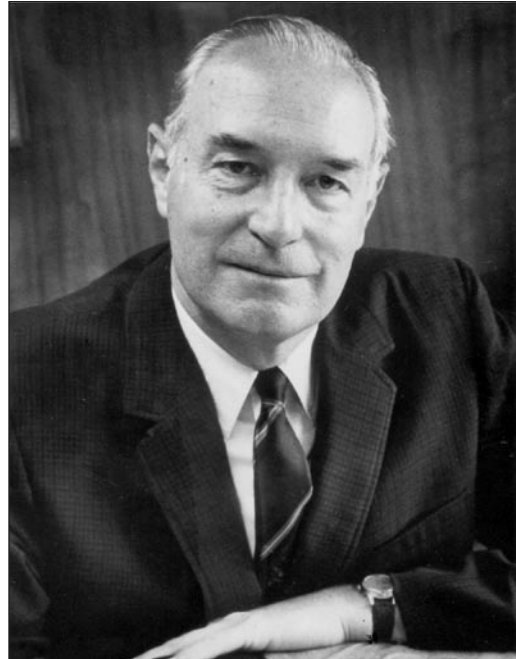
After graduation, Cleveland, at age sixteen, was admitted to Princeton University. He traveled extensively during summer breaks and went to Japan and China in 1937 on a study tour. While in China's Yangtze Valley, he witnessed some of the events leading to World War II, including the Japanese naval bombardment of Shanghai.

After receiving his bachelor's degree in 1938, Cleveland continued his studies at Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar. Oxford provided him with a strong background in Keynesian economics. He was active in the Oxford University Labour Club and helped organize demonstrations opposing Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement with Germany.

His doctoral studies came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of war in Europe, and he returned to Washington to work as an intern with the National Institute for Public Affairs. He was not too concerned that he was unable to complete his doctoral studies as he was not interested at the time in pursuing an academic career: "I thought of myself as a 'reflective practitioner.' That is, a person who would be doing, but thinking harder about it than most of the doers."

As a result of his background as a Rhodes scholar, Cleveland secured a paying job in the information division of the Farm Security Administration, a New Deal program designed to assist poor farmers. However, because the U.S. was in a state of war-readiness, much of his work in the FSA involved the relocation of people displaced by war preparations.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Cleveland was assigned to the "Enemy Branch" of the Board of Economic Warfare. He was put in charge of the Italian Section, working with a small group of exiles, mainly Jewish intellectuals and businessmen



(UH Photo Archives)

who had escaped before the outbreak of hostilities. Their job was to determine how to destroy selective pieces of the Italian economy, in some cases by advising the U.S. Air Force on what they should and should not bomb.

Later, as the Allies gained the upper hand after the invasion of Sicily, Cleveland traveled to Rome to take up a staff position as assistant to General William O'Dwyer, head of the Allied Control Commission (ACC) in Italy. His talents as a generalist and bureaucratic analyst were quickly put to the test in calculating the first balance-of-payments estimate for postwar Italy. Because Cleveland's work was regarded as a remarkable accomplishment by his supervisors in Washington, he was, at age 26, appointed to be executive director of the Economic Section of the ACC.

In the early postwar years, Cleveland transferred to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) to continue the work he had been doing for the ACC in Italy. In 1948, he joined the Economic Cooperation Administration, where he first served as director of the China Aid Program, then developed and managed U.S. aid to East Asia. In 1952, he became the Washington-based supervisor of the Marshall Plan for European recovery.

Cleveland left Washington in early 1953 to become executive editor and later publisher of *The Reporter*.

In 1956, he was appointed dean of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. He was also professor of political science at the school.

As dean, he refined his theory that public administration was informed by the social sciences: "We thought of public administration as not just how you do the pick-and-shovel work in a bureaucracy. I thought of it as a horizontal overlay on the social sciences." While at Syracuse he published his first book, *The Overseas Americans* (1960): "It developed some theory about what was the difference in working abroad and there-

fore, what kind of preparation people should have.”

Cleveland was a New York delegate to the 1960 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, and from 1961 to 1965 served as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs in the President John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson administrations.

Appointed U.S. Ambassador to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, he continued in that post until the first months of the new Republican administration under President Richard M. Nixon in 1969.

Cleveland stepped into the University of Hawai‘i presidency in the aftermath of a long, bitter dispute between and among the university administration, faculty and students regarding the tenure of Oliver Lee, a UH-Mānoa political science professor whose strong antiwar views led to the denial of his tenure application by the Thomas H. Hamilton administration, a decision supported by the UH Board of Regents. Hamilton’s decision was subsequently appealed on the grounds that it

violated Lee’s right to due process, an appeal supported by the UH-Mānoa Faculty Senate. Hamilton then announced his resignation and formally left office in May of 1968. On April 26, 1969, the regents named Cleveland to be the university’s eighth president.

Cleveland served during one of the most tumultuous eras of the twentieth century. Across the nation, college students demonstrated against the Vietnam War and protested societal injustices such as race and gender discrimination. A unique culture based on activism, rock music, drugs, and social and intellectual awareness developed. During those years, America also endured scandals that led to the resignation of its vice president and president. The nation’s trust in government and its leaders were at a nadir.

Warren Nishimoto conducted eight interviews with Cleveland in 1996 as part of a series of oral histories with former University of Hawai‘i presidents. The following edited narrative begins at approximately the midway point of the interviews, when he assumed the presidency.



President Harlan Cleveland (far right) and Vice President Richard Kosaki (second from right) visit Kapi‘olani Community College, 1969. (UH Photo Archives)

Coming to the University of Hawai'i.

What was going on through my mind was that a university presidency was the one kind of job that I would really like to tackle because of my professional and academic interest in administration, in how things get done. It seemed to me that being president of a university was the most difficult form of administration. The staff was not really responsible to the so-called boss. A chemistry professor would regard himself as much more responsible to the field of chemistry nationally than he would as part of the university. An urban hospital would be maybe one ratchet more “horizontal,” in that the faculty there, the doctors, are not even on the payroll of the hospital. They are on the payroll of the third-party payers—insurance companies and the like—who pay the tab. So maybe a university wasn't the ultimate case in “horizontal” administration, but it was close enough. And I had already projected in my thinking, then later projected in *The Future Executive*,¹ the notion that most administrative relationships were going to be horizontal in the foreseeable future.

A university presidency would get me into what seemed to be a congenial sort of role where I could use the skills that I had already developed as an administrator and manager; to run things and supervise people. But I could also use my brain to think about the process in which I was engaged and to think about the subject matters I was administering.

So I spread the word among my friends and colleagues [while U.S. Ambassador to NATO] that that's the sort of thing I'd like to do next. If they heard of anything interesting, to let me know. I didn't really have Hawai'i in my sights particularly, although I'd always been interested in Hawai'i. I had stopped there when I was a student on our Orient study tour. I stopped there on my way back and was actually sort of offered a chance to be a young reporter or an intern at *The Honolulu Advertiser*. I met George Chaplin, the editor of the paper, then.

One of my favorite people in the Maxwell [School] faculty and one of our most distinguished professors, had moved to Hawai'i, Stuart Gerry Brown. I got a letter from him in Brussels that winter of the shift-over when it was obvious that I was going to need a new job.² He mentioned that they had been fiddling around here for a year and a half trying to find a new president for the University of Hawai'i³ and “a group of us would like to suggest you. What do you think?” It turned out that he, George Chaplin and Gregg [M.] Sinclair, former [University of Hawai'i] president [1942–55], had gotten their heads together. I didn't really know Sinclair. I knew Chaplin vaguely.

So my guess is, on the basis of Stuart's testimony, they decided I would be right for the job. And they started promoting this idea, apparently, to the [Board of] Regents and I suppose to the governor and others. And so at the end of February or early March [1969], I get a formal invitation to come out.

Now, one thing happened before that. I was in Washington, [D.C.] for a consultation sometime, it must have been in February. And [Herbert M.] “Monte” Richards and Monsignor [Charles A.] Kekumano were—I don't remember whether Bob [Robert L.] Cushing, who was the chairman of the Board [of Regents], was in on that or not—were going to be in Washington for something. I got word that they would like to meet me. I guess we had dinner together. And I liked them both very much, and I liked what they said about the university. Well, they mostly described the sort of shape and size. I hadn't realized that it [the university] was practically the whole of higher education in the state of Hawai'i, give or take a few small denominational colleges. And it wasn't formally a system at that point but it sounded as if it was working up to being a state system. They also described that there had been a lot of ructions there in connection with Vietnam and that there were pending cases. They mentioned the Oliver Lee case, but I didn't really have any idea what it was or how it fitted in. But they weren't selling me the institution; mainly they were trying to find out about me. The next thing I heard was an invitation from the Board of Regents to visit Hawai'i for a week, with Lois, first-class travel, all expenses paid, and so on.

We had arrived at the beginning of the week. I was to lecture at the East-West Center on the Friday of that week. And that was kind of the “cover story,” so that people wouldn't cotton to the fact that I was a candidate for the presidency. And somehow, I think probably because of George Chaplin, they had managed to convince all the media, the television people and the newspapers not to reveal—although most of them knew—why I was in town. Meanwhile, I was doing all sorts of things [that week] that couldn't possibly be kept secret. I was visiting with the governor, I was visiting with the legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle in both houses. I was talking with the regents, obviously. I was having meetings with various groups of faculty and students. And all of them knew why I was visiting with them. So the idea that the reason for my visit could be a secret struck me as increasingly laughable.

It looked like I was going to be offered the job because there didn't seem to be any other candidates around. And more of the conversation was directed at selling me the job than interviewing me for the job, it seemed to me. They, of course, were in the midst of this imbroglio about Oliver Lee, which had blown Hamilton out of the water earlier. So I was given huge sheets of paper to read about the case and what had happened in court, and so on. When I finally got to the meeting with the regents when we were getting serious talking about the job, one of them said, “Well, what do you think we ought to do about this Oliver Lee case? You've read all the background.”

In effect I told the Board of Regents they ought to fish or cut bait. And that was a kind of a risky thing to say because

I didn't know whether I'd be blowing my chances right there by saying that. But I knew enough about politics and administration to have a strong hunch that that was the right thing to say. And they swallowed it.

The "Prospectus for the Seventies"⁴

It was written during my first year [in office]. I established a committee which Dick [Richard H.] Kosaki chaired, for the university-wide community to essentially think about the strategy for the university during my period. That's what I was thinking about. And they held a number of hearings and developed quite a literature on what was possible. It was in that process that I began to get an inkling, for example, that Mauna Kea was going to play a special role and would be noticed worldwide.

But I took the position very early—and Kosaki was very skillful at making it come out this way—that I wasn't setting up a committee to write the prospectus. I was setting up a committee to help me understand what was going on and what was possible. After all, I was fifty-one, and a published author of already several books, and I was pretty sure that I could write it, if I knew what to say, you know. And Dick managed to work it so that nobody resented the fact that when it was finally written, it wasn't really the committee's document, it was mine. I didn't want them to start nitpicking sentences or concepts. And so I went off over Christmas vacation and—I think that was done at the Sheraton Maui, which was one of our favorite places to disappear to—and wrote, or rewrote, every section of that document. And I worked very hard to get it done by the end of the year.

It was a very valuable exercise. First, it was very valuable to me, because, after all, I'd been working in Europe on security problems. I'd been working for four years on subject matter that had nothing to do with Hawai'i at all, or the Pacific, for that matter. So, it was an excuse to get immersed in the subject matter of the university's purposes.

But, the prospectus was not only good for me, it was good because we were able, through the Kosaki committee, to involve a lot of people on the faculty, and show that I wasn't coming in here with a set agenda that I'd cooked up on the plane coming over. Instead, it really would be built out of ambitions that people there had. And it was, in fact. There were a number of things that went in there that I hadn't realized, I hadn't even imagined before.

It had an enormous impact, both in assuring people who weren't watching very carefully, "Well, the university seems to know where it's going." It created that impression. But it also, for those who were involved—the governor and the legislators and the faculty leaders, student leaders, and parents and supporters around the state—gave them something to sink their teeth into.

My definition of planning was improvisation on a general sense of direction. That [prospectus] was the general

sense of direction, but in this case, I thought that it really needed to be put down on paper and widely circulated.

We got lucky, because again [George] Chaplin was helpful. And he decided, to my surprise, to run the whole thing as a series of articles in *The Honolulu Advertiser* from January 21, 1970, entitled "Prospectus for the Seventies." He preempted the op-ed [opinion and editorial] page for a whole week, and just ran this in big chunks, full text.

We generally tried to phrase everything we did with the legislature in terms that came out of the prospectus. There was enough philosophy in the prospectus to cover almost anything we'd wanted to do. Nowadays, it would probably be called a strategic plan or mission statement or something, and that kind of thing is done more and more.

And when I was leaving [in 1974], there were several efforts—I think the best one was probably in the [*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*—to say, "Well, this guy came in with all these ideas. What's happened to them?" And they went through the prospectus, more or less point by point, and concluded that most of them had been done or were underway. And that was because it was in fact a general sense of direction on which I was improvising every day, and as it turned out, a lot of other people were too.

University programs

Since I'd worked so much in international affairs myself, I thought of the university as an international institution more than a university of the Pacific. For example, there wasn't any Asian language and culture center. There were people who taught Japanese, there were people who taught Chinese, and some of them were in the university; some of them were in the East-West Center. And there were people in sociology and anthropology who had done research in these areas. My problem was to dramatize a concept, and then to attract—usually not very many new faculty into it—pull together the faculty that was there, and find somebody, either internally or externally who could do the coordinating and be the external symbol.

Marine sciences

That's one thing that I worked quite hard on the first year, because I had been told that the University of Hawai'i, despite its natural advantages in marine sciences, had been passed up in the first allocation of Sea Grant money to the universities from the federal government. That struck me as very strange, and I was kind of curious as to why that was. When I got there, it became very clear that the reason was that the marine sciences were scattered around. There was the Coconut Island marine biology [facility]⁵ and there was a strong geophysics element with George Woollard, who was good at landing federal grants. But there wasn't any centerpiece, and nobody available to talk to the federal government people about that whole subject.

John Craven had been one of the candidates, apparently, a year before, for the [UH] presidency. I knew him a little bit. So I arranged an early trip to Washington to get together with him. At that time he was up at MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology], for a one-year appointment—he had just left the [federal] government. He'd been chief scientist of the Polaris program and an expert on small submersible vehicles. He was, interestingly, a combination of ocean engineer and lawyer. And the governor [Governor John A. Burns] liked him. And soon after he came, the governor made him also the state coordinator of marine affairs. So with those two jobs, he was in a very strong position to do what I wanted which was both to pull together the marine sciences inside and to advertise them, sell them, symbolize them, outside, particularly to Washington.

Mauna Kea

I had not realized that Mauna Kea was potentially the world's best terrestrial site for astronomy. I knew generally that there'd been a history of solar astronomy based more at Haleakala than Mauna Kea. I really got religion about Mauna Kea and pushed very hard for UH to be ambitious. We fortunately had a very good director of the Institute for Astronomy, which had already been set up, named John Jefferies, who had started life as a solar astronomer.

An arrangement had been made, before I got there, for the university to have a ninety-nine-year lease on the whole top of Mauna Kea. But we only had one small telescope there; it belonged to the university. So the runaway take-off for that whole astronomy program happened during my time, although some of the telescopes we negotiated for didn't actually get constructed until after I left. We bid for what was going to be one of the world's great telescopes, what came to be known as the France-Canada-Hawai'i telescope, which was a joint venture between French and Canadian astronomers. They came, I think reluctantly, to Hawai'i to look at the site. They had previously visited all the places in the world where they had any ambitions about astronomy and where French was spoken, and didn't find any of them satisfactory from a scientific point of view. By happenstance, the three people that they mostly dealt with when they got to Hawai'i all spoke French. I had just come from NATO, which is a bilingual community, and I was fluent in French at that time—more so than now, it's rusted over now. John Jefferies had had part of his scientific training at the Sorbonne, in French. And the chief astronomical engineer, Hans Boesgaard was a multilingual Dane who also spoke French. And I always thought later that at least 75 percent of their positive decision was based on the scientific characteristics of Mauna Kea: the black night, the lack of pollution from below, the 9,000-foot inversion of the clouds so that it kept pollution off the top of the mountain. But that maybe 25 percent was just of a cultural feeling

that, "These people must be all right. They speak French," you know (laughs).

Korean Studies

One of the things that were clear from the beginning was that we could be a center for Korean studies. Korea, because it had historical importance for us, being the venue of one of our great wars, there was a lot of interest. We had a very good professor there, Dae-Sook Suh, who was in fact an expert on North Korea, and actually wrote a book about Kim Il Sung. Suh was one of the first people later on to be allowed to travel in North Korea. So when the question came up, I took the line that the question wasn't whether we ought to have a Center for Korean Studies, but that we were the center for Korean studies in the United States. And then later—I can't remember which years, second or third year—I went on a trip to [South] Korea and negotiated with the minister of education there a deal whereby they would put up half the funds to build that building [i.e., Korean Studies Center], and we would pass the hat in Hawai'i. And interestingly, I thought we'd be depending mostly on the Korean Americans there [in Hawai'i], and maybe some Korean-Americans on the Mainland and so on, but the Japanese and Chinese communities also were very helpful.

PEACESAT⁶

There was a fellow there named John Bystrom, who was a very well-known person in the field of communications, and he knew quite a lot about the coming technologies of the information age long before most people were turned on by them. I was sort of beginning to get interested in that. Much later, I wrote a book called *The Knowledge Executive*, and have been active in that field ever since.

John Bystrom was one of the people who turned me on to the potential of electronic communication, and particularly satellite communication. He got wind of a NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] satellite, one of the very early ones. I think it was called ATS-1, Advanced Technology System One, which was up there in the sky, and had been up there for several years. The research and development at NASA and elsewhere had gone past it, but the satellite was still healthy up there. NASA didn't have a job for it anymore, because they were working with more advanced technology, partly for military purposes. And so they issued us all a half-hearted announcement saying, in effect, "Anybody want to use an old satellite? Anyone who wants to use it for some educational or non-profit purpose, we'll make it available for free."

Bystrom caught that ball in mid-air, and [in 1970] conceived the idea that we should develop a Pacific-wide electronic communications system. This is before anybody was really talking about e-mail and so on. And the idea as we developed it was that we would have a communication sys-

tem that would exchange information among all the higher education institutions in the Pacific, including Alaska, Fiji, Tonga, and so on. We had to have a technology that wasn't too expensive for communicating with the satellite—we got the satellite free. And NASA liked this idea very much, because we were going to use something that they had put up and we could show that they were doing something for humanity and so on. And our congressional delegation liked the idea and was very helpful in pushing it. Senator [Daniel K.] Inouye was very helpful, and Senator [Spark M.] Matsunaga, too.

We needed a ground station [to access the ATS-1 satellite]. And there was a very imaginative—some people called him crazy—professor in the [physics department], who was a ham radio enthusiast [Katashi Nose]. And he said, “My goodness. I could put together a ground station out of stuff I could buy off the shelf in a ham radio store.”

I said that the problem with any organization, even if it's expanding, is that what you're already doing fills up the budget. The only way to start anything new is to have some money that doesn't require cutting somebody's budget. So, the thing to do was to make an across-the-board cut ahead of time, so that nobody was feeling the pain. So we had this fund we called the President's Innovation Fund, and I told Bystrom and [Nose], “Here's \$5,000. Why don't you see if you can make it work?” And for an amount that turned out only to be about half the \$5,000, they constructed a ground station on the roof of the engineering building.

And within—I don't know, a year, a year and a half—Bystrom had this thriving business going, where for two or three hours every day, there would be an exchange of views and discussion by what we would now call e-mail. You'd type out a message and it would go out on the system. And altogether, for peanuts as a university investment, it was possible to make a major innovation in satellite communication, because the satellite was free. So that was again partly taking advantage of Hawai'i's location as a Pacific university, but also betting on the imagination and drive of a senior professor [Bystrom].

The community colleges

I began to worry about, “What about the best and brightest of the students who come through the community colleges? Are they going to get a chance to go on, since it was all one system after all?” I came to regard that as a kind of an entitlement: that if somebody did well enough in community college, they ought to get a chance to get to the Mānoa campus, or later, to the Hilo campus, for a four-year degree or beyond into graduate work.

It was a part of my educational philosophy, but also a political judgment, based on having seen what was happening in other states, where the smaller, more spread-out parts of public higher education were vigorously supported by

the local legislators from those districts. And I came to feel very strongly that we should encourage the maximum flow of people through the community colleges to the Mānoa campus. Our arrangements for admitting students to the Mānoa campus should leave plenty of room for ambitious youngsters from the neighbor islands and from outside of the Honolulu complex itself.

We developed a proposal, which I made to the faculty senate in Mānoa, that we should develop the principle that any student that does satisfactory work and gets sixty credit hours of transferable work should have not just the opportunity, but should have a preferential right to move to the Mānoa campus for the rest of their education. That was very hard for the Mānoa faculty to swallow. First of all, there was an attitude that these are probably inferior students, that they're country folks who really wouldn't understand how to survive on our campus. Then it turned out that they [Mānoa faculty] didn't really know what was going on at the community colleges, and there weren't many friendships of community college faculty with Mānoa faculty. So I used our innovation fund to support a whole series of lunches and dinners. For example, getting the mathematicians on the Mānoa campus together with the people who were teaching mathematics in the community colleges. And some of it was very revealing, because the Mānoa faculty didn't know what was happening in the other parts of the statewide system. In some cases, they were surprised that it was so good; in some cases they were distressed that it was so bad, and began to take responsibility for helping the community college people in their fields to do teaching that would mesh with the teaching on the Mānoa campus when the students came, you see. So, it was not just a question of passing a rule. It was a question of developing a whole new culture.

Finally, after, I think, negotiating about it for more than two years, we got the Mānoa faculty senate signed on to the policy. So for the first time it meant open admissions at the University of Hawai'i, after talking about open admissions for years.

The law school

We were trying to get the law school approved, but in the senate, the senate minority leader, Wadsworth Yee, was very much opposed to it. He took the line that lawyers of his generation often took, which was, “Well, we had to go to the Mainland for law school, but it worked all right in my case. Why don't the kids want to do that?” There tended to be more local politics involved in it, because so many of the legislators, and outside people, were lawyers, and had their own idea of what a law school should be.

I kept arguing that any community that isn't producing some of its own lawyers and some of its own doctors is still a colony, and, “If you guys want to be a colony of California, that's all right, but I don't think we ought to be.” It turned

out to be a pretty powerful argument. Anyway, [Senator] Wadsworth Yee was opposing the law school. But at the same time, he was trying to help his son get into law school on the Mainland. He told people—I don't remember if he told me, or if he told somebody who told me—that he was a good friend of the governor of Colorado, Governor [John A.] Love of Colorado. He would call him up about his son. And the governor, I gather, said something like, “Are you kidding? I can't even get my own son into [a certain] law school.” So, the next day, as a result of that phone conversation—as I understand the story—Yee was standing on the floor of the state senate, saying, “The Mainland schools are discriminating against our kids. We can't have that. We've got to have our own law school.” Just, bang, like that.

We had some consultants come in, including a guy who was dean of the Stanford [University] Law School, who later became president of Indiana University. And they developed a very imaginative kind of a curriculum for a law school, which involved much more clinical work earlier, and didn't start with the usual torts and contracts and so forth in the first year. But the local lawyers, both in the legislature and out, were not about to make our law school a big educational experiment, which they thought might get in the way of being helpful to their kids, you know. And they may have been right about that, actually. Anyway, we did start the law school in a more normal way.

The medical school

The medical school was much more expensive inherently, and there was also a big argument about whether we ought to have a hospital. The guy who had been heading the two-year program at UH had come up through, I think, UCLA, and to him a medical school was something that had a hospital attached. I started consulting around about medical schools with friends on the Mainland. One of my friends was president of Johns Hopkins [University], and he said, “Whatever you do about a medical school, don't have a [university] hospital. It takes half my time and half my budget.”

So we imported a group of consultants to think about it, and they came up with what I'd hoped they would come up with, which was, “You guys don't need a hospital. You've got some fine hospitals around here. Your problem is to make them part of your program.” And that turned out to be the hard part. Because to make them part of the program meant that you had to get faculty members who could be physicians on their staff, and you had to make sure that those physicians, who were faculty members, were in control of the educational program in the hospital. And I'd been in several negotiations with the Russians and with our allies in Europe, and it struck me that I'd never been in anything so difficult as negotiating with the hospitals in Hawai'i. I thought it would have been the same anywhere. And that's probably why so many university medical programs have their own hospitals.

The Vietnam War and campus climate

I arrived in September [1969], and in the middle of October, there was sort of a general movement on campuses around the country to declare a special day calling attention to the Vietnam War. It came to be called the October Moratorium.

We consulted with some of the faculty leaders, and some of the regents and so on, and decided it was all right to have a day off [from classes] for talk about that, and that it would be a good thing for every professor to think of a way to make it a day of thinking about the war in Vietnam through the prism of their discipline. And we officially called off classes for an afternoon, a Wednesday I believe it was, so there could be a big meeting on the subject. Student leaders very much wanted a big protest meeting.

They invited me to come to the meeting and speak. I think I surprised them by saying, “Yes, I'll come.”

I hadn't previously said anything publicly about Vietnam. But when I issued a statement that called off classes and made this meeting possible, I said that everybody wants the war over; it's just that there are different ways of wanting it over. But nobody wants this war to continue. Which was more or less true.

And then, when the students running this meeting gave me the floor, I had prepared a very strong and, as I look back on it, eloquent analysis of why we ought to get out of the war. I wasn't able to use the phrase, because Senator George Aiken of Vermont, I guess it was, had already used the phrase, “Let's declare victory and get out.” But that was my theme. It became known with some of my colleagues as the “Vietnam-is-our-Algeria War,” because I had this phrase in there about, “We ought to do what de Gaulle did about Algeria, and just walk away from it.”

I had a line designed as an applause line, and it turned out to be a headline line, to the effect that the reason we're not getting out is because we've got “face” problems involved. I thought this was a way of putting it that would mean something to a largely Oriental-parentage audience: “The face of my nation is not worth the life of my son,” I said. That was emblazoned over the top of the newspaper, the next day. It was by far the lead story, and somewhat transformed my relationship with students in general, and the student leadership in particular.

It also transformed my relationship with Admiral [John S.] McCain, [Jr.], who was the Commander-in-Chief [of the U.S. Pacific Command]. His son [John S. McCain III], now a [U.S.] senator from Arizona, was still a prisoner of war in Hanoi. And so coming out against the war was a stab in the back as far as Admiral McCain was concerned.

Well, it didn't really quiet the indignation about the war, but it took me personally a little bit out of the firing line. And it gave me an opportunity for some educational experiments. People would come in and conduct sit-ins in my office, and

I figured since they were sitting there, they might as well be learning something, so I'd give them things to read and we'd discuss them. I was particularly fond, at that moment, of a piece that I'd just read, that I'd read in French, but that had just come out in English, by Raymond Aron about the events of 1968 which occurred just the year before in France.⁷ It is a long and very brilliant essay about the distinction between dissent and disruption. I thought it was a very good opportunity for educating people about the important distinction between dissent and disruption.

Decentralizing the University of Hawai'i system

The goal was to actually try to decentralize the university administration by at least giving the impression that the community colleges were a little better represented. I had to avoid the sense that because of the structure, I was bound to pay most of my attention to the Mānoa campus. Of course, that was what I paid most attention to always, because it was the biggest part of the university in terms of number of students, in terms of dollars, in terms of investment, and in terms of outside renown.

For me personally, the UH presidency became a marginally less attractive job after we set it up as a state "system," because I wasn't seeing quite as much of the best people on the Mānoa campus. They had to go to the chancellor for their problems. And it was harder to initiate things. For example, PEACESAT was initiated right out of my office, with a quite direct relationship with the professor who was masterminding it. But with a more decentralized administration, all those dynamics would be between the Mānoa chancellor and him, except it might not happen because I had the flexibility to move resources around from my level, more effectively than a campus chancellor would have.

The board of regents

I remember a meeting of the board of regents in which we were trying to recruit somebody in a sub-field of biology. And it was the kind of sub-field where there were probably only half a dozen, or a dozen at most, first-rate people in the whole country. One of the regents was critical of the fact that the chairman of that department was off gallivanting around the country on our budget, trying to recruit somebody for this slot. And he asked the question, you know, "Can't we find somebody like that around here?" Well, in the context, for that particular slot, that was a ridiculously ignorant question. But you couldn't say to a regent, "That's ridiculously ignorant," you know. So we just had to explain how difficult it was, and how few people there were, and so on. And how if you didn't go after them, other people would get them because there were a lot of good universities with good biology departments.

So, you've got that kind of regent trouble. But by far, the most serious issues with the board as a whole, or at least

with the majority of board [members], came over athletics. And that may be typical elsewhere, too.

Collective bargaining

I always thought that it was a bad idea for faculty members to form a union. I thought it would be better for them to have a strong professional association and work things out that way. Unionization would have a levelling effect. If you were an associate professor, you would tend to get paid [a certain amount] whether you were topflight or just average in whatever the field was. It didn't seem to me to serve either the university's purpose or the individual's purpose, for the best people in a particular category to be kind of held to an average salary. For [certain] fields, it would be harder to get the best people unless we paid top price. It would be harder under collective bargaining, I thought, to make those distinctions, either between excellence and average, and between, say, physics and English. Because for a very good price for an English teacher, you couldn't get a first-rate physicist in the marketplace. And we needed to be able to make those distinctions.

But the politics of our situation was fundamentally different. In the first place, unions were politically popular. Some of them—Harry Bridges and the longshoremen and so on—had played a big part in the history of the West Coast and of Hawai'i.⁸ So it was hard to make the kind of points that I'm making now without being seen to be anti-labor, you know. But by the same token, the labor mystique in Hawai'i was very hard to apply to this kind of intellectual activity.

So I had talks with Werner Levi and other faculty leaders. I advised them against going for a union. But some of the best of the faculty leaders thought that it would be both good for them, but also, that it was inevitable in Hawai'i that it would happen, and they'd better try to keep control of it themselves.

So then the Hawai'i Labor Relations Board held a hearing about whether this kind of union collective bargaining could be applied to the university. And also—very important—where you would draw the line between "labor" and "management" in a university. I was clearly management. And a professor with no administrative duties was clearly a peon in the traditional hierarchy of labor relations. But what about a department chair? The department chair is partly representing the faculty in their disciplines, but at the same time, the chair has responsibilities to the administration to stay within budget and stuff like that.

So they had me come and testify about where you would draw the line. I read up on some labor history, and prepared quite a substantial brief on the subject, which was, I think, quite baffling to them because their experience hadn't prepared them for my argument, which was that a department chair is both "management" and also part of the "labor" group. Most department chairs teach and do research. So I

thought that if collective bargaining [were to take place], there ought to be some way of adding a third party of people who were not entirely labor and not entirely management, but who had certain responsibilities of their own and ought to be heard in the dialogue.

I made it too complicated an issue for them. The result was that they went ahead and simplified it anyway: they threw the department chair into the [bargaining] unit. I told them if the department chair were thrown into the unit, it would require the appointment of a whole collection of assistant deans to do some of the things that the department chair was supposed to do for the administration. And that would inflate the administrative costs of the university, and be generally unpopular with people who thought that there oughtn't to be so many administrators anyway. That was a sort of curve ball from the point of view of the labor relations panel, because I was speaking to their prejudices—that there were already too many administrators.

Anyway, all my efforts along that line were not very successful. And it came out in favor of collective bargaining. The vote was more split on the Mānoa campus. As I remember, it was a slight majority against collective bargaining on the Mānoa campus, but that was swamped in the bigger numbers of the university faculty as a whole.⁹

Resignation

When I was negotiating the question of being president with the Board of Regents in the spring of 1969, I was asked in one of the meetings whether I would sign on for five full years. They wanted me to stay for five, but they weren't willing to change the constitution, which states that the executive officer serves at the pleasure of the Board of Regents.

That would have required an explicit contract on their part to change that deal. So I didn't have any term of office. But as I came up to the fourth and fifth year, I had a feeling that it would require kind of a new decision on my part, almost as if it had been a five-year term. I had to think about that. I also had the impression that the people most interested in the subject, the regents and other political folks in the legislature and the governor's staff, and so on, were sort of regarding it as a five-year term, too, and thinking that maybe they had a decision to make as to whether I should stay.

Because of what I thought was a sort of depressing effect of unionization on the potentials that I had been pushing for at the university, and because the regents were showing more and more signs of "local-itis"—it seemed clear to me that Hawai'i as a community was going to insist pretty soon on there being a locally-born president of the university, I decided that I didn't really want to stay around to go through that argument and fight about it.

I started thinking that I would rather decide when to leave, rather than get into a situation where I'd be more and more being pushed out by what was, I think, clearly a dete-

riorating [relationship with the] Board of Regents. They were all appointed by the governor. I think one very important factor was that the governor [John A. Burns] was sick,¹⁰ and that was slowing him down, making him less willing to take advice from everybody the way he used to. And that he was putting on the board people that he felt he had some political obligation to, to advance or to give some plum to. And being on the Board of Regents was regarded as quite a plum.

[Following his resignation from the university in 1974, Harlan Cleveland developed and directed an international program at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies. In 1979 he was the Distinguished Visiting Tom Slick Professor of World Peace at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin.

During the 1980s Cleveland served as the founding dean of the University of Minnesota's Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, a graduate school, research institute, and one of the nation's early centers for leadership education. He retired in 1988 as professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota.

Cleveland authored articles and books on executive leadership and world affairs. He was a fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Science and in 1991 became its president, a position he held at the time of the interviews, which were conducted in Pāhala, Hawai'i and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

He and his wife Lois raised three children.]

ENDNOTES

¹ Harlan Cleveland, *The Future Executive: A Guide for Tomorrow's Managers*, 1972.

² A lifelong Democrat, Cleveland knew his days as U.S. Ambassador to NATO under the Nixon administration were numbered.

³ After Thomas H. Hamilton's resignation in 1968, the university was headed for a year by Acting President Richard Takasaki.

⁴ Cleveland's "Prospectus for the Seventies," was written to be a "general sense of direction" for the university. According to Cleveland, it was not meant as a "personal initiative," nor a "consensus of the university community." See Center for Oral History, *Presidents of the University of Hawai'i: Harlan Cleveland* (Honolulu: Center for Oral History, 1998). A1-A28.

⁵ Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology

⁶ Pan-Pacific Education and Communication Experiments by Satellite.

⁷ Aron, Raymond. (1969). *The Elusive Revolution: Anatomy of a Student Revolt*. trans. Gordon Clough. New York: Praeger.

⁸ The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union [ILWU] has had a long history in longshoring, sugar, pineapple, and other fields, affecting several thousands of Hawai'i laborers.

⁹ The University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly (UHPA) has been the exclusive bargaining agent for all faculty members of the University of Hawai'i system since November 1, 1974.

¹⁰ John A. Burns, who served as Hawai'i's governor from 1962 to 1974, left office on December 2, 1974. He died on April 5, 1975.

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
College of Education
Educational Perspectives
1776 University Avenue
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