UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Language Education, Race, and the Remaking of American Citizenship in Los Angeles, 1900-1968

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5zd66224>

Author

Gutfreund, Zevi

Publication Date

2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Language Education, Race, and the
Remaking of American Citizenship in Los Angeles, 1900-1968

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in History

by

Zevi Moses Gutfreund

2013

© Copyright by
Zevi Moses Gutfreund
2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Language Education, Race, and the
Remaking of American Citizenship in Los Angeles, 1900-1968

by

Zevi Moses Gutfreund

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Stephen Aron, Chair

This dissertation uses language instruction in Los Angeles as a lens through which to explore assimilation, immigration, and what it means to be an American. It draws from sources such as curricular materials, court records, correspondence, blue book exams, and student newspapers in the city of angels' Anglo, Mexican, and Japanese American communities. They launched language experiments that attracted national attention from 1900 to 1968, the year of the federal Bilingual Education Act and the "Chicano Blowouts" in East Los Angeles. While many scholars have pointed to those events as crucial moments in the origins of the modern "culture wars," they came from a long history of language projects in Los Angeles. In studying that history, this work attempts to answer three questions. How did public schools design language instruction to Americanize foreign-born students before World War II? How did those

students respond to Americanization curriculum? Finally, after the war, how did immigrant communities use bilingual education to reshape debates about desegregation and citizenship?

These questions were not often addressed in direct discussions between Anglo, Mexican, and Japanese Angelenos. However, telling the stories of colorful characters from each community suggests that language learning played a central role in local and national debates about immigration and education. The dissertation begins in the Progressive Era, when teachers, students, and community members argued about the idea of public schools as Americanization factories that produced assimilated citizens ready for the work force. After Congress imposed “national origins” quotas in the Immigration Act of 1924, many advocates of foreign-born children challenged the notion that education was a nation-building project and insisted that schools should celebrate their students’ native cultures as well. Until the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Los Angeles school district and community-run heritage schools stressed language learning in their definitions of citizenship education.

This debate shifted during and after World War II, as the national interest in Americanization gave way to new ideas about racial integration. In 1947, a court ruling that stopped a school district in Orange County from segregating Spanish-speaking students on account of language became a precedent for the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. That case was heard in Los Angeles, where judges, officials, and reformers began to think about integrated schools along with another new concept, bilingual education. Since 1960, Angelenos have proposed a range of programs that created controversy leading up to, and after, the Bilingual Education Act and the East L.A. Blowouts of 1968. Taken together, the language projects of the city school district, immigrant educators, and student protestors reflect the coexistence of segregation and inclusive citizenship in Los Angeles schools.

The dissertation of Zevi Moses Gutfreund is approved.

Patricia Gándara

Kelly Lytle Hernández

Stephen Aron, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments		vi
Vita		x
Introduction	The Racial Politics of Language in Los Angeles	1
Chapter 1	Progressives Professionalize Language Instruction: Los Angeles Launches Multiple Language Experiments, 1900-1930	16
Chapter 2	Selective Citizenship: Americanization and International Allegiances in Interwar Los Angeles	45
Chapter 3	Wartime Projects Promote Patriotism and Protest: Riots and Internment Turn Language Education from Assimilation to a Civil Rights Agenda, 1941-1945	83
Chapter 4	The Rise of School Desegregation and Bilingual Education: Civil Rights Rhetoric Links Language and Integration, 1945-1952	137
Chapter 5	Language Learning as Political Protest: Mobilizing for Bilingual Education in East Los Angeles, 1960-1967	190
Chapter 6	The Blowouts and the Bilingual Education Act: Language Learning Policy and the Walkouts of 1968	230
Epilogue	Bilingual Education After the Blowouts: English-Only Politics and the Rise of Language Immersion, 1971-2011	281
Bibliography		298

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the many rewards in writing about the history of education was that it allowed me to tell the fascinating stories of teachers. Teachers who I never met happen to be the most colorful characters in my dissertation, but this project would not have been possible without a long list of teachers who have enriched my life. My Second Grade teacher, Mrs. Hilda Burness, recognized my interest in history when she encouraged me to write a letter to the publisher about an error in a biography of George Washington. At Harvard, William Gienapp persuaded me to major in history with his brilliant lectures about the Civil War and baseball in American society. For the last seven years, I have been fortunate to learn from a master teacher, Stephen Aron. He patiently answered my countless questions, encouraged me to think about why my project was original and significant, and always left me more eager to return to my research and writing. Steve's interest in "convergence" at the Autry inspired my own approach to this dissertation, which is better off because of his suggestion to include each ethnic group in every chapter. He made graduate school a rewarding experience for me, and I aspire to the example he has set as a teacher, as a writer, and as a public historian.

I have benefited from other model teachers at UCLA as well. Patricia Gándara is not only an expert in the field of language education, she is actively participating in the uphill battle to protect what remains of bilingual education in the United States today. Her work at the UCLA Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* is worthy of a history of its own, and I have always appreciated her enthusiasm for my study of the topic's more extended history. Kelly Lytle Hernández is a bold researcher and an entertaining lecturer, and I am fortunate to have worked with her as a student and as a Teaching Fellow. My interest in bilingual education came

from a research paper in her seminar, and her comments have pushed me to find more sources and tell more stories in this project. Other UCLA professors who did not sit on my dissertation committee have also been generous with their time, their experience, and their interest in my career. Many thanks to Eric Avila, Caroline Ford, Toby Higbie, David Myers, Jan Reiff, Joan Waugh, and Craig Yirush.

Many people helped me through the twists and turns of dissertation research. Some of them may not have expected to hear from a graduate student. In particular, I want to thank Mr. Joseph Zanki, Sr., a retired teacher from Roosevelt High School. Mr. Zanki invited me into his home, where I read old student newspapers and yearbooks at his dining room table. I visited so many times that I got to know many members of the Zanki family, all of whom made me feel welcome. Thanks also to Olga Stara at San Fernando High School and Pamela Bailey at Jefferson High School, both of whom shared primary sources from their campus libraries. Many librarians and archivists at academic and public institutions were just as helpful in the research process. I am grateful for the guidance I received from the staffs of the Japanese American National Museum; Department of Special Collections, UCLA; Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA; Grand Avenue Library & Book Depository, University of Southern California; Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont College; Department of Special Collections, Stanford University; and Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley. I should also acknowledge Sal Castro, whose autobiography *Blowout!* was very helpful. Mr. Castro passed away as this dissertation was completed.

This work was supported by the generous fellowships and grants that I received from the John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation, the UCLA Department of History, UCLA Graduate Division, and UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. I also thank Hadley Porter and Eboni Shaw for guiding me through every step of the Ph.D. process.

A myriad of scholars offered comments on individual chapters or suggested primary sources. I am indebted to Thomas Andrews, Laura Barraclough, Geraldo Cadava, Jon Christensen, Lawrence Culver, William Deverell, John Mack Faragher, Steven Hackel, Todd Holmes, David Igler, Sarah Keyes, Jessica Kim, David Labaree, Robert (Roy) Ritchie, Virginia Scharff, Josh Sides, Rachel St. John, Eric Steiger, Alan Taylor, Louis Warren, Mark Wild, and Richard White. Rosina Lozano and Natalia Mehlman Petrzela graciously shared their recent research about language education in New Mexico and California, respectively.

The dissertation has been enriched by other experiences I have had in graduate school. Many of these came at the National Center for History in the Schools. I met Marian Olivas and Gary Nash at NCHS the first week I arrived at UCLA, and their willingness to experiment with new projects taught me a lot about K-12 curriculum development. It was exciting to create NCHS curriculum guides like the ones that had been so helpful to me when I was a high school teacher, and Gary also suggested the topic that became my first published article. That article received invaluable editing from Merry Ovnick at *Southern California Quarterly*, and I continue to benefit from her support today. I am grateful to Gary, Marian, and Merry for teaching me about the worlds of public history, publishing, and curriculum design.

I have also learned a lot from fellow students, to whom I owe many thanks. As they finished their own Ph.D.s, Erik Greenberg, Joshua Paddison, Erika Pérez, and Karen Wilson each advised me on my own writing process. And I appreciated the many attendees who heard several presentations at the UCLA history department's graduate colloquium, including Max Baumgarten, Alfred Flores, Matthew Luckett, Daniel Lynch, Devin McCutchen, Michael Slaughter, Devon Van Dyne, and JoAnna Wall. Most of all, I extend deep gratitude to the members of my dissertation writing group, Lauren Acker, Jean-Paul deGuzman, Caroline Luce,

and Laura Redford. They read long rough drafts of each chapter, and their thoughtful comments have made this a better dissertation. Our lengthy lunches, and occasionally heated debates during dinner, are among the highlights of this long process we have undertaken together.

I am very lucky that the greatest teachers in my life happen to be close relatives. I am grateful to my family for giving me the gift of a lifelong love of learning. My parents, Minette and Isaac Gutfreund, hooked me on history as soon as I could read by buying a set of childhood biographies of famous Americans. I thank my mother, who suggested studying the history of education in the first place, and my father, who made many sacrifices so that I could have the best education, even if that meant moving to San Francisco's rival city to the south. My own thinking about the dissertation improved as I answered numerous questions from my parents, my sister Mia Gutfreund, and my grandparents, Ken and Esther Trigger, who each indulged me by reading the complete draft. I cannot thank enough all of the family members who have always supported me. Finally, I could not have written the dissertation without Rosalyn Won, who has helped me through this process in countless ways. In addition to being my best friend, indispensable companion, and a great sports fan, Roz is one of the best elementary school teachers I know. I am grateful to Roz, and Milo, for bringing joy to my life in the final stages of writing this dissertation.

VITA

2001	B.A., History Harvard University Cambridge, Massachusetts
2007-2008	Teaching Assistant Department of History University of California, Los Angeles
2007-2009	Summer Research Mentorships Graduate Division University of California, Los Angeles
2008	M.A., History University of California, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2008-2009	Teaching Fellow General Education Freshman Cluster Program University of California, Los Angeles
2009	Summer Mini-Grant Institute for Research on Labor and Employment University of California, Los Angeles
2009-2010	Project Coordinator <i>Bring History Alive! A Sourcebook for Teaching U.S. History, Revised Ed.</i> National Center for History in the Schools University of California, Los Angeles
2009-2011	Appleby/McWilliams/Caughey Recruitment Fellowships Department of History University of California, Los Angeles
2011-2012	Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship The John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation Los Angeles, California
2012-2013	Teaching Fellow Department of History University of California, Los Angeles

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Zevi Gutfreund. (May 2007). "Standing Up to Sugar Cubes: The Contest over Ethnic Identity in California's Fourth Grade Mission Curriculum." Paper presented at Whitsett Graduate Seminar in California History, California State University, Northridge.

_____. (April 2008). "From Busing to Bilingual Education: The Legacy of Liberalism in Los Angeles Schools." Paper presented at "Politics, Activism, and the History of America's Public Schools" conference, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Zevi Gutfreund and Laura Redford. (November 2008). "Teaching with Primary Sources." Presentation to Teacher Education Program seminar. Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, UCLA, Los Angeles.

Zevi Gutfreund. (November 2009). "Agency and Americanization: The Politics of Language in Los Angeles City Schools, 1916-1941." Paper presented at annual meeting of Social Science History Association, Long Beach, Calif.

_____. (February 2010). "Immigrant Education in the City of the Future." Presentation to Education M186, "Equal Rights and Unequal Education," UCLA, Los Angeles.

_____. (May 2010). "Before Bilingual Education: Three Views of Language Learning in Progressive-Era Los Angeles, 1900-1930." Paper presented at Graduate Student Workshop, Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, San Marino, Calif.

_____. "Standing Up to Sugar Cubes: The Contest over Ethnic Identity in California's Fourth-Grade Mission Curriculum." *Southern California Quarterly* 92 (Summer 2010): 161-197.

Heather Dahl, Zevi Gutfreund, Karen Hoppes, Alli Jason-Fives, Rachel Stutzman. *Home Lands, How Women Made the West: A Teaching Unit, Grade Range 4-12*. Los Angeles: The National Center for History in the Schools with the Autry National Center, 2010.

Stephen Aron and Zevi Gutfreund. (May 2011). "Home Lands: How Women Made the West." Presentation to Southern California Social Science Association and Los Angeles County Office of Education, Autry National Center, Los Angeles.

Zevi Gutfreund. (June 2011). "Selective Citizenship: Americanization in Interwar Los Angeles." Paper presented at Western History Dissertation Workshop, Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, San Marino, Calif.

INTRODUCTION

THE RACIAL POLITICS OF LANGUAGE IN LOS ANGELES

When Lyndon Johnson signed the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) in 1968, language learning became a focal point in the culture wars of the late twentieth century. In Los Angeles, elected officials from both political parties played pivotal roles in helping the president authorize federal funding to teach immigrant students in their native language. Ironically, the curriculum in L.A. city schools ignored the language reforms that local congressmen, senators, and school board members had just proposed. In fact, two months after the president signed the law, thousands of Mexican American students walked out of seven high schools in East L.A. protesting the school board's ban on Spanish language instruction. These contradictory events conveyed the combative nature of the "culture wars" of the late twentieth century. Most scholars tie the 1968 East L.A. "Blowouts" to the origins of the Chicano civil rights movement. And many studies of language acquisition revisit the BEA of 1968 to point out the problems with modern bilingual education policy. But the Blowouts and the BEA are both part of a tradition that has brought national attention to bilingual experiments launched in L.A. for more than a century. Examining language innovations in Los Angeles schools reveals a rich history of nation-building projects in the fastest-growing, most diverse metropolis in the modern United States.¹

This dissertation uses language instruction in Los Angeles from 1900 to 1968 as a lens through which to explore assimilation, immigration, and what it means to be an American. It challenges conventional images of Anglo reformers who argued that English-only education

¹ Gareth Davies, "The Great Society After Johnson: The Case of Bilingual Education," *Journal of American History* 88.4 (2002), 1405-1429; Mario García and Sal Castro, *Blowout! Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

would Americanize foreign-born students and departs from counter-narratives about immigrant educators who wanted the second generation to preserve their ethnic identity by learning the heritage language. Instead, it makes direct comparisons between the education agenda of the L.A. school district and the language learning strategies of the county's Mexican and Japanese communities. Studying how those multiple perspectives competed and coexisted shows that nation-building was a process of negotiation in a multiethnic community. The increasing influence of student participation further complicates this story. As student activists shifted the topic of negotiation from Americanization to school desegregation after World War II, the symbolic power of language education as a racial and ethnic project grew even stronger. By 1968, language learning programs had transformed the national debate about public education from questions of citizenship to questions of civil rights.²

Making Americanization Multiethnic in Los Angeles Schools

Before World War II, there was a common assumption that the public school was the country's primary instrument of assimilation or, as Woodrow Wilson put it, "the place where we are all made Americans."³ Scholars often refer to "programs of forced Americanization" in the context of nativism and the immigration restriction acts of the 1920s. At the time, however, public and private institutions joined the president in romanticizing Americanization. James Barrett describes the classic scene at Henry Ford's Model T assembly plant, where immigrant auto workers celebrated their graduation from the Ford English School's language and civics

² For more on the idea of immigration as a "process of negotiation" and built on relationships, see Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12.1 (Fall 1992), 4-41. They frame the invention of ethnicity as a "dual construction," explaining that, "at the onset of mass immigration to the United States in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Americans themselves were engaged in a self-conscious project of inventing a national identity, and in the process found themselves also inventing the category of ethnicity... The two inventions were closely intertwined with one another." If ethnicity was a nineteenth-century invention, this dissertation argues that in the twentieth century, the inventions of citizenship and civil rights were closely linked.

³ Quoted in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998), 21.

program by dressing in their ethnic garb to march into a physical “melting pot,” only to emerge in identical suits waving American flags. The ceremony represented Wilson’s Americanization model, the notion that all immigrants (especially white Europeans) absorbed Anglo-American values and norms simply by showing up at school. This dissertation will show that, in multiracial Los Angeles, the dynamics of Americanization were not as linear as Henry Ford’s symbolic melting pot. Rather than forcing all newcomers to accept total integration into daily life, Americanization in the era of mass European immigration from 1880 to 1924 became a contested cultural ideal that was shaped by ethnic differences as much as it was defined by the process of assimilation. As immigration patterns changed after 1924, the racialized discourse underlying earlier Americanization struggles laid the groundwork that made language learning central to postwar debates about integration and the participation of immigrant children in public schools.⁴

While graduations resembling the melting pot ceremony also occurred in Los Angeles, they did not reflect the county’s collective view of Americanization. Instead, local Mexican and Japanese communities were both engaged, and often at odds, with the L.A. school district in a struggle to achieve social inclusion and acculturation without abandoning ethnic traditions (including the heritage language). In contrast to the European newcomers who entered Wilson’s public school melting pots in northeastern cities during the Progressive Era, Los Angeles’ influx of immigrants from Spanish-speaking and Asian countries encouraged many novel experiments in the schooling of foreign-born students. This made the “city of angels” a unique laboratory for questions about assimilation, citizenship, and democracy. Although Angeleno educators shared

⁴ James Barrett, “Americanization from the Bottom Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the American Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930,” *Journal of American History* 79 (December 1992), 996-998; Conzen, Vecoli, et. al. “The Invention of Ethnicity,” 4-41; Shelley Lee, “Cosmopolitan Identities: Japanese Americans in Seattle and the Pacific Rim, 1900-1942” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2005), 10-11; David Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995). More than 20 million immigrants came between 1880 and 1924. Mae Ngai and Jon Gjerde, eds., *Major Problems in American Immigration History, 2nd Edition* (Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2013), 2.

the prevailing view that English instruction was an essential tool in Americanizing immigrants, throughout the century school officials insisted that L.A.'s language curriculum offered pioneering projects that other cities should adopt. At the same time, Spanish and Japanese language schools sprouted up across Los Angeles County as Mexican and Japanese communities confronted the decision of encouraging their children to assimilate or to retain their native cultures. These debates shaped each community's response to desegregation discussions after the war—language education played a central role in shaping the legal victories for school integration in the 1940s and setting in motion the Chicano civil rights movement in the 1960s.

Although these questions reached the highest levels of state and local government, the students of Los Angeles left behind plenty of evidence about their attitudes toward Americanization, language learning, and civic participation. Their voices turned traditional debates about assimilation and cultural maintenance into broader issues of social and political inclusion. In the Progressive Era, for example, Angeleno adolescents did not sit by as Anglo-, Mexican-, and Japanese-American educators struggled to shape the school district's approach to Americanization. Rather, they negotiated the lessons of Progressive reformers who taught English-only classes with the ethnocentric lessons they received after school from teachers who argued that learning Spanish was a central component of full Americanization. They observed the paradoxes of wartime policies that prohibited Japanese instruction in internment camps but permitted it in the army. And after the war they insisted, in court testimony and in street protests, that bilingual education was a key component of school integration. From the turn of the century to 1968, students showed that language learning could serve, simultaneously, as a vehicle of control for the school district and a vehicle of protest for the students. The participation of young people in debates that included Anglo administrators, Progressive educators, and immigrant

parents pushed L.A. schools towards a more democratic approach to the problems of nation-building and race relations in the twentieth century—even if the school board pushed back.⁵

This student-driven narrative is a departure from the long line of scholars who have used language learning as a tool to explain the influence of nation-states in modern life around the world. But the multiethnic makeup of Los Angeles did not exist in the European states that historians of nation-building have most famously studied. Language plays a central role in Benedict Anderson's description of nation-state formation. In defining the nation as an "imagined political community" constructed by emotional attachments consumed through popular media as a shared experience, Anderson identifies the language of distribution as a fundamental tool in the politics of nationalism. As central governments grew in *fin de siècle* Europe, language learning became a key component of the widespread nation-building project to make primary education compulsory. In *Peasants Into Frenchmen*, Eugen Weber shows how language instruction was a deliberate tactic that sought to speed up the slow process of Frenchifying the rural countryside. One hasty strategy was a direct order, from Louis Napoleon's Minister of Public Instruction, that children who spoke their native, *patois* dialect hold a brick at arm's length until they had caught a classmate breaking the same *patois* ban. Anderson and Weber both show that language learning and schools can extend the notion of nation-state formation beyond the scope of political history. But their top-down approach tied language formation to state-building by accepting the old quip that "a language is simply a dialect with an army and a navy." In European nations where one language was dominant, there was little room for peasants to express themselves, especially in their own dialects.⁶

⁵ Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). According to Bosniak, "citizenship is treated as the highest measure of social and political inclusion."

⁶ Stephen May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Language* (Harlow, Essex, England: Longman, 2001), 129; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-*

Language operated under different dynamics in Los Angeles, a city that stood apart for its uniquely multiracial makeup. In 1930, racial minorities composed 14 percent of the population. The only city with more nonwhites was Baltimore, but its population was less diverse. Out of 1.2 million people in 1930, the city of angels had 97,000 Mexican residents and 21,000 people of Japanese descent. This perspective was not lost on Angeleno educators. In 1923, the school superintendent observed that L.A. had become “the third largest Mexican city in the world.” Others noted that more than a third of the Japanese students in California schools lived in L.A. County. The history of language learning gives agency to these rapidly growing communities as well as to the city that received them. School officials offered a number of creative approaches to English-language instruction in the hopes of Americanizing immigrants. But immigrants were also adamant about preserving the languages they had spoken in the old country. Telling these stories together shows that immigrants believed that studying their mother tongue (and embracing an identity that made them distinct from other ethnicities) was also a pure expression of their commitment to U.S. citizenship. School officials, Japanese American educators, and Mexican American students each struggled to shape the dynamics of American democracy by proposing their own language programs in the Progressive Era, in the years between the two world wars, and in the civil rights era after World War II. This dissertation describes the language experiments chronologically, including each ethnic group in every chapter, to convey a more complete picture of the policies and experiences of immigrant education.⁷

1914 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976). Other Europeanists who address language instruction and nation-building include Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983) and Patrice Higonnet, “The Politics of Linguistic Terrorism and Grammatical Hegemony during the French Revolution,” *Social History* 5 (January 1980), 41-69. There is also scholarship of language instruction outside Europe, including Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Political in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1930* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997) and Hiraku Shimoda, “Tongues-Tied: The Making of a ‘National Language’ and the Discovery of Dialects in Meiji Japan,” *American Historical Review* 115.3 (June 2010), 714-731.

⁷ George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 88; Reginald Bell, *Public School Education of Second-Generation Japanese in California* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935), 379; Edward Strong, *The Second-Generation Japanese Problem*

This is not the first work to examine multiple ethnic groups in Los Angeles schools. Previous scholars have celebrated such rich diversity in the city of angels by noting the school district's interest on "internationalism" before the war. In their studies of diverse, working-class neighborhoods like Boyle Heights in East L.A., Allison Varzally and Mark Wild both argue that adolescent Angelenos, in particular, created new cultural identities simply by interacting with their diverse array of neighbors and classmates. At Roosevelt High School in Boyle Heights, Wild finds that history classes experimented with "Internationalism studies," teaching students about the diplomatic policies of their parents' native countries. Although these World War II-era classes explored foreign nations rather than cultural heritage, which is a priority in ethnic studies courses today, they represented an effort by California teachers to address their classrooms' growing diversity. This curriculum's emphasis on top-down diplomacy was a stark contrast to the bottom-up "international dress-up days" that students sponsored to celebrate their parents' diverse traditions. Varzally describes Roosevelt's annual costume parade to illustrate how a shared non-white identity allowed all Californians of color to overcome ethnic differences and forge lasting personal and political bonds. These brief sections in Wild's and Varzally's narratives indicate that public schools were original sites of multiethnic mixing in Los Angeles. But this emphasis minimizes the fact that distinct immigrant groups also influenced the identity formation of individual students. Revisiting public education debates from the perspective of language learning challenges the romantic model of multiracial harmony in L.A. schools.⁸

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1934), 68-69; Mrs. Pierce and Mrs. Dorsey Discuss Matters Before the Principals' Club," *Los Angeles School Journal* 6, February 12, 1923, 59. Other studies of multiple racial groups in L.A. include Laura Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

⁸ Mark Wild, "'So Many Children at Once and So Many Kinds': Schools and Ethno-Racial Boundaries in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles," *Western Historical Quarterly* 33.4 (Winter 2002), 453-478; Allison Varzally, *Making a Non-White America: Californians Coloring Outside Ethnic Lines, 1925-1955* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Also see Richard White, "Race Relations in the American West," *American Quarterly* 38.3 (1986), 397.

At the same time, the city's ethnic diversity offers richer insights into the influence of language instruction as a racial project. Randolph Bourne was right to challenge the myth of Henry Ford's "melting-pot" ideal in his 1916 essay, "Trans-national America," which argued that immigrants adjusted to American society by "weaving back and forth" between their ethnic heritage and their new surroundings. Like Wild and Varzally, Bourne romanticized colleges as sites of "this international intellectual world of the future" where students of every ethnicity freely intermingled in classes and social settings. But evidence suggests that language instruction occurred in isolation, allowing immigrant communities to coordinate their own attitudes toward studying English and preserving ethnic identity. This made language learning a messy business in diverse neighborhoods like Boyle Heights, where Spanish and Japanese (and Yiddish and Russian) would spill onto the street in simultaneous—yet separate—conversations. As multiple language projects progressed side by side, they showed alternatives to immigrant education in a cosmopolitan city. The main issue regarding language education in these competing racial projects was not the simple choice between assimilation and preserving ethnic identity. Rather, language experiments led to a subtle conversation between the L.A. school district and the city's two largest non-white immigrant communities that is not available in direct evidence.⁹

This dual examination of Mexican-American and Japanese-American history engages multiple interpretations of past limits on citizenship for people of color.¹⁰ They show that distinct ethnic cultures could coexist with burgeoning experiences of "internationalism." In his seminal study of Mexican Los Angeles, for instance, George J. Sánchez observed that immigrants "became Mexican American" by combining the two national identities into a new culture. While

⁹ Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America," *Atlantic Monthly* 118 (July, 1916), 86-97, from <http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rbannis1/AIH19th/Bourne.html>, viewed December 6, 2012.

¹⁰ Other scholars have also compared ethnic attitudes toward citizenship in the past. In her history of public health in L.A., for example, Natalia Molina found that county officials used the discourse of health to racialize Mexican and Japanese immigrants, creating a hierarchy that energized and legitimized racism. Natalia Molina, *Fit To Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

the L.A. school district advised Americanization teachers to “go after the women” in the hopes of assimilating domestic spaces, Sánchez argued that Mexican Angelenos engaged in a form of “ambivalent Americanization.” Becoming American meant joining labor unions, launching voter registration drives, and forging a new politics of opposition that drew upon the organizing traditions of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. By giving agency to the Mexican Americans themselves, Sánchez showed that immigrants of color created inroads to assimilation even as they navigated a system with racialized restrictions on privileges of citizenship in schools and other public institutions. Emphasizing “ambivalent Americanization” suggested that L.A.’s largest nonwhite community adapted its own attitude toward the question of assimilation. Comparing Sánchez’s interpretation with studies of Japanese immigration shows how language instruction allowed alternative approaches to citizenship education in the same city.¹¹

This is important because scholars of individual groups focus on immigrant relationships with their countries of origin. Eiichiro Azuma, for example, gives a transnational perspective of racial formation in his study of Japanese-Americans, *Between Two Empires*. Azuma argues that first-generation immigrants, the *Issei*, formed “dual nationalist claims” by adopting their own version of the American frontier myth. Viewing California as a future extension of Japanese imperialism, the “Issei frontier thesis” gave immigrants the proud identity of pioneers promoting the superiority of their ethnicity. Sending their U.S.-born children, the *Nisei*, back to Japan for school became the ultimate expression of this “racialized ideology of self-empowerment.”

Across the Pacific, Japanese officials saw the frontier thesis and community-based language instruction as elements of a broader project to turn the *Nisei* into “bridges of understanding”

¹¹ Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*. Other studies of L.A. and Americanization in the Progressive Era include Sánchez, ““Go After the Women”: Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant Woman, 1915-29,” in *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women’s History*, 2nd Ed., eds. Vicki Ruiz and Ellen DuBois (New York: Routledge, 1994), 284-297, and Lawrence Culver, “Closing America’s Playground: Los Angeles and the History of Our Parks and Recreation Crisis,” *History News Network*, <http://www.hnn.us/articles/138310.html> (viewed April 11, 2011).

between Japan and America. Other historians have examined the idea of the Nisei as a bridge, emphasizing language education as a means of creating a transpacific dialogue. But these binational stories overlook the fact that Japanese language schools taught the concept of “Issei internationalism” to the same students who took “internationalism studies” classes at Roosevelt High School. It is understandable that Issei educators kept better contact with the Japanese government than with their Los Angeles neighbors who taught in public schools or in Mexican consulate schools. However, telling these stories together amplifies the significance of language learning as a racial and national project. While heritage learning represented a racialized strategy of national belonging at the heart of Azuma’s transnational history, the “bridges of understanding” concept shows that even racial projects influenced issues of international relations in diplomatic circles as well as in working-class neighborhoods like Boyle Heights.¹²

By examining immigrant education in Los Angeles, this dissertation compares and contrasts the school district’s numerous innovations in language learning and Americanization with Mexican immigrant approaches to “ambivalent Americanization” and the “bridges of understanding” ideal in the county’s Japanese community. Perhaps the purest expression of Woodrow Wilson’s melting-pot school was the California Home Teacher Act of 1915, a state law written by an Angeleno reformer which authorized school districts to hire social workers to Americanize immigrant mothers by teaching them to speak English and run clean, orderly homes. By 1923, Los Angeles led all school districts in the state with more than 100 Home Teachers. But Anglo reformers were not the only ones who used language to sway citizenship in Los Angeles. In 1926 the Mexican Consul General opened a school in the East L.A. *barrio* of

¹² Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 145. Other binational border histories include Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). For more on the Nisei as “bridges of understanding” see Lon Kurashige, *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Yuji Ichioka, *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*, eds. Gordon Chang and Eiichiro Azuma (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

Belvedere. With financial backing from Mexico's Office of Public Education, ten consulate schools pledged to help immigrant children become dual citizens by teaching them Mexican history and geography and maintaining their Spanish language ability. Although Japanese language schools lacked official connections to Tokyo, more than one hundred schools belonged to the Southern California Japanese Language Association by 1930. Unfortunately, the association's president was such an important community leader that he became one of the first Japanese citizens arrested on the day of the Pearl Harbor bombing, December 7, 1941. This suggests that language instruction in Los Angeles meant more than a series of experiments to grapple with increasing immigration levels—it shows how the city's language programs shaped national debates about citizenship and transnational identities at key moments.

Civil Rights, Language Learning, and the Discourse of School Desegregation

Los Angeles' influence continued after World War II, even though the public education debate shifted from the Americanization of foreigners to the integration of racial minorities. Like the earlier struggles for citizenship, the civil rights movement concerned questions of social and political inclusion. Such inclusion meant many things in a multiethnic state like California where, many recent scholars have shown, the long fight for civil rights addressed a plethora of prejudices. These works all point back to Carey McWilliams' wartime claim that the Golden State was America's "racial frontier," where social injustices suffered by immigrants of Asian and Hispanic descent deserved the same attention that African Americans were advocating in new civil rights organizations. During World War II, McWilliams wrote a book about the prejudice of Japanese internment and defended Mexican American youths who were wrongly convicted of murder in L.A. in 1943. That year, McWilliams wrote the line that is now the title of Mark Brilliant's comprehensive masterpiece, *The Color of America Has Changed: How*

Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California. Brilliant includes California in the civil rights struggle, in part, by looking at language instruction debates from the 1947 *Mendez v. Westminster* decision to the Supreme Court's ruling on bilingual education in San Francisco schools in 1974. This widens the civil rights story from World War II to the 1978 California tax revolt. Focusing specifically on language education, however, offers an even longer time frame through which to consider the civil rights struggle in Los Angeles. Considering the continuities between L.A.'s language experiments in 1915 and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 allows us to examine the influence of immigrant activism on the interracial nature of reform movements in California. It also shows that, as attention turned from Americanization to the fight for school desegregation, immigrant educators in L.A. had become civil rights advocates by the 1960s.¹³

Just like Americanization, the notion that schools were sites of a civil rights struggle was a contested idea that took shape in legislation, textbook curriculum, and local classrooms alike. In a recent history of education between the world wars, Diana Selig argues that Americanization and intercultural education became a central component of the "antiprejudice crusade" led by affluent progressive educators. While Selig identifies that the national debate shifted from Americanization to the desegregation of public schools during the war, her study is limited to the views of liberal teachers who saw a link between assimilation and racial integration. This project examines controversies about language learning to add the voices of parents and students of color to the postwar discussion surrounding school desegregation. During the war, Mexican Angelenos advocated for Spanish language instruction as a means to gain equal attention (and funding) from the school district. Meanwhile, Japanese students in the internment camps

¹³ Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-4. Also see Daniel HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

demanded the reinstatement of Japanese language schools to show their frustrations with the relocation centers. In both of these previously overlooked cases, immigrant communities relied on the act of language learning to express their impatience with the government's project of forced Americanization and demand a more inclusive curriculum during and after the war.¹⁴

Just as language learning policies shaped, and were shaped by, Americanization ideas before the war, they influenced school desegregation debates after it. The 1947 court ruling *Mendez v. Westminster*, which stopped a school district in Orange County from segregating Spanish-speaking students on account of language, became a precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education*. *Mendez* has secured a place in the history of school integration, but less attention has been paid to the first judge who heard the case in Los Angeles Superior Court. The testimony about language acquisition left a lasting impression—two years later, he ruled that Japanese language schools had the right to reopen in the territory of Hawaii, which had suspended them after Pearl Harbor. These early legal decisions do not always receive as much attention as later rulings in school integration and bilingual education, but they show the centrality of Los Angeles in the long history of language learning. The local-federal relationship between the East L.A. Blowouts and Lyndon Johnson's Bilingual Education Act was not a new phenomenon that began in 1968. In *Blowout!*, a recent memoir by Sal Castro, we get a behind-the-scenes look at the event credited with triggering the Chicano civil rights movement. This dissertation situates the Blowouts within a series of language experiments launched by the L.A. school district, as well as the county's Mexican and Japanese communities, suggesting that immigrant education turned early uproar over Americanization into debates about school desegregation before 1968.¹⁵

¹⁴ Diana Selig, *Americans All: The Cultural Gifts Movement* (Harvard University Press, 2008).

¹⁵ Philippa Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican-American Rights* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010); García and Castro, *Blowout! Sal Castro & the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice*.

Castro continued the long line of colorful characters who used language instruction in Los Angeles as a vehicle to reshape public opinion about immigration and integration. Although no leader could speak for an entire group, this dissertation profiles many individuals who influenced politics at the national and personal levels. It begins in Chapter 1 with the novelist and settlement house worker Amanda M. Chase, who reformed the Progressive approach to Americanization when she authored the Home Teacher Act for the California Legislature in 1915. After a decade teaching English to Spanish-speaking women in Los Angeles and Mexico, Chase challenged educators across the country to consider the fact that language learning was more effective outside the classroom. As language experiments like the Home Teacher project, Mexican consulate schools, and Japanese language schools became more established in the 1920s, students started to stand up for their own visions of citizenship and ethnic identity. In Chapter 2, John Aiso articulated the ambitions of Nisei students who saw themselves as “bridges of understanding” across the Pacific Ocean. Despite facing discrimination in oratorical contests at Hollywood High School, Aiso extolled the virtues of American democracy as an exchange student (and later English teacher) in Japan. But he returned home before the war to open the Military Intelligence Service Language School, where he trained 6,000 Nisei linguists who translated captured battle plans and interrogated Japanese prisoners of war to defeat their parents’ homeland. Chapter 3 contrasts Aiso’s patriotism with the letters of Afton Nance, an L.A. County teacher who corresponded with her former Nisei students after they were sent to internment camps. Nance continued her commitment to migrant students after the war when, as detailed in Chapter 4, she worked with the California Department of Education to write the country’s first curriculum for English as a Second Language. All of these stories enrich the events of Chapters 5 and 6, when Sal Castro became an overnight celebrity for sparking the 1968

Blowouts, getting arrested, and calling on the school district to overhaul its bilingual education program. The life stories of these individuals, and many other activist Angelenos, made it fascinating to research the history of language learning in Los Angeles. Together, their voices show that public debates about Americanization and school desegregation not only had deep roots in language experiments dating back to 1900—they also show that racial and national projects were shaped and challenged by individual students and teachers throughout the century.

CHAPTER ONE

PROGRESSIVES PROFESSIONALIZE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: LOS ANGELES LAUNCHES MULTIPLE LANGUAGE EXPERIMENTS, 1900-1930

Long before the Blowouts and the Bilingual Education Act addressed civil rights issues in the 1960s, language learning in Los Angeles was linked to national debates about Americanization. Although language instruction in the Progressive Era was promoted by affluent white women, not Chicano youth, it was still a divisive issue that forced all ethnicities to grapple with their identity as Americans. In 1926, women reformers sought to show their professionalism at the graduation of seven foreign women from the 28th Street School's Americanization class. They were proud that the event, in a room lined with portraits of America's leading citizens, attracted the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and *Ex-Presidente Generale* of Mazatlan, Mexico. The seven honorees who sat behind a polished wooden table in their best dresses, one of them carrying a baby, were the only graduates in a class of 67 immigrants. Mrs. Portillo, the Mazatlan official's sister-in-law, articulated her classmates' struggles and aspirations:

"You don't realize how sad I was because I couldn't understand any word in English. I thought I was the most ignorant person in the world. I am in the middle way of my ambitions and I shall try to climb until I reach the top. My aim is to be a Spanish teacher in the schools here. Today is the happiest day of my life because I am going to have my certificate."

Mrs. Portillo's goals reflected the agendas of both her Progressive teachers and the Chicano protestors of 1968. She wanted to speak English and advance in the city's social hierarchy as a professional, but she was just as certain that she wanted to teach Spanish. Unlike the later culture wars, when lines were drawn between English-only advocates and those who wanted to teach immigrants in their mother tongue, Mrs. Portillo believed in both types of language instruction.

In contrast to the Chicano walkouts, this privileged Mexican mother framed other immigrant objectives, suggesting that the politics of language learning seemed less polarizing before 1968.¹

At the turn of the century, before language instruction was called “bilingual education,” it was not simply a question of civil rights. Mass immigration in the decades before the National Origins Act of 1924 brought an abundance of foreign languages to the United States along with a burning desire to learn English and assimilate. But applying the Progressive label of Americanization inaccurately assumes that all immigrants easily adapted into a mythical melting pot. Although many ethnic groups did attribute their social integration to acquiring proficiency in English, many non-white immigrants grew ambivalent about English as they struggled to assimilate. In Los Angeles, sociologists and social reformers believed the lack of language learning among two of the city’s largest racial minority groups was central to the “Mexican Problem” and the “Oriental Problem.” Many Mexican and Japanese immigrants agreed with the basic premise of white Progressives, though they had their own views about language and Americanization. From 1903 to 1930, Mexicans, Japanese, and Anglos proposed new ideas about immigrant education to the state legislature, in school district publications, and at neighborhood community meetings. These innovative proposals from the age of Americanization created contingencies that could have led to a different outcome than the protests of 1968.

Although Angelenos were active in these Americanization debates, they have largely been forgotten since the Progressive Era. Recent scholarship has interpreted Americanization as an assimilation effort that meant eliminating the immigrant’s previous ethnic culture and replacing it with social, political, and moral attitudes acceptable to mainstream Americans. But historian John Higham pointed out that the movement was not simply a radical reaction to new

¹ Mary Gibson, “Schools for the Whole Family,” *The Survey* 56.5 (June 1, 1926), 300; Gertrude Ford, “A Home Teacher Graduation,” *Community Exchange Bulletin* 4.4 (May, 1926), 19.

immigration patterns. “Americanization, even its most coercive aspect, involved an appeal to the foreign-born,” Higham wrote in his landmark book, *Strangers in the Land*. “It drew, to be sure, on nativistic impulses and suspicions, but it served in a way to contain them. It turned part of the new fears of foreign influence which came out of the war into a positive program of emancipation rather than a wholly negative one of exclusion.” In fact, Angeleno educators tried to draw a line between themselves and nativists, introducing a series of experiments in the schooling of foreign-born students that made Los Angeles a laboratory for questions about language and citizenship in an age of mass immigration. They believed Progressives across the nation looked to L.A. for the latest Americanization innovations. In 1926, *The Survey* praised the “California Plan” for questioning the xenophobic application of “Americanization.” According to this Progressive magazine, Angelenos rejected reactionary politics and remade the term:

“‘Americanization,’ a smug and patronizing word at best, means in many communities a waning war-time enthusiasm, now expressed through a few classes in English for Foreigners. But in California it has been translated into something vital... This far reaching innovation in the public school system is California’s unique contribution to the ‘new education.’”

In negotiating between postwar extremism and participatory democracy, L.A. reformers captured the contradictions of Americanization. They developed lessons that taught immigrants to adopt their middle-class Protestant values, took pride in their social reform efforts, and intended to create a liberal legacy that would shape the political culture of the “city of the future.”²

But white reformers represented only one voice in L.A.’s language debate, albeit the loudest. Americanization challenged immigrants as they struggled to acquire English without losing their native dialect, but they rarely recorded their experiences unless, like Mrs. Portillo,

² Diane Wood, “Immigrant Mothers, Female Reformers, and Women Teachers: The California Home Teachers Act of 1915,” (PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 1996), 5; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 262; “Education for Everybody: The California Plan,” *The Survey* 56.5 (June 1, 1926), 297. As early as 1915, New York City’s “Committee for Immigrants in America” reported that California’s new Home Teacher Act was “rapidly overcoming New York’s original lead” of “Visiting Teachers.” This issue of *The Survey* published eleven stories about children’s policy. The issue’s second, third, and fourth articles all focused on the “California Plan.”

they spoke in Anglo publications. Historians of Mexican and Japanese Americans have tried to identify immigrant voices in Anglo accounts. Vicki Ruiz used oral history of Mexican women to bypass the filter of personal prejudice. Henry Yu argued that Anglo reformers shaped not only how Asian Americans were viewed by whites, but also how they understood themselves. Looking at Anglo, Mexican, and Japanese Angelenos together reveals a range of language instruction possibilities in the age of Americanization. As disparate perspectives competed and coexisted in the “city of the future,” they forged coalitions and constructed arguments that still influence bilingual education debates today. Language learning is a lens to examine how each generation of reformers and immigrants shaped questions of assimilation and ethnic identity.³

Chapter 1 will explore three questions about language instruction in Los Angeles from 1900 to 1930: (1) How did the L.A. school district’s language curriculum seek to Americanize foreign-born students? (2) How did those students respond to Americanization classes and contemporary notions of academic success? (3) How did the efforts of immigrant communities to teach children their native languages compare and contrast to English-only curriculum? Evidence suggests that Angelenos offered multiple answers to each question. The experiences of settlement house teachers and immigrants from Mexico and Japan reveal the core tension between learning English to assimilate and speaking native languages to preserve ethnic heritage. These groups were not in dialogue, but the different ways they approached language learning shows that immigrant education became central to the struggle over the meaning of Americanization during the Progressive Era. The political pressures wrapped up in this debate explain why heritage language schools struggled while the assimilation approach was more successful.

³ Vicki Ruiz, “Dead Ends or Gold Mines? Using Missionary Records in Mexican American Women’s History,” in *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women’s History*, 2nd Ed., eds. Vicki Ruiz and Ellen DuBois (New York: Routledge, 1994), 298; Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 9.

Los Angeles' first language experiment began in a settlement house in 1903. Much of the scant evidence about these early "neighborhood schools" comes from the imagination of teacher Amanda Mathews Chase. Her short stories based on her settlement house classes describe English instruction in romantic terms. She helped incorporate volunteer women into the school system by writing the 1915 Home Teacher Act, linking Americanization to the Progressive idea of "municipal house-keeping." Home Teachers argued that Americanizing immigrant mothers would encourage them to create "American" homes and assimilate their families. They also hoped that white women who became Home Teachers would gain recognition from the city's school bureaucracy. Anglo reformers congratulated themselves for romanticizing and professionalizing immigrant education. And they evaluated the immigrants they taught, praising many Japanese for eagerly assimilating while questioning the language ability of many Mexicans. Such subjective reports exoticized each ethnicity, dismissing Mexicans as incapable students and claiming that Japanese superiority, over even Anglo children, justified "Oriental otherness." Statistical studies of school achievement seem to confirm those stereotypes, but a closer reading suggests that academic outcomes were not racially determined. Mexican and Japanese immigrants did not discuss Home Teachers in their own communities because they had their own agendas. They organized private language schools that led the ethnic groups in different directions. Mexicans organized *El Pensador Mexicano* to teach their children Spanish and loyalty to Mexico. In contrast, Japanese argued that the dozens of new language schools in L.A. would help Americanize the next generation. Examining these experiments together suggests the range of emotions tied to language learning during the age of Americanization debates.

Settlement House Schools: The Romantic Promotion of English Instruction

Los Angeles' immigrant education division, introduced in 1916, was promoted at the state and national levels throughout the Progressive Era, but it was staffed by women reformers with little political experience. In this spirit of paradox, the clearest statement of the city's real-life Americanization agenda came from a fictional story by Amanda Mathews Chase, one of the original evening schoolteachers at the College Settlement in 1903. This settlement house, run by college-educated women near the Pueblo de Los Angeles, an old area with an increasingly immigrant population, recruited volunteers like Chase to teach foreigners how to read and write English. These classes became so popular that, after three years, the volunteer clubwomen persuaded the L.A. school board to take charge of the program and hire an assistant superintendent to oversee immigrant education and night schools. Those three years had inspired enough ideas for Chase to publish a book of short stories called *The Hieroglyphics of Love: Stories of Sonora Town and Old Mexico*. As her title suggests, Chase depicted the era's mundane routines of English language instruction as romantic episodes of love and heartbreak. This fiction created a founding myth that would help affluent reformers promote immigrant education from its pioneering days in L.A. to a statewide campaign a decade later.⁴

In "Cupid and the First Reader," for example, Chase's character Ramon Morales treated the English First Reader like a "Lover's Manual of Correspondence." Although he and Guadalupe Puentes were teen-agers, their long absences and illiteracy had placed them in the Foreign First Grade class. Ramon wanted to express his instant attraction to Guadalupe on paper. Since he did not know how to write in Spanish, he flipped through his First Reader for a pick-up

⁴ "The College Settlement (formerly Casa de Castelar)" in *Handbook of Settlements*, eds. Robert Woods and Albert Kennedy (New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications, 1911), 11-12; Louise Cooperider, "History of the Americanization Department in the Los Angeles City Schools," (master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1934), 112; George Jackson, "A History of the Adult Education Program in the Los Angeles Public Schools," (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1957), 36-37.

line and wrote, “The duck runs to the hen.” After she wrote back, “The hen can run to the duck,” they were officially in love with each other—and with Foreign First Grade. The young lovers began coming to school every day. In the final scene, the teens embrace at their desks amidst the giggles of their much younger classmates.⁵

Chase’s emphasis on the First Reader suggests that the tale’s true hero was not Ramon, or even Guadalupe, but their teacher. She used this romance to encourage regular attendance and a new interest in English vocabulary. In the final scene, the teacher separated Ramon and Guadalupe when an Italian boy complained that “I no can study when Greasers all the time hug themselves.” So she “punished” the lovers by making them skip recess and copy “The little hen flew to the duck” twenty times! In Chase’s imagination, apparently, two Mexican immigrant teen-agers could not fall in love without the aid of a white teacher and, of course, her English First Reader. The fictional teacher did more than sympathize with her students; by providing them with the skills to learn English, she had given them the key to happiness.⁶

Amanda Chase left to teach English at a private girls’ school in Mexico City for four years. When she returned, she became the first volunteer in L.A.’s second immigrant education experiment, the Home Teacher program, which jumpstarted California’s Americanization efforts. In 1915, the State Legislature approved the Home Teacher Act, authorizing local school districts to hire Home Teachers to work with schools in immigrant neighborhoods. Many school boards resisted the idea, and Los Angeles only “hired” Chase when the Daughters of the American Revolution offered to pay her salary. By 1921, L.A. had 108 Home Teachers, more than twice the faculty of any other California city. Home Teachers were like traveling settlement house workers: they would conduct home visits during the day and hold evening classes to teach

⁵ Amanda Mathews, *The Hieroglyphics of Love: Stories of Sonora Town & Old Mexico* (Los Angeles: Artemisia Bindery, 1906), 72-82.

⁶ Mathews, “Cupid and the First Reader,” 72-82.

immigrant mothers how to make “American” homes. “We have ignored the natural home-maker and yet tried to Americanize the home,” she explained. “The home teacher, like the family doctor and the family pastor, is to be a real and intimate possession of the family.” Chase wanted other Progressive women to serve as Home Teachers because, while immigrant children Americanized at school and their fathers adapted at work, there was no institution to assimilate mothers.⁷

Home Teachers Create Americanization Curriculum

Chase’s most innovative ideas attempted to merge her expertise in English language instruction with the ideals of Americanization. She proposed that all schools in immigrant neighborhoods acquire a “school cottage” to serve as “a model American home, small but complete, attractive, but simple and inexpensive.” These cottages would supply immigrants with tangible images of American values such as hygiene and sanitation. Chase advised Home Teachers to visit pupils’ homes on Friday field trips—under the guise of a practice social call, she urged the teachers to inspect the homes and compare their upkeep with the school cottage. Even more persuasively, she proposed English lessons which would teach immigrant mothers the vocabulary of the Americanized life they were meant to live. Drawing on her vast experience at the College Settlement and in Mexico City, she warned that teaching English to illiterate adults was “a fine pedagogical art with a psychology of its own.” To harness immigrant psychology, Chase advised teachers to “be live, practical, interesting, even dramatic” as they led language lessons about groceries, household activities, and clothing. Reasoning that immigrant mothers

⁷ Ethel Richardson, “Program Reports of the Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction,” 1 April 1921, Records of the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Immigration and Housing, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley (Carton 92, Folder 11) (hereafter CCIH Records); Wood, “Immigrant Mothers, Female Reformers,” 33; Amanda M. Chase, “Working Plans for the Home Teacher,” in *The Home Teacher: The Act, with a Working Plan and Forty Lessons in English*, (Sacramento: Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, State Printing Office, 1916), 7-9.

would want to learn English vocabulary which they could apply in their daily activities, she advised Home Teachers to focus on the practical, homemaking aspects of Americanization.⁸

Chase's English curriculum conveyed the type of Americanization she wanted Home Teachers to model, and it reflected her racial assumptions as well. When she gathered mothers in her classroom, her ninth English lesson taught them to say "I cook the eggs. I wash the dress. I iron the dress. I sweep the floor. I mop the floor. I dust the chairs." But Chase was less confident about the success of such English instruction. In 1921 she complained that, even if Home Teachers "talked cleanliness, hygiene, school attendance, thrift, and adult education 'up one street and down another,'" immigrant mothers resisted most efforts to change their routines. By starting at the Amelia Street School, near her old College Settlement, the school's sheer diversity presented a challenge. Amelia Street's student population was "one-half Mexican, a third Japanese, while the remaining one-sixth compris[ed] Italians, Arabians, Syrians, Poles, Spaniards and Negroes." Although Chase enrolled almost 90 mothers for her courses in English, singing, patriotism, sewing, and cooking, which met twice a week for Mexican mothers and once a week for Japanese, she was lucky if fifteen moms came to class. This lack of interest may have stemmed from Chase's efforts to cram other assimilation activities into her language classes.⁹

While the mission of the Home Teacher Act was Americanization, its advocates also hoped to create professional titles for Progressive women. Chase's mentor, who authored the assembly bill in 1915, joined the California Commission on Immigration and Housing (CCIH), and her associates rose to become Los Angeles' first Director of Immigrant Education and assistant superintendent at the State Department of Education. They spent as much effort training

⁸ Chase, "Working Plans for the Home Teacher," in *The Home Teacher*, 9-12.

⁹ Chase, "Ninth Lesson" in *Primer for Foreign-Speaking Women, Part I* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1918), 15; "Home Teaching Experiences II, by Amanda Mathews Chase, Amelia St. School," *Los Angeles School Journal* 5 (November 14, 1921), 5 (hereafter *LASJ*); Chase, quoted in Wood, "Immigrant Mothers, Female Reformers," 57.

Home Teachers as they did teaching English to foreigners. In 1920, they convinced the University of California to offer Home Teacher training courses taught by John Collier, a prominent Progressive who would become the longest-serving director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs under President Franklin Roosevelt. Collier taught Americanization courses across the state, certifying hundreds of white women as Home Teachers. The CCIH proudly kept Collier's files. His student-teachers wrote hundreds of blue book exams describing community organizations they worked for and immigrants they taught. The exams provide insight into internal debates about the role of language learning in immigrant education.¹⁰

These blue books are a new set of sources that reveal the range of opinions Progressive reformers held about non-white immigrants. They are different than the more documented Survey of Race Relations, the life histories of Asian Americans compiled from 1924 to 1927 by sociologist Robert Park which, Henry Yu has shown, catered to Park's theory that there was a four-stage cycle of race relations. In contrast, the blue books from Collier's classes were written by female teachers in 1920 who were unfamiliar with the ideas Park would publish a year later. Vicki Ruiz has argued that, in reading such sources, historians must "sift through the bias, the self-congratulations, and the hyperbole to gain insight" into immigrant lives. But there are glimpses of immigrant voices beneath the reformers' professional pride and idealistic ambitions. One L.A. teacher, Annie Callaghan, expressed a blend of sympathy and low expectations that she learned while working at Brownson House, whose mission mixed developing immigrant leadership from the bottom-up with a Progressive skepticism of working-class ingenuity. The settlement house's aim was "to develop in the people a self-respect, to encourage initiative," she explained. "To make the people feel they have a relation to society and a place in the community

¹⁰ Mary Gibson to Henry Norton, 8 August 1919, Norton to Gibson, 7 October 1919, and Gibson to Simon Lubin, 10 November 1919, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 1, Folders 15-16). Gibson was the Educational Commissioner who insisted on hiring Collier. She was also the author of the California Home Teacher Act in 1915.

and to have them understand [that] the problem of the neighborhood is their problem, and that this is an agency to which they can appeal in any trouble.” In arguing that hosting “properly supervised” dances would help Mexicans “solve some of the problem of juvenile delinquency” in 1920, Callaghan captured the paradox of self-reliance and social welfare that motivated Home Teachers and shaped the experiences of the immigrants they taught.¹¹

Some blue books are instructive because they show how Home Teachers learned from their students. Druzilla Mackey’s career was certainly informed by her early experience in Boyle Heights, an East Los Angeles district featured prominently in every chapter of this dissertation. Her exam began by explaining that, “since our neighborhood is composed of Mexicans, Italians, Germans, Armenians, Syrians, Japanese, and Negroes, the process of community organization must be slow.” Before her first class, Mackey met with other agencies in Boyle Heights and asked how she could “plan English lessons which would teach the people the use of all the agencies.” But she quickly learned that students themselves wanted to create the curriculum, noting that “young people asked repeatedly for classes of their own.” Although Mackey’s limited funds meant she “could offer only classes in Elementary English for adults,” she helped the immigrant teens organize a local boys’ club and girls’ club. She was impressed when the girls’ club took “leadership in community singing and dramatic entertainments” to raise money for the additional classes. Mackey moved to rural Orange County shortly after writing this exam in 1920, but her two years in Boyle Heights taught her to trust the immigrants she worked with.¹²

Mackey’s career after Collier’s class reflects the internal contradictions for Americanization teachers. Intrigued by her work in Boyle Heights, the California Fruit Growers

¹¹ Yu, 40-41; Ruiz, 298; Annie Callaghan, “A Community Organization I Have Known” (Economics 89, University of California, Southern Branch) 9 July 1920, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 93, Folder 8).

¹² Druzilla Mackey, “A Community Organization I Have Known” (Economics 89) 9 July 1920, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 93, Folders 11).

Exchange recruited Mackey to organize classes for migrant camps in the orange groves of La Habra and Fullerton. Although she was serving the agriculture industry's economic interest, Mackey "chose to live in one of the houses supplied by the fruit growers," turning it into the "neighborhood model" with flowers and a vegetable garden. She persuaded the fruit growers to pay for evening classes, offer a well-baby clinic, and build a meeting hall, where migrant workers gave musical performances that left Progressive reformers impressed by the "unusual talent among the Mexican people." Mackey was so moved by her teaching experiences that she visited Mexico City in the summer of 1925. There, she met a university-trained Spanish instructor who elected to leave the capital to work in "the mountains where nobody could read or write." Mackey described this teacher to her Progressive colleagues in L.A. as "Mexico's Amanda Chase." Even the harshest critics of Orange County's migrant labor camps have praised Druzilla Mackey, who supervised six Americanization centers by 1930. Although the fruit growers' curriculum taught men the words for menial tasks ("to prune," "to snip"), Mackey made the centers safe spaces where Mexican migrants could speak in Spanish about leaders like Benito Juarez and Abraham Lincoln. Mackey's contradictory teaching strategies reflected the internal tensions most Americanization teachers felt about their immigrant students.¹³

Home Teachers Debate the Role of Language Instruction in Americanization

This tension turned into a public argument between Angeleno administrators about the function of language learning in Americanization curriculum. The debate received national attention in 1921, just as Los Angeles city schools were expanding their Home Teacher programs and promoting them across the country. That year, the American Academy of Political and

¹³ Cooperider, 56-58; Mackey, "Impresiones de Mexico," *Community Exchange Bulletin* 4.1 (November, 1925), 28-31; Gilbert G. Gonzalez, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 122-132. Mackey also published *An Easy English Book for the Foreign Born* (Dansville, N.Y.: Owen, 1922).

Social Science devoted an entire issue of *The Annals* to “Present-Day Immigration” after California passed its second Alien Land Law, which prohibited (mostly Japanese) “aliens ineligible for citizenship” from land ownership. Five of the 28 articles in *The Annals* came from Angeleno reformers. Two discussed Japanese immigrants and another addressed Mexicans in Los Angeles. The other two were written by a pair of Ph.D.s, Ruby Baughman and Carol Aronovici. The CCIH had hired both of them to train Home Teachers in L.A. County. Although each approved of Amanda Chase’s decision to place language instruction at the center of Americanization classes, they disagreed about whether to include immigrants’ native languages in the Home Teacher program. Studying the success of Baughman’s English-only approach helps to explain the choices that ethnic groups made as they established their own language schools.¹⁴

Ruby Baughman mixed Amanda Chase’s romantic enthusiasm for immigrant instruction with a degree of scholarly skepticism when she arrived in Los Angeles as a professor in the Normal School. When the L.A. city school board converted Chase’s Home Teacher status from voluntary to regular employee in 1916, it hired Dr. Baughman to direct its newly established Department of Immigrant Education. Baughman augmented her part-time position (and half-salary) by offering a Saturday morning class on “The Teaching of English to Foreigners,” which helped expand her staff to twelve Home Teachers by 1918. Aware that so many immigrant mothers worked outside the home, she ordered teachers to hold “‘factory classes’ in paper mills, laundries, car barns, canneries, Pullman cleaning departments,” and labor camps. Baughman even compiled a textbook of lessons in “industrial English” published by the California Fruit Growers’ Exchange, which later lobbied the legislature to extend Americanization work because

¹⁴ Although 16 of the articles focused on “the Japanese question” in California, 8 writers joined her in commenting about national questions of assimilation, including Carol Aronovici, from whom we will later hear. The *Annals* special editor also noted that Baughman was one of 4 authors who addressed Mexican immigration. Carl Kelsey, “Foreword,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 93, “Present-Day Immigration with Special Reference to the Japanese,” (January, 1921), 93, x.

of “its financial advantage to the State.” She worked with the fruit growers because she hoped that agribusiness would help immigrants integrate into American society. But these commercial interests also colored her views about the role of language learning in immigrant education.¹⁵

Baughman believed that Americanization meant learning English. “Concerning the need of a common national language there can be no debate,” she declared on the first page of her *Annals* article. Claiming that “a common language will be purchased at no small expenditure” helped L.A.’s inaugural immigrant education director justify her department’s budget.

Baughman went beyond Woodrow Wilson, arguing that English instruction in school was essential to the Americanization process. “For the illiterate our schools are responsible directly; for the non-English-speaking citizen, only indirectly. They are both the task of the public school,” she explained, “not as afterthoughts, but as a large constituent part of the huge plan by which we make over our concept of the business of education.” Baughman’s business model worked—with funds from the fruit growers, she had quadrupled the Home Teacher faculty by 1921. But this emphasis on language instruction for immigrant laborers limited the range of vocabulary in her Home Teacher curriculum. For example, she argued that Mexican orange pickers “must be taught not only the English vernacular of their own familiar process but they do well also to learn the existence of other related processes of growing, cultivating, pruning, picking, and irrigating.” Baughman had become an expert in industrial English after writing the textbook for the California Fruit Growers’ Exchange. But this narrow focus neglected the other aspects of immigrant life that a common language could incorporate—or stifle.¹⁶

¹⁵ Cooperider, 58, 116; Judith Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise: Politics and Reform in Los Angeles Schools, 1885-194* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 77; Baughman, “Elementary Education for Adults,” 163-168. Baughman bragged about L.A.’s cottage schools that immigrant mothers loved meeting in “modest, often dingy little rooms or houses where they learn slowly to come out from the shell of shyness or fear” and assimilate on their own terms.

¹⁶ Baughman, “Elementary Education for Adults,” 161, 163, 165.

Before *The Annals* published her article in 1921, Baughman had left Los Angeles to join the Anthropology department at the University of Minnesota. The CCIH tried to improve the Home Teacher program she had built by offering courses for Americanization instructors at the University of California Extension School. Once it had approval to organize the course, provided that it funded the program itself, the immigration and housing commission identified two intriguing teacher trainers. Although the CCIH eventually hired John Collier, the future New Dealer and more famous figure, the career of the other candidate reveals more about L.A.'s Americanization argument. Carol Aronovici was a Rumanian immigrant who had studied city planning at Cornell and Brown before coming to California. He had already served the CCIH as housing director in Belvedere, an unincorporated area just east of the old Pueblo where Amanda Chase had taught her first College Settlement classes. A month before the CCIH hired Collier, its executive officer told the board that "Dr. Aronovici's essay on Americanization reads more harmoniously with our ideas on the matter than anything I have ever seen." Ironically, that essay may have cost him the job. Its opposition to English-only education may have been too progressive for the political realities in which the statewide commission operated.¹⁷

Aronovici argued that educators should respect the emotional attachments between American immigrants and their mother tongue. This was a sharp contrast from Ruby Baughman's practical approach, which faulted adult evening schools that had "neglected the education in a common language so essential in a democracy." Instead, Aronovici lamented the laws which had suppressed foreign language newspapers, and banned foreign languages from

¹⁷ Gibson to Henry Norton, August 8, 1919, Norton to Gibson, October 7, 1919, and Gibson to Simon Lubin, November 10, 1919, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 1, Folders 15-16); Profile of Carol Aronovici, 1931, University of California Extension School Records, Bancroft (Box 3, Folder 27). The controversy over the intent of Americanization in the Home Teacher Act followed Collier to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He vocally expressed support for Indian self-determination and did more to protect Indian land and culture than any previous Indian Affairs Commissioner, but American Indians continued to criticize the paternalism of federal government policies. Kenneth Philp, *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977).

public assemblies during World War I. Preaching that tolerance led to loyalty, Aronovici insisted that he “would rather the immigrant would love America in German than hate America in English.” He argued that Americans could never understand the struggles of immigrants unless they tried to learn a new language themselves. The CCIH settled this dispute by electing not to hire him as an instructor in 1921. While Baughman’s English-only emphasis prevailed that year, Aronovici articulated a new approach to immigrant education. In urging native-born citizens to empathize with their newly arrived neighbors, he declared that “the weaving of national and racial characters of the alien into the fabric of American civilization is the real task of Americanization.” This showed that language learning was central to the Americanization debate among Progressive reformers. But it was equally important to Mexican and Japanese immigrants as they established new community language schools in Los Angeles.¹⁸

Evaluating Immigrant Students: Beyond the Biases of Teachers and Tests

How did those students respond to Americanization curriculum and contemporary notions of academic achievement? This is not a simple question to answer, and not just because wanting to assimilate and succeeding in school required different measures. While it is likely that most foreign-born Angelenos found Americanization desirable, few non-white immigrants explained this in their own words. The blue books of John Collier’s student-teachers help answer this question for Mexican and Japanese immigrants. Comparing these evaluations shows how teachers could exoticize ethnic groups in different ways. To substantiate their interpretations of the two groups, administrators also published statistical data to quantify the Mexican and Japanese classroom experience. Combining blue book anecdotes and numerical test results helps us come closer to understanding what Americanization classes meant to immigrants in L.A.

¹⁸ Baughman, “Elementary Education for Adults,” 161-162; Carol Aronovici, “Americanization,” in *The Annals* 93, “Present-Day Immigration with Special Reference to the Japanese,” (January, 1921), 134-138.

while reinforcing the fact that affluent white women still imposed their versions of assimilation and academic achievement on the students of color they taught. By looking at Anglo interpretations of two groups at once, these sources put Progressive values in broader perspective and provide a setting in which to look for shared, and unshared, immigrant experiences.

Although Progressives promoted opposite narratives about Mexican and Japanese students, a close reading of the teachers' data and blue books shows that both stories were stereotypes. Citing low test results and the failure to advance grade levels, reformers argued that Mexican immigrants could not succeed in school. On the other hand, Japanese pupils often earned higher grades than Anglos, prompting Progressives to believe they possessed natural academic instincts which gave them an unfair advantage. Home Teachers tried to solidify these storylines by comparing the classrooms in which they taught each ethnic group. Although they lived in isolated districts, Japanese Angelenos held classes in local churches, settlement houses, and public schools. Mexican communities were more segregated, and their class schedules more erratic. In Huntington Park, a Home Teacher created the Mission Road Camp School out of a boxcar to Americanize the women in nearby shacks. In neighboring San Bernardino County, rural schools taught Spanish-speaking women in "*La Escuelita*," a classroom in an old school bus that rolled from one Mexican camp to another, teaching English to orange pickers' wives. These conditions likely helped Japanese pupils perform better in school. But the Home Teachers' blue books show that the two groups shared stories of academic failure as well as success.¹⁹

Many Home Teachers reported individual examples of immigrants dropping out of school for a variety of reasons. One teacher wrote about Kiyoshi Miyato, a 25-year-old truck-farmer from San Pedro who left school to sell berries despite enjoying draftsmanship classes, in

¹⁹ Margaret Holdsworth, "A Community Organization I Have Known" (Economics 89) 9 July 1920, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 93, Folder 10); Grace Palmer, "Escuelita," *Community Exchange Bulletin* 5.2 (December, 1926), 37.

which he had developed “rather remarkable” landscaping skills. Another Japanese boy from El Monte, Satsuki, with “an aptitude for drawing and painting” planned to stop school after he had mastered conversational English to support his family as a vegetable farmer. A survey of Mexican American youths reported other reasons to leave school, such as struggles in arithmetic, caring for siblings, and marriage, but like the Japanese, economic necessity was the primary cause. Manuel had to stop after his second year of high school because “we went to the fruit two years. The first year I tried to make my grade and I did, but when the same thing happened again the next year I quit.” A girl of 18 wanted to stay in school because “my teachers all gave me a regular lecture and told me it was wrong to quit, but my father said it is bad enough to worry about something to eat without worrying about school.” The Home Teachers may have considered these children academic failures, but they were reporting examples of capable students who made the most of their schooling while negotiating the needs of their families.²⁰

Other Angelenos were more impressed by the initiative immigrants took to learn English. At the Mission Road Camp School, the boxcar instructor enticed Mexican women to learn English by providing them badly needed quilting materials and then teaching them “simple stories” and Anglo “rhyme songs” as they sewed. In L.A., the Americanization director who replaced Ruby Baughman boasted about a “cottage schools” experiment in 1926. She was proud of one anecdote that showed how the cottage curriculum encouraged interethnic cooperation:

“One group of women was very much interested in stenciling curtains for the school bungalow, and it developed that a Mexican woman knew a ‘stitch’ which a Japanese woman wished to learn. A restless baby was making it practically impossible for the Japanese mother to be taught the desired new ‘stitch.’ To the rescue came a Jewish woman, who cared for the Japanese baby while the Mexican woman taught the Japanese mother.”

²⁰ Natalie Loewenthal and R. Tate, “An Immigrant I Have Known” (Economics 52), 9 July 1920, CCIH Records, Bancroft (Carton 93, Folders 5 & 7); Mary Lanigan, “Second Generation Mexicans in Belvedere” (master’s thesis, U.S.C., 1932), 39-42.

The supervisor added that, although on the first day “ninety percent of our Mexican applicants were unable to talk or understand English, a decided improvement has been noted in the 16 weeks in the class. It is now possible to talk with them in English without difficulty.” Like the Mexicans, the majority of Japanese attending adult English classes were women. One Home Teacher observed that “the Japanese perhaps more than any other racial group within our midst are anxious to learn English,” organizing classes at three churches and hiring white instructors to teach various ability groups. Assigning classes by English ability pleased Progressive reformers because it made language learning a central focus of the classroom. Adopting ability groups may have been a more direct display of assimilation than the Mexican mothers interested in quilting, but there were successful language learners from both ethnicities.²¹

Despite these similarities, Anglo reformers constantly compared student success by race. Some assessments were subjective. Miss James was an L.A. teacher who was enthusiastic about all her students but played favorites anyway. “If I assign a topic to a Japanese boy he will work it out, and not only that but... he will do more than he is asked to do,” she said. “If a topic is assigned to a Mexican, he will try to get by as easily as possible.” Educators tried to turn these teacher intuitions into scientific fact during the Progressive Era with what Paula Fass called the “Americanization of mental testing,” when Stanford psychologists devised a standard measure of intelligence. Although the Stanford-Binet test was questioned from the start, most Progressives accepted the notion that testing could demonstrate a link between mental ability and race. While the tests confirmed Miss James’ observation that Japanese were more successful students than Mexicans, their true purpose was to prove that both groups had less intelligence than their Anglo

²¹ Holdsworth; Flora Smith, “Cottage Classes,” *Community Exchange Bulletin* 4.2 (January, 1926), 16-17; Gretchen Tuthill, “Study of the Japanese in the City of Los Angeles” (master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 1924), 39-41. Flora Smith, the Americanization director, was so proud of the “cottage schools” that she invited the Mexican consul to take a tour. The broad scope of these “cottage classes” shaped her own opinion about assimilation. Smith argued that “Americanization is the encouragement of decent living and making possible the attainment of decent standards.” Quoted in Cooperider, 12.

peers. But beyond the bias of I.Q. tests, data analysis painted a fuller picture of the academic challenges, and successes, that non-whites experienced in the schools. These tests showed that Mexican students always seemed to exceed very low Anglo expectations in academic achievement, and Japanese students were the only immigrant group that consistently outperformed native-born whites. The data on dropout rates, grade advancement, and marks in academic subjects reveals the discriminatory conditions that perpetuated these stereotypes.²²

Merton Hill placed Anglo assumptions about ethnic intelligence in contradictory contexts in his 1928 survey of hundreds of Mexican families in the Chaffey Union High School District of Ontario, just east of L.A. County. As Americanization director in the school district where Home Teachers visited Mexican camps in “*La Escuelita*,” the bus-turned-classroom, he hoped his findings would show why Ontario needed to expand its immigrant education program. But Hill also assured readers that he was not trying “to prove the children or adults of any nation inferior in native capacity,” rather he would show that Mexicans did “not have advantages equal to those of American children.” Thus, he “corrected” Mexican “index of ability” scores that were at least 60 percent of white scores in vocabulary, arithmetic, and language memorization in Spanish and English to conclude that Mexicans’ overall “index of ability” was only 52 percent of whites. While this logic seems flawed, Hill included other statistics that explained Mexican education more plainly. In particular, 78 percent of Mexican children were “over-aged,” or older than their assigned grade levels, while only 33 percent of white pupils were. Whereas the average white fourteen-year-old was in ninth grade, his average Mexican counterpart was in fifth grade. Hill believed this discrepancy went beyond “index of ability” and even language handicap. Finding

²² William Smith, “Oriental vs. Mexican Children in School (interview with Miss James),” no date, #327, Box 35, Survey of Race Relations, Hoover Institution, Stanford University (hereafter SRR); Paula Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 45-46. While Nisei earned higher grades in academic classes, Anglos continued to score the highest on Intelligence Quotient exams.

that more than forty percent of all “Mexican peon parents” had never gone to school (in Mexico or California) and that more than a third of them were illiterate (in Spanish as well as English), he concluded that “home conditions make the Mexican child under-nourished” in the literary and academic skills needed to avoid the “retardation and elimination of Mexican pupils in the public schools.” Hill’s survey of “home conditions” and “over-aged” (or “retarded”) students seemed more persuasive than his manipulation of Mexicans’ “index of ability” scores. In simply reporting the rate at which Mexican students advanced (or failed to advance) to the next grade, Hill demonstrated that public schools were not properly serving the Mexican community.²³

Since Japanese students were more likely to stay in school, scholars could study them in more direct ways. Stanford’s Director of Citizenship, Reginald Bell, set aside intelligence tests and measured L.A. city high school student achievement using teachers’ marks by grade level and by academic subject. Teachers’ subjectivity challenged the accuracy of this data, which was less available for Mexican students who were less likely to reach seventh grade, but it showed that second-generation Japanese students (Nisei) were successful in school. In looking at the grades of Nisei Angelenos in 1927-28, Bell corrected his earlier conclusion that language caused an “educational retardation” of Japanese children. As ninth graders, Nisei students were far more likely to receive “A” and “B” grades than their white peers (74 percent to 41 percent) and less likely to receive “D” and “E” marks (5 per-cent to 25 percent). In finding that statistical

²³ Merton Hill, *The Development of an Americanization Program* (Ontario, Calif.: Board of Trustees of the Chaffey Union High School, 1928), Preface, 6, 13-15, 52-55, 62-64, 82-83. Hill calculated “index of ability” by direct comparisons of Mexican and Anglo scores on tests of vocabulary and language acquisition (of both English and Spanish). He gave students tests designed by the Educational Research division of L.A. city schools. While the city studied Mexicans’ academic achievement, it always emphasized Intelligence Quotients more than Hill’s analysis. In a 1932 survey of 1,240 Mexican children, for example, the school district’s Educational Research Division found that the average Mexican I.Q. was nine points below the control group of 1,074 white children, at least partly due to the language handicap. Although the Mexican children’s reading comprehension scores were on par with their I.Q. tests and grade placements, the school district concluded that the average Mexican child was “found to be chronologically retarded one full year.” While this data was not very different than Hill’s data from Ontario, his statistics allow historians to make more independent interpretations than the L.A. study. Ellen McAnulty, “Achievement and Intelligence Test Results for Mexican Children Attending Los Angeles City Schools,” *Los Angeles Educational Research Bulletin* 11 (March, 1932), 90-94.

significance of this academic superiority dissipated over time (Nisei and white twelfth graders had nearly identical grade distributions), Bell questioned their “mental development.” Bell’s bias continued when he claimed that, although the Nisei earned higher grades in every subject, they mostly excelled in “non-academic” subjects only. It was true that the highest disparities came in Shorthand and Mechanical Drawing classes, but the Nisei still earned 25 percent more “A” and “B” marks in Science, 23 percent more in Spanish, and 22 percent more in Math. Although a limited look at linguistic subjects did not show statistical significance, the Nisei scored at least 8 percent higher marks than whites in English, French, and German. Despite Bell’s belief that the Japanese were unlikely to excel in more advanced classes, their superior marks in almost every subject showed that, if they could afford not to drop out, the Nisei could succeed in school.²⁴

Rather than reading the data to understand the needs of immigrant Angelenos, administrators like Reginald Bell and Merton Hill interpreted it to enhance Anglo images of each ethnic group. Bell brushed aside the Niseis’ superior classroom scores as biased grading, arguing that they got good grades not for their intelligence but because “other factors such as liking for hard work, interest in school subjects, persistence, docility, and likability all seem to affect teachers’ marks greatly.” Hill confirmed this early iteration of the “model minority myth”—a survey of 80 teachers in his district ranked only Japanese and Germans with a higher “capacity to do academic work” than native-born whites. In contrast, teachers thought black students were the only racial group with less potential than Mexicans, whom they ranked with 68.5 percent as much academic “capacity” as whites. They assigned Mexicans even less “capacity” than Anglos in subjective qualities like initiative, dependability, determination, and energy. Incidentally, the white educators thought that Japanese and Mexicans shared the highest “capacity to do manual

²⁴ Reginald Bell, *Public School Education of Second-Generation Japanese in California* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935), 32 – 62. Bell’s data about “educational progress” and academic success of U.S.-born Japanese came from Los Angeles junior and senior high schools.

work.” In measuring student success by race, administrators used statistics to extend the narratives that Amanda Chase had introduced in fiction two decades earlier. While they provide glimpses into the academic experiences of immigrants in L.A. city schools, these studies, like the blue books from John Collier’s Home Teacher classes, cannot fully capture the stories of the students most impacted by the Americanization ideas that L.A. Progressives loved to promote.²⁵

The Americanization Question and Foreign Language Schools

The ethnic communities did not share the Progressives’ passion for Home Teachers. The records of Mexican and Japanese Angelenos suggest that the school district’s immigrant education experiments were not as central to their lives as reformers believed. The Progressives’ racial bias was one reason for this silence about the Home Teacher Act. But when non-white immigrants did discuss language learning and assimilation—in ethnic newspapers, sociological surveys, and life history interviews—they usually spoke about their own efforts to teach the second generation their mother tongue, not English. Just as Woodrow Wilson believed the public school was the primary place for Americanization, Mexican and Japanese immigrants insisted their new language schools could become core pillars in their respective communities. Although these instructors found vocal supporters to endorse language preservation, their intentions to establish leading institutions were resisted by equally enticing immigrant desires for children to assimilate and learn English. These contradictory impulses were evident in Los Angeles’ two largest foreign language programs for the Mexicans and the Nisei. While both experiments had flaws, Japanese language schools were able to navigate the allure of Americanization and become influential institutions, but Mexican consulate schools rapidly dissolved.

The Mexican consulate schools probably failed to gain traction because they lacked grassroots leadership in the Eastside *barrios* but, like the Home Teacher program, they received

²⁵ Bell, 35; Hill, 95.

positive coverage in the print media. In 1926, the Mexican consul in L.A. proposed to establish fifty schools in southern California, funded by the Mexican Department of Education. He was endorsed by the newly established newspaper *La Opinión*, already America's largest Spanish-language daily, which covered the schools' progress for the next four years. It received immediate support from the Eastside's largest *barrio*, Belvedere, where the local Chamber of Commerce offered the Consulate a building to house the first *Escuela "Mexico,"* but it was blocked by banker Marcus Hellman, a land speculator who sought control over this unincorporated area. Undaunted, the consul and his backers successfully opened eight schools across L.A. County by 1929, offering free textbooks and a curriculum that taught students Spanish language and Mexican history (*lengua castellana e historia patria*). In patriotic vernacular that emphasized Mexico's European (Castilian) ties, the consulate schools sponsored the Mexicanization of American-born children. But the schools did not last long. After only three consulate schools re-opened in 1930, with a total enrollment of 200 students in a city of 97,000 Mexican-origin residents, *La Opinión* stopped writing stories about them.²⁶

Manuel Gamio's interviews of Mexican immigrants revealed a more complex relationship between language and assimilation. The consulate's school campaign came from *El Pensador Mexicano*, a group of Belvedere businessmen like Anastacio Cortés who wanted their children to develop Mexican patriotism. An undertaker and Methodist minister, Cortés paid to build the first schoolhouse and hire *La Escuela "Mexico's"* first teacher in 1926. Despite trying

²⁶ Stories in *La Opinión* included "Mas Escuelas en California," 18 February 1930, 5; "50 Colegios Mexicanos en California del Sur," 12 November 1927, 1; "La Escuela 'Mexico,' de Belvedere," 17 February 1927, 2; "Grave Disputa en Belvedere: La Escuela 'Mexico,' en peligro de desaparecer," 31 July 1927, 1; "Ocho Escuelas Mexicanas en Los Angeles: Informe del Departamento Educativo del Consulado," 1 September 1929, 1; "Tres Escuelas Para Educar 80,000 Niños," 12 October 1930, 1; James Cameron, "The History of Mexican Public Education in Los Angeles, 1910 – 1930" (master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1976), 39, 179-180. Cameron argues that the Mexicans of Belvedere successfully defeated Hellman on the Maravilla Park issue, but my reading of *La Opinión* reached a different conclusion. Since they were not citizens, most of Belvedere's Mexicans could not vote against the measure to break Maravilla Park apart from Los Angeles. The consulate never opened a school in Belvedere, but *El Pensador Mexicano* ran an informal school there.

to make his children proud of their Mexican heritage, they had all learned English, and Cortés got angry when they did not speak Spanish at home. Gamio interviewed ten other Angelenos who refused to surrender their Mexican citizenship and wanted their children to learn Spanish—two of Cortés’ neighbors joined *El Pensador Mexicano*, but the others dreamed of sending their offspring to school in Mexico. In contrast, only four of Gamio’s L.A. interviews were happy that their children had learned English. In any case, all fifteen immigrants had seen their children and siblings assimilate quickly. Two of them observed that Los Angeles’ Mexican community was more likely to speak English than it was in El Paso, Phoenix, and other parts of the southwest.²⁷

So the Mexicans of Los Angeles experienced Americanization as a paradox—the first generation refused the benefits of citizenship while their children embraced the local language and culture. Maybe this marked the triumph of L.A.’s Home Teachers and the school district superintendent, Susan Dorsey, who in 1923 complained that it was “unfair for Los Angeles, the third largest Mexican city in the world, to bear the burden alone of taking care educationally of this enormous group... We have these immigrants to live with, and if we can Americanize them we can live with them.” But perhaps it proved that *El Pensador Mexicano* had backfired by rejecting the English language and the L.A. school district in favor of Spanish textbooks from the Mexican consulate, Japanese immigrants sought a different strategy in establishing their language schools. Mindful of the exclusionary sentiments that led the California Legislature to restrict Japanese farm ownership in the discriminatory Alien Land Laws of 1913 and 1921, the Japanese language schools were careful not to give the impression that they despised the

²⁷ Manuel Gamio, *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), 205-208, 55-58, 237-242, 50-52, 109-111. Gamio’s interviews were conducted in 1927 and first published in 1931. The claim that Mexicans were more likely to speak English in L.A. than other cities was confirmed by labor organizer and civil rights leader Bert Corona who, upon moving to L.A. from El Paso in 1936 was told that “here it’s best not to speak Spanish. It’s best if they don’t know you’re Mexican. They treat you better.” Mario García, *Memories of Chicano History: The Life and Narrative of Bert Corona* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 68-73.

language and customs of their Anglo neighbors. This approach helped make Japanese language schools community institutions in Los Angeles until internment began in 1942.²⁸

Unlike the Mexican consulate schools, which disappeared from the public record in 1931, Japanese language schools did not have an enrollment shortage. In the 36th Street school district, for example, 44 percent of the 199 Nisei attending public schools in 1927 spent their afternoons in language school. One Nisei born in Little Tokyo in 1923 remembered the language school and the public school, along with the Japanese grocery, barbershop, and mortuary as the pillars of her neighborhood. There were 35 language schools in the county by 1930, from San Pedro to San Fernando, but this expansion came with some controversy. By the 1930s, they were opening so rapidly that the Japanese Chamber of Commerce proposed consolidation because they were expensive to operate and draining money from immigrant families. Despite these divisions, the schools all joined the Southern California Japanese Language School Association (SCJLSA) and shared the same structure of gathering the Nisei for a few hours every evening after public school “to instruct children in reading and the writing of the language, to make them understand daily conversations,... and to furnish the American-born children with a Japanese background.”²⁹

But language school instructors left the meaning of “Japanese background” open for interpretation. The president of the SCJLSA was Kohei Shimano, who had founded the city’s first language school in 1911. Shimano’s *Rafu Daiichi Gakuen* was a few blocks from the Amelia Street School, where Amanda Chase would become L.A.’s first Home Teacher five years

²⁸ “Mrs. Pierce and Mrs. Dorsey Discuss Matters Before the Principals’ Club,” *Los Angeles School Journal* 6, February 12, 1923, 59.

²⁹ Koyoshi Uono, “The Factors Affecting the Geographical Aggregation and Dispersion of the Japanese Residences in the City of Los Angeles” (master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 1927), 110-130; Sue Kunitomi Embrey, interview by Arthur Hansen and David Hacker, August 24, 1973, #1366, California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program, 102; Diana Bahr, *The Unquiet Nisei: An Oral History of the Life of Sue Kunitomi Embrey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 13; Tamiko Tanaka, “The Japanese Language School in Relation to Assimilation” (master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 1933), 34, 39; Fumiko Fukuoka, “Mutual Life and Aid Among the Japanese in Southern California with Special Reference to Los Angeles” (master’s thesis, University of Southern California, 1937), 69-70.

later. Shimano always tried to work with the Amelia Street principal, but especially after 1921, when the same State Legislature that had endorsed Home Teachers passed the Private School Control Law, requiring all language schools to only hire teachers proficient in English and to only use textbooks approved by the State Board of Education. Shimano worked with Japanese language instructors to publish a series of texts that expressed the Niseis' dual allegiance as *Beishu Nichijû*, "primary emphasis on America and secondary on Japan." But after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Private School Control Law in 1927, two-thirds of the schools in SCJLSA left *Beishu Nichijû* and returned to the Japanese-approved textbooks which discussed loyalty to the emperor. Shimano warned against this decision, stating that "although the moral training of the children can be greatly accomplished by the presentation of good Japanese racial traits, we must not forget that we are educating American citizens."³⁰

While many principals did not share Shimano's sympathy for *Beishu Nichijû*, the SCJLSA balanced Americanization and cultural preservation more carefully than did the Mexican consulate schools. Unlike *El Pensador Mexicano*, which wanted children to return to Mexico, SCJLSA policy was that "Japanese children are Americans and are going to spend all their years here, and our whole educational system must be founded upon the spirit of the public instruction of America." While the Mexican consulate created all-day schools, Japanese language schools offered supplementary instruction on afternoons and weekends that would not compete with the public schools. Despite different policies, language assimilation had similar impacts in each community. Just as Anastacio Cortés got angry when his children spoke English at home, one Nisei teen-ager spoke English with her school friends and siblings but was careful

³⁰ Embrey interview by Hansen, 102; Tanaka, 56-58; Toyotomi Morimoto, "Language and Heritage Maintenance of Immigrants: Japanese Language Schools in California, 1903-1941" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989), 68, 80-93. Morimoto explains that the Supreme Court actually overturned a language education ban by Hawaii in the 1927 case *Farrington vs. Tokushige*, but this decision annulled the California Private School Control Law.

to switch to Japanese “the minute when my father or mother should enter our presence.” And while Japanese language schools were more popular and long-lasting than the Mexican consulate schools, most Nisei never became proficient in conversational Japanese. Yet, just as the Nisei had higher academic achievement than Mexican American students, the Mexican community’s resistance to the postwar pressures of Americanization led to fewer language schools than the more accommodating Japanese community established in Los Angeles in the 1920s.³¹

Concluding with Commencement Speeches

In the spring of 1926, when Mrs. Portillo declared her intention to become a Spanish teacher upon receiving her diploma from the 28th Street School’s Home Teacher class, a 17-year-old Nisei was preparing his graduation speech at Hollywood High School. John Aiso was Hollywood High’s first Nisei salutatorian, but this was one of many bittersweet honors of his school career. Three years earlier, when Aiso won his middle school election for student body president in a neighborhood with outspoken opponents of Japanese immigration, Hollywood’s Anglo parents complained so loudly that the principal advised Aiso to leave student government. But the middle school election was less complex than Hollywood High’s oratorical contest on the U.S. Constitution, which Aiso won as a junior and a senior. After his 1926 victory, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the “Japanese silver tongue” would not compete in the national contest in Washington D.C. due to illness. The *Times* later added that although Aiso had withdrawn, his performances had “inspired his fellow students at Hollywood” to pay the expense of his trip to Washington so he could coach the school’s runner-up, Herbert Wenig. Unfazed, Aiso arrived at the train station in a bow tie and fedora and smiled as he stood behind Wenig, who was six inches taller but dressed the same. Aiso watched Wenig win the national

³¹ Kiichi Kanzaki, *California and the Japanese* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, Reprinted 1971), 20-21; Tanaka, 51; Morimoto, 8.

championship on Capitol Hill in front of 8,000 spectators, including President Coolidge. As the new national president of the Constitution Club, Wenig was invited to speak to the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Better America Federation back in Los Angeles. But the Hollywood High senior class still wanted John Aiso to give their graduation address.³²

John Aiso and Mrs. Portillo did not represent the average Mexican or Japanese student, but they lived through the range of experiences available to immigrants in Los Angeles city schools during the age of Americanization. Although Aiso was a Nisei teenager and Portillo was a mother of five who had gone to college in Mexico before the 1910 revolution, both came from families that valued education. Work ethic and intelligence did not stop their struggles in school, although Portillo's language barrier was different than the discrimination that denied Aiso his title as class president and oratorical champion. While they both used school success to propel their future careers in America, they never abandoned their mother tongues. In the fall of 1926, Portillo became a Spanish teacher and Aiso spent a year in Japan, where he continued the language study he had begun in Los Angeles. John Aiso and Mrs. Portillo may have been in the minority of non-white Angelenos who completed their diplomas in L.A. city schools, but their efforts reflected the majority of Mexican and Japanese immigrants who actively sought Americanization while struggling to maintain their native languages.³³

³² William Smith, "Takeuchi: The Life History As a Social Document," 14 August 1924, #86, Box 25, SRR, 13; Stories in *Los Angeles Times* included "Boy Orator On Way East," 30 May 1926, 4; "Oratory Champion Arrives Home," 16 June 1926, A1; "John Aiso to Visit Japan: American-Born Oriental Who Gave Wenig Chance to Win Oratorical Honors Holds High Record," 28 October 1926, A11.

³³ "John Aiso to Visit Japan," A11; Aiso, "As Japan Sees America," *Los Angeles Times*, 31 July 1927, B4.

CHAPTER TWO
SELECTIVE CITIZENSHIP:
AMERICANIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL ALLEGIANCES
IN INTERWAR LOS ANGELES

Chapter 2 will explore how language instruction shaped, and was shaped by, several citizenship projects in interwar Los Angeles schools. Angeleno educators debated whether those two topics required separate classes. Part I examines two innovative programs in which L.A. city schoolteachers targeted specific ethnic communities. While language learning was central to the Neighborhood Schools program that Nora Sterry designed for Mexican and Asian communities, English ability was a prerequisite for the “Diploma Plan for Naturalization of the Alien” that Charles Kelso developed for European immigrants. Sterry and Kelso were two of many Progressives who had done missionary work, mostly overseas, before coming to California to teach. In working with the Mexican and Japanese consuls of L.A., they found a shared bureaucratic goal of using schools to produce patriotic, well-behaved workers who were devoted to the governments of both their biological and adopted homelands. The collaborative curriculum they had created by 1940 shows that Angeleno teachers were learning that the earlier emphasis on English language instruction could not fully accomplish their Americanization and citizenship objectives for children of nonwhite immigrants.

Part II details how teachers in L.A.’s Mexican and Japanese communities tried variations on Anglo teaching tactics between the wars. Whereas white missionaries traveled abroad to Americanize native peoples, Japanese language school instructors like Kohei Shimano took *Nisei* (second-generation) students to Japan to instill respect for tradition. Mexican and Japanese

educators alike worked with their respective L.A. consulates to ensure that ethnic schools taught lessons that emphasized the values of foreign cultures as well as Americanization. Immigrant students who spent their weekdays in public schools and their summers on Nisei study tours or attending “Friends of the Mexicans” conferences came to understand several types of citizenship. Part III analyzes these multiple meanings through the oratory of students like John Aiso in the 1920s and the extra-curricular activities of World Friendship clubs in the 1930s. A careful examination of Roosevelt High School newspapers in the decade before World War II suggests that, despite the threat of Japanese internment and the closing of Mexican consulate schools after repatriation in 1931, Japanese and Mexican American students were just as active as their Anglo teachers in defining an agenda for U.S. citizenship. This joint effort shows that language and citizenship were central to the educational shift from Progressive Era reforms of white liberals to New Deal projects that incorporated ideas from select immigrant adolescents.¹

Part I: Administrators Separate Citizenship and Americanization

Nora Sterry, the matronly leader of immigrant education in L.A. from 1910 to 1930, used the American flag in her Neighborhood Schools with a missionary zeal. Sterry, who posed for a portrait in the *Los Angeles Times* wearing a white headdress emblazoned with a cross, believed the flag could link language instruction to her larger goal of preparing citizens to participate in a democratic society. Sterry was principal at both Amelia Street and Macy Street Elementary Schools downtown, near the historic L.A. Plaza, labeled “Little Mexico” in a 1924 *Times* headline. That year, when city officials quarantined the Macy Street district during the last major outbreak of the plague in the United States, Sterry insisted on opening her school during the two-week epidemic. A thousand residents in the “district of suffering” had “saved their pennies to

¹ My idea of an “educational shift” is adapted from the political transition from Progressive to New Deal liberalism described by Doug Rossinow in *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

buy” a medal for Sterry, but that did not make her as proud as the fact that Macy Street students had “hoisted the American flag at full staff” every day of the quarantine. In 1927, Sterry’s students wrote prize-winning essays that they performed at the annual patriotic program sponsored by L.A.’s Daughters of the American Revolution. Sterry accompanied a Macy Street Home Teacher, fourth grader Daniel Wong, and sixth grader Ampara Macias to celebrate their awards for “The Story of Our Flag” and “How I Can Be a Good Citizen of the United States.” These essays about the flag by children of non-English speakers showed how Angeleno educators designed language learning for immigrants to fit an ideal version of U.S. citizenship.²

Sterry’s stunts during the 1924 epidemic were one way that ambitious administrators promoted immigrant education experiments as essential to broader nation-building projects of the interwar period. But bureaucrats endorsed different visions about what those projects should be. From her schoolhouses in “Little Mexico,” Nora Sterry believed that immigrant education belonged in the city’s poorest districts, where white women could teach foreign mothers and children the refined language of domestic life. But another teacher who had been a missionary in Singapore, Charles Kelso, confined his outlook on immigrant education to a few classrooms close to the school district’s downtown office. The father of the Los Angeles Diploma Plan, Kelso insisted that adult foreigners should use public schools as a pathway to citizenship, and he promised naturalization to all English-speaking immigrants who passed his evening civics class. As the most innovative classroom projects of the 1920s, L.A.’s Neighborhood Schools and Diploma Plan show the centrality of immigrant education to the city school district. Comparing

² “Teacher Raps Race Division,” *Los Angeles Times* (hereafter *LAT*) , April 6, 1931, A2; “Little Mexico Honors Its Heroine,” *LAT*, November 14, 1924, A1-A2; “Patriotic Program Featured,” *LAT*, December 4, 1927, C33; William Deverell, “Ugly Reactions to a 1924 Los Angeles Plague Outbreak Offer a Lesson for Fight Against SARS,” *LAT*, April 24, 2003, B17. Deverell describes the quarantine’s impact on Macy Street and the “Mexican district” in *Whitewashed Adobe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 172-206.

the aspirations of Nora Sterry and Charles Kelso reveals the range of relationships between Anglo educators and their foreign-born students during the age of assimilation.

In particular, the role language instruction played in each program showed that Progressive teachers made distinctions between Americanization and citizenship. Americanization belonged in the poor Neighborhood Schools—which were also in less desirable districts where white women were more likely to rise into leadership positions. The more prestigious Diploma Plan, in contrast, required white male instructors to explain the principles of democracy to educated immigrants from Europe who already spoke English and needed only a crash course on the Constitution to become responsible members of society. Although it has received little analysis from historians, the Diploma Plan brought national attention to immigrant education in Los Angeles. The women who taught in Neighborhood Schools were more prolific writers who reached more of L.A.’s foreign-born population, but the school district did not compensate them in salary or title. These competing programs forced Anglo educators to struggle with the relationship between language and citizenship in L.A. schools after World War I.

Defining Nora Sterry’s “Neighborhood Schools” by Location and Language

Nora Sterry had been principal of L.A.’s first two Neighborhood Schools on Amelia Street and Macy Street since 1911 (see Chapter 1), but in the 1920s she created a new immigration campaign. In multiple articles, female faculty insisted that the key to Americanizing foreigners was to work in the poorest parts of the city. Sterry praised the school district’s “unusually liberal” efforts to serve “an extensive slum area filled with a foreign population,” but other women used less subtle language. When the *Los Angeles School Journal* published a “Neighborhood Schools” issue in 1927, one principal wrote that these schools were always located in “the dumps” near old railroad cars, adding with grudging admiration that the foreign

children who attended them were “mostly poor,... probably dirty and unkempt.” But she proudly reported that one class of students from “the back-wash of a feverishly growing city” won a blue ribbon banner for learning about bathing, brushing teeth, and eating fruits and vegetables. Some administrators who saw the poor living conditions of the neighborhoods where they taught placed issues like cleanliness above language and academic subjects.³

Sterry’s 1927 article, “The Neighborhood School,” showed her goal of creating a community center where immigrants could come to assimilate their lives both inside and outside the classroom. Macy Street School served immigrants from three continents (although 70 percent were Mexican), and provided clean showers and hot “penny lunches” to children who came to school “dirty, ragged, underfed,... with little or no medical care.” It also offered playgrounds for kids and evening lectures for adults to counter the “cheap picture houses, dance halls, and pool rooms of more than doubtful propriety” near downtown. Sterry expected her teachers to have “intimate knowledge of the neighborhood,” from her students’ housing conditions to a familiarity with the “streets and alleys and vacant lots” they passed on the way to school. The community center concept continued in the class-room, where teachers required all fourth graders to get library cards for bi-monthly library field trips and assigned students to attendance duties such as sweeping the streets, observing traffic, and interpreting foreign languages for nurses who made home visits. Macy Street’s language program aimed to serve the entire community. Stressing that immigrants’ language barriers prevented standardized tests from “properly classifying children,” Sterry set up her own grade placement system, and she offered “English classes for grown people at any hour or place advisable.” L.A.’s Neighborhood Schools

³ Nora Sterry, “The Neighborhood School,” *California Quarterly of Secondary Education* 2.1 (January, 1927), 117; Florence Mount, “The Neighborhood School,” *LASJ* 10.28 (March 21, 1927), 11, 26-29.

offered immigrants many activities, but language education was a central service because it fulfilled Sterry's mission of assimilating foreign-born students in academic and social circles.⁴

The homefront experience during World War I persuaded Progressive women that foreign language instruction could play a positive role in immigrant assimilation. One convert was Ruby Baughman, the city school district's first Americanization director, who had earlier advocated a "common national language." As the war wound down in September, 1918, she laid out her department's agenda for the new school year. Baughman admitted that the war had caused a "kaleidoscopic rearrangement of ideas" and shifted away from her personal priority that all immigrants "learn English—the language of America." But despite her belief that English was the only acceptable language in L.A., Baughman proposed "Americanization propaganda in English and foreign language press." While she compiled a textbook of lessons in "Industrial English" for the California Fruit Growers' Exchange (Chapter 1), she also recruited "foreign societies" and volunteers who spoke other languages to spread the school district's war effort. In asking non-English speakers to stress the "absolute democracy of the draft," and "the contribution of the foreign-born to the world and America," Baughman brought foreign languages into an Americanization campaign that she would have preferred to be English-only.⁵

Most Americanization teachers accepted Baughman's idea that Mexican newcomers needed English language instruction despite "threads of race prejudice" against them, but many had moved past her previous plans for a common national language. In 1919, Central Intermediate Evening School teacher Mary Cox wondered about the relationship between Americanization and the foreign language movement in postwar Los Angeles. Whereas the war had shown

⁴ Sterry, "The Neighborhood School," 118-123.

⁵ Ruby Baughman, "A Foreword on the Year's Work in Americanization," *LASJ* 2.1 (September 2, 1918), 12-14; Baughman, "Elementary Education for Adults," *The Annals* 93, "Present-Day Immigration with Special Reference to the Japanese," (January, 1921), 161-8.

Baughman how many immigrants lacked literacy in English, it had convinced Cox of Anglos' "lack of ability to use foreign tongues." Cox called the war a catastrophe not for the obvious loss of human life but because it had disrupted the nation's reluctant acceptance of languages that had arrived over four decades of mass immigration. For Cox, Americanization was a "counter-current" to her ultimate goal of seeing foreign languages studied in every school. She rejected English-only education by arguing that immigrants were more likely to assimilate if Americans could communicate with them "sympathetically, understandingly, with an appreciation of all they have left behind." In urging Angelenos to acquire other languages, Cox conveyed that many Americanization instructors had different agendas for their immigrant classes.⁶

From Americanization to Citizenship: The Los Angeles Diploma Plan of 1915

One of Sterry's early recruits, Charles Kelso, quietly changed her initial agenda and redefined the target population for the Los Angeles school district's citizenship department. Despite his policy differences, Kelso shared Sterry's missionary background. After graduating from Boston University, a Methodist bishop asked Kelso to teach at the Calcutta Boys' School in India before sending him to Singapore, where he headed the Anglo-Chinese school for four years. Upon returning to the States, Kelso's international experience led him to postgraduate study in comparative religion, education, and sociology. Then Kelso came to L.A., where Sterry trained him to become the city's first citizenship instructor in 1912—fifteen years later, he had created his own bureaucracy while Sterry was still fighting for Neighborhood School funding. Both teachers believed they had a moral obligation to teach foreigners how to benefit from American society's superior values. But, while Sterry started schools in L.A.'s non-white communities, Kelso catered his Diploma Plan curriculum to European immigrants. The school

⁶ Carole Aronovici, "Americanization," *The Annals* 93 (January, 1921), 134-138; Mary Cox, "Americanization and Foreign Language Study," *LASJ* 3.8 (October 20, 1919), 5-6. *LASJ* promoted "Language Games" in a page 4 advertisement just before Cox's article.

district's shift from Sterry's Americanization agenda to Kelso's citizenship department was recorded by Asbury Bagwell, a devoted Diploma Plan teacher.⁷

But Bagwell's ideal citizen may have been assistant superintendent Harry Shafer. He profiled Shafer's patriotism on a lake in Italy, where seeing a U.S. flag on a yacht "caused a thrill to the body and an added impulse to the heartbeat." The flag inspired him to supervise L.A.'s Home Teachers and Americanization and naturalization classes. Like Sterry, Shafer linked the flag to language education in L.A. He called the wartime instruction of alien and native-born citizens in English reading and writing skills "the greatest Americanizing influence ever exerted." Such assimilation was on display in a 1919 graduation at Sterry's Amelia Street School. Months before the armistice, Shafer watched as "children of foreign parents appeared in drills in which they carried flags of different nations and also recited selections of a patriotic nature." A local judge naturalized parents who had qualified for citizenship. But Shafer's favorite part came when an immigrant boy read a statement by Theodore Roosevelt:

"We have room but for one flag, the American flag... We have room but for one language here and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans and of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house."

Foreign languages had no place in Shafer's system of Americanization, even as military propaganda. While the assistant superintendent accepted foreign flags to create a metaphoric melting pot at graduations, Shafer's citizenship ceremonies had room but for one language.⁸

⁷ Asbury Bagwell, "The Los Angeles Diploma Plan of Naturalizing the Alien: A Comparison of the Los Angeles Diploma Plan with Certain Other American Naturalization Methods in the Light of the Social Process of Assimilation and Socialization," (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1929), 140-146.

⁸ Harry Shafer, "Naturalization," *LASJ* 2.29 (March 23, 1919), 465-466; Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 147-152; General Circular No. 14, Los Angeles City School District, Office of the Superintendent, *LASJ* 5 (November 14, 1921), 11; Shafer, "Americanization," *LASJ* 2 (September 16, 1918), 34. Shafer cited another citizenship ceremony in addition to Sterry's Amelia Street School. Each compares to James Barrett's description of Henry Ford's "melting pot" graduation (see Introduction, pp. 2-3).

Administrators adored Sterry's flag activities, but they borrowed other teaching methods that changed the meaning of immigrant education. For example, an early Neighborhood School experiment ultimately became the Diploma Plan, a more celebrated L.A. city school program. Sterry revived Los Angeles' latent immigrant education ideas in 1910 when she set out to secure citizenship papers for the parents of her largely foreign-born student bodies. With little support from the superintendent, Sterry sought allies in her quest for adult education. She approached the city's director of naturalization to ask if he would cooperate with an evening class to assist immigrants applying for citizenship. He agreed, but Sterry could only find one willing adult, an Italian, to attend her first class in February, 1910. Although she had recruited 27 by March, the superintendent refused to let her use the Amelia Street classrooms. When allies in women's social circles publicized their concerns about the "educational lack" of Mexican and Chinese immigrant workers in the *L.A. Times*, the school board was forced to open a school for foreign-born adults, though it did not fund teacher salaries. Still, Sterry made language learning central to the "social center work" in L.A.'s first two Neighborhood Schools.⁹

Sterry steered students into her classes by promising language instruction. She opened the evening school at Macy Street in 1911 because that facility had a large hall where she planned to show concerts or moving pictures. After canvassing the neighborhood, Sterry learned that the parents of her daytime students were most interested in learning English. So she shelved the citizenship classes which the director of naturalization had endorsed and offered English classes taught by Italian- and Spanish-speakers, urging immigrants of other languages to bring their children as interpreters. Nearly 300 adults showed up for the first night of the Macy Street experiment. Only one classroom had electricity; but by the end of the first week the language

⁹ Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 104-107; George Jackson, "A History of the Adult Education Program in the Los Angeles Public Schools," (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1957), 48-49.

learners had brought enough lanterns, lamps, and candles to light every room. The *L.A. Times* reported that the city's first evening Neighborhood School included "Mexicans who removed their silver-laced sombreros to bow to their principal, Russian women in gaudy head-dress, dark-eyed Slavs and Italians, and eager, slant-eyed Japs." Sterry's students were a "motley and cosmopolitan" crowd, but she pleased her adult pupils by making English classes accessible and offering the music and dance classes they requested.¹⁰

The next year, Sterry started the city's first citizenship class at Amelia Street. She persuaded the director of naturalization to make Los Angeles the nation's "first city to have her evening work accepted in the courts in lieu of an examination for citizenship papers." This program was so popular by 1914 that elementary evening schools had nearly tripled enrollment. But Sterry's true value to the Neighborhood School became clear in 1915, when the school board restricted her duties to the daytime principal at Macy Street School, shaving \$600 off her salary. Parents petitioned the school board to let her continue supervising both day and night schools. As an educator who listened to and accommodated her clientele while experimenting with new assimilation policies, Sterry made herself integral to the immigrant communities she served.¹¹

But she also set the groundwork for the Los Angeles Diploma Plan, which revised Sterry's citizenship program by removing Americanization. In 1912, Charles Kelso was teaching at L.A. High School by day while overseeing the campus' "social center work" at night. When the immigrants at Sterry's Neighborhood Schools started showing proficiency in English, she asked Kelso to teach them American government to prepare for the naturalization exam in federal court. Although his initial lessons were little more than tutoring to the test, Kelso became

¹⁰ Jackson, "A History of the Adult Education Program," 49-50; "Citizens Made As They Wait: Los Angeles' First Social Center Launched," *LAT*, September 12, 1911, Section II, 1.

¹¹ Superintendent Francis' *Annual Report* for 1914, quoted in Jackson, "A History of the Adult Education Program," 50-52; "Plead to Keep Guiding Hand: Macy-street School Patrons Miss Teacher-friend," *LAT*, September 21, 1915, 9.

more attached to these citizenship classes than he was to L.A. High School. In 1915, despite taking a pay cut from the school board, Sterry helped Kelso conceive of the Diploma Plan. Other influential women introduced him to a Superior Court judge who they knew would approve of the proposal. Although he later argued that his citizenship work belonged in a different department than Sterry's Neighborhood Schools, Kelso's agenda came from collaborating with L.A.'s most prominent Americanization advocates.¹²

Kelso's influence enabled the Diploma Plan's emphasis on citizenship to supersede Sterry's stress on Americanization in three ways. First, although Sterry set aside the naturalization director's agenda in 1912, Kelso created a 15-lesson curriculum that fulfilled the city's citizenship requirements. Second, by 1915 he convinced the school district to create a new citizenship department, under his leadership, with the authority to naturalize immigrants. Third, in 1928 he converted an old elementary school building into a new "School of Citizenship for Naturalization." While the Diploma Plan made citizenship classes a direct path to naturalization, it also defined the primary purpose of Americanization classes as English language instruction. Thus, just as Nora Sterry was starting Neighborhood Schools to provide all services to L.A.'s immigrant masses, Kelso's criteria made citizenship courses more exclusive than inclusive.¹³

In contrast to Sterry's Amelia Street School, where students raised the American flag whether there was a quarantine or a graduation ceremony, the central character in Kelso's Diploma Plan was the physical facility that became the Citizenship School in 1928. Sitting on a sunny, tree-lined street, the two-story, wood frame structure represented the triumph of administrative bureaucracy. With its chain link fence, picture windows, and open air on all four

¹² Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 106-116, 140, 142-146. While Sterry and Kelso were the key advocates of the citizenship course, the administrator of Macy Street Evening School in 1912 was L.J. White. Bagwell, 122-123.

¹³ Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 1, 82, 108; Bagwell, "Local Courses Boon to Aliens," *LAT*, August 21, 1927, B1-B2.

sides, the school enjoyed the amenities that middle-class Americans were supposed to want for their own homes. Diploma Plan graduates, the school walls suggested, did not simply wave flags and read speeches; they were active citizens steeped in the nation's patriotic history and prepared to vote on Election Day. Male educators like Asbury Bagwell awarded more pomp and circumstance to the Citizenship School's inauguration than they did to 350 recent graduates who had taken the oath of naturalization in federal court a few weeks earlier. This may have made for less eloquent oratory than Nora Sterry's flag-waving "melting-pot" enactment, but it showed a shift in emphasis from Americanization to citizenship in L.A. city schools.¹⁴

The Diploma Plan's only records were written by a biased source, Asbury Bagwell, who was teaching citizenship classes when he filed his master's thesis at USC in 1929. Bagwell called Kelso the "Father of the Diploma Plan"— he also surveyed Americanization teachers in 60 cities and, unsurprisingly, concluded that L.A.'s education policy was superior because of its stricter requirements for naturalization and English language ability. No other city empowered its teachers to determine whether or not immigrant adults were worthy of citizenship and the right to vote. Bagwell boasted that more than 20,000 immigrants had earned citizenship in the program's first twelve years, but he added that L.A. had nearly 150,000 "foreign born white men and women of voting age." This low naturalization rate was a point of pride for Bagwell, who said:

"No effort is made to 'drum up' students for the citizenship classes....Indeed the entire enrollment is made up of those who have applied for naturalization and have been sent by the naturalization director to the citizenship school."

The image of "aliens studying their way into citizenship" stressed that the Diploma Plan limited citizenship to a self-selective group of immigrants, almost all of whom were white Europeans with the time and resources to undertake a process that no other city offered. Bagwell's bragging of low enrollment was the opposite approach of Americanization director Ruby Baughman, who

¹⁴ Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 115.

proposed many methods to recruit immigrant students during World War I, even if she had to find bilingual volunteers to spread her department's agenda in other languages.¹⁵

Bagwell used Mexican students to demonstrate the differences between L.A.'s Americanization and citizenship departments. He pointed out that more than 6,000 Mexican adults attended Americanization classes in 1926-27, making up 53 percent of the evening school population. In contrast, there were only eight Mexicans enrolled in the Diploma Plan, making a ratio of one Mexican for every 173 citizenship students. Another Diploma Plan teacher argued that Mexicans were the least likely immigrants to seek citizenship because "their easy going habits preclude the industry necessary to become a factor in the government under which they are living." Although many Neighborhood School instructors shared this opinion about Mexican immigrants, their agenda was to help the Spanish speakers from the south learn English and assimilate. The Diploma Plan's discrimination against non-white immigrants seemed more successful than the Neighborhood Schools' efforts to Americanize them, and these outcomes were not limited to the classroom. The Diploma Plan also thrived in national politics while the Neighborhood Schools lacked attention outside L.A.¹⁶

Reviewing the Reforms: Political Influence vs. Gastronomic Identity

Comparing Kelso's and Sterry's stories in the 1920s reveals two different possibilities for white teachers who created immigrant education policies in Los Angeles. The Diploma Plan gained political prominence even though its male faculty did not have to promote citizenship classes to the public. On the other hand, the women who worked in Neighborhood Schools were tirelessly defended their cause in countless publications. For example, Sterry was a longtime

¹⁵ Bagwell, "Local Courses Boon to Aliens," B2; Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 1, 82, 108; Bagwell, "Local Courses Boon to Aliens," *LAT*, August 21, 1927, B1-B2.

¹⁶ Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 39-40; William Bell, "What the Los Angeles Schools Have Done for the Alien Seeking Citizenship Training," *LASJ* 5.5 (October 10, 1921), 5. Bagwell added that Americanization classes had students from 46 different nationalities, and 2.5 percent of these students were Japanese. No Asian immigrants took citizenship classes, which had students from only 24 nationalities, most of which were European.

editor of the *Los Angeles School Journal*, which devoted an entire issue to Neighborhood Schools in 1927. Though the *Journal* only published one article about the Diploma Plan between 1917 and 1930, Kelso was content to sit in the school district's new citizenship department offices with his administrative funds while Sterry saw her wages cut. He quietly mimeographed outlines for his fifteen lessons on the U.S. Constitution, government, and history to share with his salaried citizenship teachers while some women worked at Neighborhood Schools without pay. By 1931, the year of the repatriation raids, Sterry had left the Macy Street Schools and the superintendent had canceled evening Americanization classes in the Mexican district downtown. In contrast, 1928 marked the dedication of the nation's first "School of Citizenship for Naturalization" at the old Avenue 23 School building, where citizenship students from seven branch schools would come to take their citizenship exams every semester. At the ceremony, the city's new U.S. Congressman congratulated Kelso and proposed a new political campaign.¹⁷

Kelso was so proud of the Diploma Plan that he tried to spread it across the country. In the 1920s, he built political momentum for legislation to make citizenship tests more rigorous. Kelso won endorsements from local judges and USC sociologist Emory Bogardus, who declared that the Diploma Plan's three-month course gave immigrants "a heart and content to citizenship" in his 1920 book, *Essentials of Americanization*. One supporter introduced Kelso to a friend in the federal Department of Labor, and Calvin Coolidge's Labor Secretary approved a proposal to promote the plan on a national scale. In 1928, the school board sent Kelso to the National Education Association meeting in Boston, where he presented the Diploma Plan "as a superior method of educating the alien for citizenship." Kelso carried endorsements from the N.E.A. and

¹⁷ Of course, Kelso was fortunate that the School of Citizenship opened the year before the stock market crash. Amanda Chase's Castelar Street School was one of five night school programs closed by the budget reductions of 1931. Jackson, "A History of the Adult Education Program," 107; Bagwell, "Los Angeles Diploma Plan," 114-122; Diane Wood, "Immigrant Mothers, Female Reformers, and Women Teachers: The California Home Teachers Act of 1915," (PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 1996), 79-113.

the Labor Secretary to Washington, where he persuaded a Pennsylvania Republican to write a bill calling for “higher standards for admission to American citizenship,” which was killed in committee hearings by Democrats from immigrant strongholds in the Northeast. Still, Kelso’s campaign to nationalize his city’s Diploma Plan marked the culmination of a career in education that gave Angeleno immigrants something they could find in no other state—a Citizenship School which bypassed the need to go to court to earn the right to vote.¹⁸

Nora Sterry could not guarantee the franchise to her immigrant students, but she urged them to express their ethnicity in the kitchen. She was so proud of the meals in the Macy Street School district that she invited a *School Journal* writer to visit several Mexican homes with a teacher. Although the instructor reported the poor housing conditions (a family of seven ate dinner on a surface “the size of a card table”), she enjoyed the Mexican spices and remarked that “the American people have yet to learn a great deal about the chili and its possibilities as a flavoring.” She was also struck by the idea of food as a teaching tool. “The women were eager to teach me how to cook,” the teacher wrote. “One of them asked me when I was going to bring a class of American women down to learn how to cook.” In contrast to Kelso’s citizenship exams, Sterry’s cooking teachers Americanized mothers by letting students share family recipes.¹⁹

Rather than restricting immigrant education to recitations of the Bill of Rights, Sterry stayed away from political lessons and focused on the food interests of her fellow Progressives. This was the case in 1930 when, as president of the Los Angeles Elementary Principals’ Club, Sterry published *The International Cook Book*. Sterry said she compiled recipes from other principals, but the majority of dishes likely came from the parents (and evening students) she had taught over two decades at Amelia Street and Macy Street Schools. The cookbook featured 37

¹⁸ Bagwell, “Los Angeles Diploma Plan,” 122-136.

¹⁹ Jane Sedgwick, “My Impressions of a Few Mexican Homes in the Macy Street District,” *LASJ* 10.28 (March 21, 1927), 28-29.

different nationalities, with the most recipes contributed by Russian (13), Mexican (11), and Jewish (seven) families. In the foreword, the supervisor of Home Economics classes in L.A. schools commented that ethnic cuisine, like open highways in sunny southern California, attracted Angelenos with “the lure of the unknown.” But she also told the principals that foreign recipes would spice up their next bridge luncheon. While Sterry sought a larger purpose than social events, she intended to share these dishes with schoolteachers only:

“These recipes have been secured by principals of Los Angeles schools from the people of various foreign groups living within their respective districts. Of the many collected only those have been chosen for publication which are suited to American tastes... It is with the hope that the teachers and their friends will enjoy the novelty of these strange dishes and will thereby in some small measure gain in sympathetic understanding of our foreign people that the Principals’ Club presents this book.”

By balancing sympathy for immigrants with a desire for foods “suited to American tastes,” Sterry showed the double meaning of Americanization in L.A. schools. Like her cookbook, immigrant education mixed concern for the foreign-born with American tastes for sanitation, capitalism, free labor—and the English language. Although foreign recipes were a far cry from a naturalization exam, the ideals of Americanization and Citizenship instructors were similar.²⁰

Part II: Language Education and Citizenship for Mexicans and Japanese

The Diploma Plan and Neighborhood Schools were pathways to citizenship offered by Los Angeles schools, but immigrants had their own ideas about Americanization and civic membership. Between the wars, the city’s Japanese and Mexican communities created their own citizenship curricula, employing many Anglo methods to fit their ethnic views of patriotism. These proposals mixed the study of history and government with instruction in language and culture. Like their Anglo counterparts, Mexican and Japanese educators traveled overseas,

²⁰ Nora Sterry, *The International Cook Book of The Elementary Principals’ Club of Los Angeles, Cal.: A Collection of Choice Recipes From Foreign Lands* (Los Angeles: Citizen Print Shop, Inc., 1930), “Table of Contents.” George J. Sánchez explores Angelenos’ attempts at culinary assimilation in *Becoming Mexican American*, 97-107.

worked with foreign diplomats in L.A., and taught students about rhetoric and using symbols like the flag to represent their communities. The Nisei study tours, “Friends of the Mexicans” conferences, and oratory contests were all collaborations with Progressive reformers. But these events also allowed immigrants themselves to develop their own notions about U.S. citizenship in school settings beyond the control of administrators like Charles Kelso and Nora Sterry.

Nisei Study Tours: Students Build Bridges between Two School Systems

The *Issei* (first generation) argued about whether their children would become better “bridges of understanding” if they went to school in Japan or America. Some wanted Nisei kids to stay in California so they could learn English in the mornings at public schools and their ethnic culture in the evenings at Japanese language schools. Other *Issei* created a Nisei subset, the *Kibei*, or American-born Japanese who left their families and went to Japan for school. In the interwar years, the relative popularity of American-based language schools and Japanese-based programs for *Kibei* fluctuated with the diplomatic relationship between the two Pacific powers. Ironically, while community leaders left each nation’s education program in limbo, the Nisei themselves came up with their own compromise. In the 1930s, they took summer study tours to Japan to learn about the culture that produced their parents and to make sense of their ties to each country. While the Nisei study tours stopped soon before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, their development after the mid-1920s showed how Japanese immigrants struggled to participate in the civic life of two nations. In contrast to Charles Kelso, whose overseas experience influenced his U.S. citizenship curriculum, foreign-born *Issei* like Kohei Shimano took their young “bridges of understanding” abroad to secure peaceful relations between the two nations he loved.²¹

²¹ Eiichiro Azuma has explored this on both sides of the Pacific. “The idea of the Nisei as a transpacific bridge was not simply an *Issei* invention, nor was it meant to serve their immigrant needs only,” he argues. “Educators, intellectuals, and government officials of Japan took no less interest in the concept throughout the 1930s.” Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 145.

The textbook debate in Chapter 1 showed Shimano's desire to prove that Japanese language schools could help Americanize the Nisei. He also built "bridges of understanding" with educators from Japan and L.A., including Nora Sterry at nearby Amelia Street School. This partnership was important because he wanted his students to become integrated into civic life beyond Little Tokyo and the Amelia Street district downtown. In 1915, Shimano stated that Japanese language teachers intended to serve "the Nisei who will live and work permanently here, not to those who will return to Japan." As L.A.'s leading language instructor, however, he enlisted the aid of his colleagues across the Pacific. In 1917, seven teachers from Japan visited Amelia Street School to inquire about the education of the Nisei. Shimano asked Nora Sterry to host a reception and entertainment for the Japanese educators at her Amelia Street campus, rather than his *Rafu Daiichi Gakuen* School, because he wanted the guests to know he was serious about Americanization. Just as Sterry had raised the American flag during the quarantine of 1924, Shimano's campus displayed the Stars and Stripes alongside the Rising Sun of Japan. One of his students later remembered when Shimano called a school assembly to give a "stern lecture about the care of a flag and the respect that we owed to the flag because it was a symbol of a country." In drawing on the expertise of educators from L.A. city schools as well as Japan, Kohei Shimano coordinated a binational effort to turn Nisei students into upstanding American citizens. This collaboration colored his approach to the Nisei study tours of the 1920s.²²

Issei leaders believed that, after the National Origins Act of 1924 nearly halted immigration, sending the Nisei on educational trips to Japan was the best way to improve diplomacy and border policies. But there were different ways to organize the trips. When Shimano took 15

²² "School News," *LASJ* 1.2 (December, 1917), 34; Kohei Shimano quoted in Yuji Ichioka, *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*, eds. Gordon Chang and Eiichiro Azuma (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 20; Embrey interview by Hansen, 106. *Rafu Daiichi Gakuen* was L.A.'s first Japanese language school. Amanda Chase from Chapter 1 was also involved.

language students to Japan in 1925, he also invited the 64-year-old Nellie Oliver, who had been Earl Warren's kindergarten teacher at the Amelia Street School in the 1890s. By 1925, Oliver was superintendent of the charity-operated Stimson Lafayette Industrial Institute, which held Americanization classes in cooking and sewing on the second floor and allowed Shimano to hold his Japanese language classes downstairs. Shimano hoped this voyage would show a shift in Americans' east coast bias and create an interwar "Pacific era" during which Issei intended to teach Nisei to become "bridges of understanding" with Anglos of Mrs. Oliver's generation.²³

However, the same year Shimano invited an Anglo Americanization teacher, a more publicized Nisei study tour recruited the most loyal Japanese immigrants it could find. In 1925, the largest Japanese-language newspaper in the U.S. that printed editions in San Francisco and in L.A., sponsored a contest offering an all-expenses-paid trip to Nisei who were fluent in Japanese. Three of the eleven winning entrants came from L.A. including Grace Umezawa, who finished first with 1.8 million votes. When they returned to California, Umezawa gave the final speech at a meeting in which each Nisei tourist described their activities in Japan and their efforts to, as the tour leader put it, shed some of their Americanization, learn their parents' culture, and "act as bridges of peace and understanding between our two countries as only they could have done." While the Japanese newspaper and Shimano shared the hope that Nisei study tours would help pupils produce positive relations between America and Japan, their different methods muddled the manner in which Nisei would become world citizens (or "bridges"). However, after Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, Shimano's strategic alliances with Anglo administrators diminished and Japanese language schools looked to Japan itself for guidance in citizenship education.²⁴

²³ California Council for the Humanities, "History of Miss Oliver and the Oliver Clubs," http://www.calhum.org/programs/story_oliver_clubs_special.htm (viewed June 30, 2010).

²⁴ Ichioka, *Before Internment*, 59-64. The newspaper was *Nichibei Shimbun*.

The Manchurian invasion changed the concept of Nisei as “bridges of understanding.” The League of Nations branded Japan a military aggressor and refused to recognize the satellite state. In Los Angeles, the Japanese consul looked to Nisei to explain Japan’s political culture to their American peers. In 1933, he sponsored an essay contest on the theme, “The Pacific Era and Japanese Americans.” While one of Shimano’s students won the contest, second prize went to a pupil from the Compton *Gakuen* who wrote that, as Nisei bridges, “we must study the Manchurian question in depth in order to dispel the misunderstandings Americans have and to preserve peace between the United States and Japan.” As the consulate planned new study tours which went from Japan to Manchuria and Korea, the Ministry of Home Affairs encouraged Nisei to become Kibei, full-time students in Japan. Indeed, the number of Kibei enrolled in schools in Tokyo and Kyoto rose from fewer than 100 in 1930 to approximately 1,700 by 1935. Thus, the Manchurian Incident’s diplomatic fallout forced the Japanese consuls to reframe Nisei obligations as “bridges of understanding” and restrict the Americanization agenda that Kohei Shimano had taken on his Nisei study tours in the 1920s.²⁵

But Nisei students had their own agenda. The paradoxical nature of student-consul communication created a cross-continental, trans-Pacific adventure for John Aiso. He was Hollywood High’s most accomplished and controversial salutatorian when he graduated in 1926 at age 16 (see Chapter 1). The youngster used his speaking success to build relationships with influential adults in L.A., Tokyo, and Washington. He could not compete in the national oratorical contest, but *L.A. Times* president Harry Chandler offered to pay for his trip to Washington to coach his classmate. Japan’s L.A. consul advised Aiso to call on the Japanese ambassador, who sent him to meet the president of Brown. The college had worked with the Japanese embassy when one of its alums, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, tried to repair U.S.-Japan

²⁵ Ichioka, *Before Internment*, 27-33; Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 138-139, 145-151.

diplomacy after Congress passed quota restrictions in 1924. Since Brown wanted to see Aiso's transcript before offering a scholarship, he returned home with his future in doubt. Despite enduring disappointment in Washington and Providence, the Nisei "silver tongue" had used his rhetorical skills to network with key figures in both the U.S. and Japanese governments.²⁶

Aiso applied his consular connections to achieve conflicting goals that somehow satisfied his Nisei obligation to build "bridges of understanding." After his graduation speech at Hollywood High, he spoke about studying Japanese with the local vice-consul, who offered him room and board in Tokyo for the following school year. With the official's aid, Aiso enrolled in a special class at *Seijo Gakuen* for children of Japanese diplomats returning from overseas service. But once he arrived in Japan, he learned that Brown had admitted him with a sizeable scholarship. From Washington, the Japanese ambassador sent Aiso's parents a stern letter asking, "What is your son doing when I have gone to the trouble of obtaining a scholarship to Brown University for him? Get him back and have him enroll promptly." But Aiso stayed in Tokyo for ten months, and he likely earned the ambassador's appreciation when he convinced Harry Chandler to publish a series of articles, "Impressions of Japan," in the *L.A. Times*. Indeed, Aiso's 1927 assertion that "now is the dawn of a new Pacific era destined by Providence to engage the attention of the whole civilized world" articulated the messages that consuls conveyed to Japanese language schoolteachers. Before he began freshman year at Brown in the fall of 1927, Aiso's actions had pleased senior diplomats in Washington and Tokyo, the capitols of both nations with which he identified. But it was his eloquent essays about citizenship in Los Angeles that had first introduced him to the consuls who made his travel and education possible.²⁷

²⁶ Tad Ichinokuchi, "John Aiso and the MIS" in *John Aiso and the MIS: Japanese-American Soldiers in the Military Intelligence Service, World War II*, ed. Tad Ichinokuchi (Los Angeles: Military Intelligence Service Club of Southern California, 1988), 7-9.

²⁷ Ichinokuchi, "John Aiso and the MIS," 7-9; John Aiso, "As Japan Sees America," *LAT*, July 31, 1927, B4.

“Friends of the Mexicans”: The Alliance of Mexican and American Educators

The Mexican consuls in L.A. also worked with Progressive Angelenos to frame the “problem” of Mexican immigration in the context of schooling. In contrast to the consulate’s failed attempt to establish its own schools in southern California, as discussed in Chapter 1, a more successful initiative began at Pomona College in collaboration with Moisés Sáenz, the Mexican Sub-Secretary of Public Education. At the small college in eastern L.A. County, Mexican diplomats and Anglo educators discussed controversial issues of the 1920s, including immigration, labor, and education. Starting in 1921, Pomona hosted nine “Friends of the Mexicans” conferences which gained in popularity each year, drawing more than 500 participants in 1929. Unlike John Aiso’s impressive relationships, Mexican students had minimal influence at these elite exchanges. Thus, while “Friends of the Mexicans” conferences led to a more coordinated educational program on both sides of the border, they also left students little say in citizenship instruction and small hope of becoming “bridges of understanding.”²⁸

The Mexican government’s interest in the conference made this educational exchange possible. In 1926, the same official who launched the consulate school in East L.A. also arranged for a group of Mexican teachers to spend six weeks of summer school at Pomona for “special study of the English language and American educational methods.” The consul also called on Sub-Secretary Sáenz to invite a Pomona administrator to Mexico. By 1928, the exchange had extended to L.A. schools. Angeleno teachers toured schools in Mexico City, the rural countryside, and the *Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico*. That spring, 28 Mexican educators spent a week in L.A., whose school system provided “Spanish speaking teachers” as hostesses. The Mexican contingent, which included 14 male professors and district administrators along with 14 female primary school principals, mixed business with pleasure. After inspection tours

²⁸ Merton Hill, “Conference of ‘Friends of the Mexicans,’” *Pomona College Magazine* 17.2 (December, 1928), 1.

of L.A. public schools and the Spanish classes at the National Automotive, Electric, and Aviation School, they visited Hollywood movie studios and saw the San Gabriel Mission Play, a popular, pastoral imagining of life in California under Spanish rule. Pomona's summer school program and the weeklong visit to L.A. showed more attention to teachers working in Mexico than most Neighborhood Schools gave to the immigrants who lived in the city's poorest communities. The "Friends of the Mexicans" conference reflected a binational effort to define Americanization as a class-based concept intended for elites on both sides of the border, not the masses they taught.²⁹

The annual pilgrimages to Pomona allowed Angeleno educators to reevaluate their positions on Mexican immigration law, citizenship, and labor status. Nora Sterry took a day off from Macy Street School to represent L.A. teachers and social workers and defend Mexican workers against exploitation from ranchers like the Western Growers Protective Association. In lamenting the impact of migrant labor on Mexican families, Sterry stressed the social cost of starting "foreign district" schools and hospitals and ignored the economic conditions that made growers want seasonal work. She mixed sympathy with low expectations, noting that "Mexican children have as fair intellect as other children but they are stunted mentally as well as physically by the spiritual and mental paucity of their homes." Sterry articulated the meeting's majority opinion that Congress should extend the quotas from the National Origins Act to include future Mexican migrants. Sterry's strong defense of the quota at the Pomona conference stood out because Mexican speakers who followed her took the opposing position.³⁰

At the 1928 conference, Harry Shafer addressed another sticky subject—U.S. citizenship. The assistant superintendent asserted that Californians were concerned about the nations with

²⁹ "The College and the International Mind," *Pomona College Magazine* 16 (1928); "Mexican Educators to Be Entertained," *LASJ* 11.34 (May 14, 1928), 13-14. For analysis of the San Gabriel Mission Play and "fantasy heritage," see Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*, 207-249.

³⁰ "Friends of the Mexicans," *Community Exchange Bulletin* (hereafter *CEB*) 8.2 (December, 1929), 35-37.

whom they shared a border or an ocean, mentioning Mexico as well as America's "Pan-Pacific policies and prospects" with Japan. Unlike Issei study tour guides, Shafer had a more measured outlook on building "bridges of understanding," noting that from World War I to the National Origins Act, "periods of fairly friendly feeling have on a few occasions been interrupted by more hostile attitudes." This described the Mexican border, but Shafer also showed interest in Spanish-speaking views about U.S. citizenship. He had convinced the "Friends of the Mexicans" officers to discuss the topic at the 1927 conference by asking his fellow educators "why so few Mexicans have any desire to become American citizens." This question appeared to puzzle Shafer, who had read reports about Mexican attitudes from citizenship teachers. Yet his summary of the 1928 conference simply accepted the consensus that "Mexicans entered the United States for economic reasons, but nationally and racially remain Mexican in most cases." Thus, the "Friends of the Mexicans" conference reinforced stereotypes that L.A. educators had about the immigrant group which was entirely absent from the city's citizenship classes but made up a majority of its Americanization classes. Perhaps this was a result of inviting teachers, diplomats, and politicians from Mexico. Even if they held radical views, the elite educators who came to Pomona could not articulate the attitudes of most Mexican immigrants.³¹

Part III: Students, Teachers, and World Friendship Projects

The citizenship curriculum that Charles Kelso and Nora Sterry had struggled over in the 1910s gave way to the notion of "world friendship" after World War I. Teachers wanted youths to build "bridges of understanding" between nations in L.A. classrooms. This development reflected the city schools' shift from a few reformers with political influence to a more diverse population of students with their own ideas about education. Comparing "world friendship"

³¹ Shafer, "1928 'Friends of the Mexicans' Conference," *CEB* 7.4 (March, 1929), 9-10; James Batten, "Letter to the Editor," *CEB* 6.1 (October, 1927), 41.

references by the *Los Angeles School Journal* in the 1920s with ethnic oratory contests and student clubs at Roosevelt High School in the 1930s will show that teachers' emphasis on global current events was reshaped by Mexican, Japanese, and Jewish students during the Depression. The rise of World Friendship clubs in L.A. high schools reflects immigrant education's transition from Progressive Era liberalism, seen in Sterry's Neighborhood Schools, to New Deal liberalism that developed in multi-ethnic districts like Boyle Heights, home of Roosevelt High.³²

The *Journal* linked "world friendship" to the overseas experiences of Angeleno educators in a 1925 issue dedicated to "Education for World Relationships." One writer reframed Americanization work as "brotherhood making or brotherization," suggesting that teachers now looked at immigrant students as representatives of their parents' homeland rather than as young Americans, turning their classrooms into international summit meetings. Another article, "Teaching Brotherhoodness," explained that the term had come from the 1923 World Conference on Education in San Francisco, where a Chinese delegate said that "reading and language work give the resourceful teacher a chance to impart the sense of world relationship" on foreign students. The *Journal* touted internationalism to teachers by promoting the Pan Pacific Association for Mutual Understanding, a new group which hosted "monthly travel dinners" and arranged lectures with L.A. consuls from Pacific Rim countries including Mexico and Japan. The Pan Pacific Association wanted schools to have "ample provision for the teaching of the Oriental languages, training for diplomatic service and commercial leadership." A story on the next page reported the latest League of Nations meeting. These articles showed the lofty ideals of L.A. teachers who saw immigrant education as a path to world peace.³³

³² Mark Wild describes "global current events" like "internationalism studies" in "'So Many Children at Once,'" 453-476.

³³ Emma Raybold, "Brotherization," Mary Foster, "Teaching Brotherhoodness," and Alice Wells, "The Pan-Pacific Association for Mutual Understanding," *LASJ* 8.9 (November 2, 1925), 10-23. This "Education for World Relationships" issue of *LASJ* also included articles titled "Modern Foreign Language Study" and "The League of Nations."

But the image of Neighborhood Schools as League of Nations clubs posed problems for Progressives. They assumed schools in immigrant districts were integrated. Despite Sterry's opposition to segregating Mexican children, the "Brotherization" article lamented the persistence of "so-called Mexican schools" in L.A. in 1925. Further, focusing on "world relations" led teachers to discuss the cultures of the children's' countries of origin, prompting the *Journal* to ask, "Are we educating Mexicans to be Mexicans, or are we educating them to be Americans?" "World relations" classes in the 1920s had similar purposes to "ethnic studies" curricula today, but they emphasized the history of nations like Mexico and Japan rather than Mexican and Japanese Americans in L.A. life. One Nisei student from Sterry's Amelia Street School recalled:

"People say that things like *Chicano* studies or black studies are innovations in education. We had all that... On May 5 there was *Cinco de Mayo* and Japanese Boys' Day, and they used to have people come in from the community or have kids from the school to do these programs. We actually had a cultural program all year round."

The two holidays that fell on May 5 fit the "world relations" format of using ceremonies to study other nations. In the 1920s and 1930s, as Progressive Anglos saw that such festivals might undermine their "Brotherization" goals, foreign-born educators used language to redefine "world friendship." Statements at "Friends of the Mexicans" conferences and Nisei oratory contests show that Mexican and Japanese teachers hoped that language instruction would lead to "world friendship," "bridges of understanding," or simply improved relations after World War I.³⁴

Angeleno Educators Arrange "Bridges of Understanding" in Three Languages

At the 1925 "Friends of the Mexicans" conference, Moisés Sáenz, the Mexican Sub-Secretary of Public Education, articulated an Americanization of rural children in his own

³⁴ Raybold, "Brotherization," 19; Embrey interview, 102. This became a national issue in 2010 when the state of Arizona banned ethnic studies from Tucson public schools. See Mari Herreras, "Class and Controversy: Tucson High's Ethnic Studies Students Wonder Why Tom Horne Won't Leave Them Alone," *Tucson Weekly*, May 27, 2010, <http://www.tucsonweekly.com/tucson/classes-andcontroversy/Content?oid=1998398> (viewed April 27, 2011). Also See James Cameron, "The History of Mexican Public Education in Los Angeles, 1910-1930," (PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 1976) and Gilbert Gonzalez, "The System of Public Education and Its Function within the Chicano Communities, 1920-1930," (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974).

country. The historian Mary Kay Vaughan has described Sáenz's educational agenda as the "real cultural revolution" of Mexico in the 1920s, when schools served as a site of negotiation between the modernizing project of the state and the *campesino* traditions of the rural masses. For a Progressive like Sáenz, U.S. economic and cultural might after World War I stood as a model society for his teachers to recreate in their classrooms. Having learned the American philosophies of public education at Columbia Teachers College, Sáenz appointed a committee of teachers and journalists "to direct a movement in the public schools to teach Mexican children love of the United States." The Sub-Secretary also impressed L.A. educators. After his 1925 lecture, the "Friends of the Mexicans" director said that "Mr. Sáenz not only uses English fluently but has a fund of wit, humor and irony, which makes him a very interesting speaker." In his English speeches in L.A., and his Spanish-language curriculum in Mexico, Sáenz seemed more interested in Americanization than the Mexican consul who lived in the L.A. barrio.³⁵

Not all educated Mexicans shared Sáenz's enthusiasm for Americanization's emphasis on learning English. One critic was Alberto Rembao, who had graduated from Pomona in 1921. After four years directing an international school in Guadalajara, he became head of the Spanish Bureau of the Foreign Language Information Service. Rembao was skeptical of Sáenz's innovations and questioned the "noble gesture" of groups like the "Friends of the Mexicans" as "our flying and joking and educational ambassadors of good-will." At the 1928 conference, Rembao requested a new form of Americanization, with "less flag-waving and less anthem-singing" and more emphasis on teaching children to be global citizens. While admitting that Mexicans' main barrier to American education was their "ignorance of our language, laws and customs," he added that impatient Americans did not give them time to assimilate. His Foreign

³⁵ Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), 7; Batten, "Friends of the Mexicans," *CEB* 4.2 (January, 1926), 23.

Language Information Service borrowed from the Japanese “bridges of understanding” idea, but it put the onus of understanding on Anglos rather than second-generation immigrants. He urged Californians to go to Mexico, meet Sáenz and, most importantly, “learn Spanish, that sweet dialect that seems to sound as the chants of the Castilian books.” In advising Angeleno educators to study Spanish, Rembao reversed the premise that Americanization was an English-only exercise. Such statements changed the “Friends of the Mexicans” conference from a pedagogical dialogue between teachers to a political debate about Mexican immigration in the 1920s.³⁶

There was less debate about the role of global citizenship in the Nisei study tours of Japan and in well-publicized oratorical contests. The objectives of “world friendship” are evident in *Orations and Essays by the Japanese Second Generation of America*, a book self-published by Issei Paul Hirohata in 1932 and expanded in 1935. A journalist for the Los Angeles daily *Rafu Shimpo*, Hirohata expressed his generation’s dreams by compiling the commencement addresses of 49 Nisei students from schools across California during the Depression. While the speeches show the academic accomplishments of many Japanese Americans, their oratory often reflected the political agendas of the adults who taught them. In fact, the most articulate descriptions of “world friendship” and “bridges of understanding” appeared in a series of introductory statements by Angeleno educators and diplomats in the foreword to Hirohata’s book.³⁷

The forewords by Japanese officials in Los Angeles couched their relationship with the second generation in a geopolitical context. The secretary of the L.A. Japanese Association wrote a message, in Japanese characters, that began with the National Origins Act of 1924. Since the quotas halted Japanese immigration, the Nisei bore “the responsibility of fulfilling the mission of promoting goodwill between Japan and the United States.” Besides being cultural “bridges,” the

³⁶ Alberto Rembao, “What Should Be Done for Juan Garcia?” *Pomona College Magazine* 17.3 (January, 1929), 145-148.

³⁷ Joyce Hirohata and Paul Hirohata, eds., *Nisei Voices: Japanese American Students of the 1930s—Then & Now* (Oakland: Hirohata Design, 2004). Joyce Hirohata updated her grandfather’s original publication, *Orations and Essays*.

secretary said, “the future development of our race in North America fell solely upon activity of the Nisei.” As the historian Eiichiro Azuma has argued, this reflected another image the Issei had created of themselves laying claim to the “Eastern” frontier and settling California as Japanese territory. This “Issei pioneer thesis” was echoed by Kay Sugahara, the former oratorical champion from Polytechnic High School who was president of the Japanese American Citizens League’s L.A. chapter in 1935. Sugahara praised speeches of the book’s “gifted Nisei trailblazers” and urged them to “never lose sight of... the indomitable courage of our pioneer forefathers.” Noting the “economic disturbances and cultural clashes” of the Great Depression, Sugahara said his generation could improve diplomatic relations because, as American citizens of Japanese descent, the Nisei were “a blend of two great cultural forces, play[ing] a prominent role in the molding of a more pacific relationship between two great powers.” The editor printed the speeches by Sugahara and the secretary in both Japanese and English. Perhaps he wanted to emphasize their “bridge” and “pioneer” themes to Japanese bilingual readers.³⁸

In contrast, other forewords written only in English referred to language using the school district’s “world friendship” theme. Toshito Satow, Japan’s consul in Los Angeles, was impressed with the Niseis’ oratory, reporting his delight to see them so “skilled in the art of self-expression.” He said this skill would help Nisei “promote understanding and friendship between America and Japan.” While the consul combined the “bridge” and “friendship” themes to describe dialogue across nations, the state Superintendent of Public Instruction explained “friendship” and “language” within the confines of a California classroom. Vierling Kersey, who would become the superintendent of L.A. schools, wrote that, “where there is a desire for

³⁸ Azuma explains the “Issei pioneer thesis” in “The Politics of Transnational History Making: Japanese Immigrants on the Western ‘Frontier,’ 1927-1941,” *Journal of American History* 89.4 (March, 2003), 1405-1407; Shiro Fujioka, “English Translation of a Message from the Secretary of the Los Angeles Japanese Association,” *Nisei Voices*, 246; Kay Sugahara, “Japanese American Citizens League’s Message in *Orations and Essays* in 1935,” *Nisei Voices*, 250.

understanding and an aim to promote friendship... we may be assured that no mere barrier of race or language can stand in the way.” Like Issei educators, Kersey commented on the capacity of California children to interact with peers of different ethnicities. But rather than using these relationships to promote “bridges” of international diplomacy, he wanted “world friendship” to create harmony in the Golden State. He cited the Olympic Games that Los Angeles had hosted in 1932. Just like L.A.’s schools, the Olympics had brought people from different countries together. Kersey called for the Olympic spirit to continue in California’s classrooms where, with “students working together, there is the greatest opportunity of appreciating and understanding the manners, the customs, the temperament and the problems of other countries.” This version of “world friendship” echoed the “bridges of understanding” theme that Issei officials had articulated, but it shifted focus from the Pacific Rim to California. And it revealed the different citizenship agendas of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Japanese consul to L.A.³⁹

Orations and Essays also emphasized how the Nisei themselves thought about citizenship in America and Japan. Analysis of these speeches reveals that Nisei adolescents expressed their ideas about assimilation as immigrant children who were interested in the Olympics, government, economic justice, and ethnic holidays. But a close reading of two statements by John Aiso, the generation’s most accomplished orator, reveals more about how non-white immigrants struggled to participate in American civic life. Aiso’s contribution to *Orations and Essays* came from late 1923, when the sophomore “silver tongue” spoke about “Lincoln’s Devotion to the Constitution.” In 1927, the recent salutatorian published a *L.A. Times* editorial under the headline “As Japan Sees America.” The two titles acknowledge the range of geopolitical influences on a second-generation youth coming to terms with his own abilities to

³⁹ Toshito Satow, “The Consul of Japan’s Recommendation Published in *Orations and Essays* in 1932 and 1935,” *Nisei Voices*, 249; State Superintendent Vierling Kersey, “Foreword in the 1932 and 1935 Editions, *Nisei Voices*, 248.

participate in American civic discourse without abandoning the ethnic identity inherited from his parents. Aiso aimed these declarations at different audiences, but the settings in which he delivered them defy expectations. He spoke about America's sixteenth President at a contest sponsored by the Federated Japanese Young Men's Association of Southern California. Four years later, Aiso opined about Japan to the *Times*' largely white readership.⁴⁰

These speeches show how Nisei like Aiso became "bridges of understanding." He was a talented orator who articulated the interwar ideals of both Japan and America. Aiso appeared most assimilated when surrounded by fellow Nisei. His eloquent explanation of Abraham Lincoln's "God-like" ability to preserve the Constitution's legal and moral integrity showcased his "loyal devotion" to American law. But Aiso's interest in the political path of Lincoln's "paramount object" from saving the Union to abolishing slavery may have also represented his struggle to square American ideals with the racial prejudice he had experienced. After all, in 1922 he had quoted Lincoln in the speech that temporarily elected him student body president (see Chapter 1). Ironically, the patriotism that forced his junior high school to suspend student government won first prize at the Federated Japanese Young Men's Association the next year.⁴¹

Aiso was proud to be both Japanese and American. When he wrote the *Times* essay during his postgraduate year in Japan, Aiso stressed Japan's "admiration for and devotion to the United States." Pointing out Theodore Roosevelt's role in resolving the Russo-Japanese War of 1907, he declared that the Atlantic era of "Elizabethan accomplishments" had given way to the "dawn of a new Pacific era." Although some Anglo Americans suspected Japanese immigrants of harboring "imperial ambitions" to colonize America, Aiso believed Nisei like him could clear up such "misunderstandings" and persuade fellow citizens stateside that "the hearts of the Pan-

⁴⁰ Aiso, "Lincoln's Devotion to the Constitution," *Nisei Voices*, 191-193; Aiso, "As Japan Sees America," *LAT*, July 31, 1927, B4.

⁴¹ Aiso, "Lincoln's Devotion," *Nisei Voices* 191-193; Ichinokuchi, "John Aiso and the MIS," 5.

Pacific countries are attuned to friendship.” As an American-born citizen of Japanese descent studying in the land of his parents’ birth, the John Aiso of 1927 viewed the elusive balance of “international understanding and friendship” with the same sort of awe in which he had held “Lincoln’s devotion to the Constitution” as a tenth grader at Hollywood High four years earlier.⁴²

“World Friendship” and Citizenship Education in a Multiethnic High School

Just as oratory allowed the Nisei to make their own way as “bridges of understanding,” Angeleno teens who joined World Friendship clubs re-shaped citizenship education in L.A. high schools in the 1930s. But teachers had called the shots in the early “Federation of World Friendship Clubs,” although they had a different name during World War I. Stephen Myrick, history department chair at Hollywood High, John Aiso’s alma mater, founded L.A.’s first Cosmopolitan club in 1915 as “the first club of that nature in any high school of the country.” Myrick arranged evenings at Japanese, Chinese, Italian, and French restaurants, where Hollywood students dined and debated with the corresponding consuls. Changing the name to World Friendship clubs in the 1920s reflected educators’ awareness of their classrooms’ changing ethnic composition. In 1928, when Myrick contributed to the *School Journal*’s “Mexican Education” issue, he was called the “the originator of the World Friendships clubs,” which had spread to fifteen city schools. Adults were still in charge when the “world friendship” craze came to Roosevelt High in 1931, sponsored by Mrs. Helen Bailey, a social science teacher who summered in South America. But students saw what they called the “Peace club” as a symbol of the school’s eastside neighborhood, Boyle Heights, L.A.’s most diverse district.⁴³

⁴² Aiso, “Lincoln’s Devotion,” *Nisei Voices* 191-193; “As Japan Sees America,” B4. To shorten Chapter 2, I have not included analysis of graduation speeches by other Nisei salutorians from *Orations and Essays*.

⁴³ The results of the survey appear in Wild, ““So Many Children,” 457; “The Federation of World Friendship Clubs,” *LASJ* 10.28 (March 21, 1927), 76; “Our Contributors: ‘Mexican Education’ Issue,” *LASJ* 11.34 (May 14, 1928), 12; “World Friendship Club Organized in 1931,” *Roosevelt Rough Rider*, April 26, 1935, 1. The author thanks Mr. Joseph Zanki, Sr., retired Roosevelt High School history teacher, for sharing old volumes of the *Rough Rider*.

Roosevelt's World Friendship club in 1931 was different than the first Cosmopolitan club at Hollywood High in 1915. Unlike the school whose principal once told John Aiso to drop out of the national oratorical contest, Roosevelt opened doors to successful students of color. In the 1930s, several student body presidents showed off their citizenship in times of economic and diplomatic crisis. Arthur Takemoto, the Nisei president in 1939, called his weekly column in the *Rough Rider* newspaper the "Fireside Chat." Hugh Acevedo, the 1935 vice president, joined the school's R.O.T.C. But Acevedo was also the only Mexican or Japanese officer of the World Friendship club, which had mostly white and Jewish students during the Depression. A 1936 demographic survey estimated that 28 percent of Roosevelt's students were "American" and 26 percent were Jewish, but 24 percent were Mexican and six percent were Japanese. The school's multi-ethnic makeup shaped the Peace club in other ways during the 1930s, when multiple Rooseveltians won L.A.'s annual Federation of World Friendship Clubs Oratorical Contest.⁴⁴

While the Peace club emphasized international diplomacy over ethnic identity, it borrowed the "bridges of understanding" idea from the Nisei. In particular, it worked with the Spanish club to complete two diplomatic tasks. In 1932, it began correspondence with a school in Barcelona, Spain, sending a portfolio of Los Angeles that included images of Hollywood, beaches, and that summer's Olympics. When the Catalanian school sent a similar portfolio in 1933, with photos of Gaudí architecture and the city's soccer stadium, the World Friendship club asked a Spanish-speaking member to translate the letter. It was the Spanish club president, Eddie Roybal, who would later become California's first Latino Congressman since 1879. Although Roybal joined Franklin Roosevelt's new Civilian Conservation Corps after graduating from Roosevelt, he returned in 1934 to help his old club celebrate Pan American Day, playing a

⁴⁴ Arthur Takemoto, "Fireside Chat," *Rough Rider*, November 2, 1939, 2; "Hugh Acevedo Elected to Vice Presidency," *Rough Rider*, June 7, 1935, 4; "Albert Teplitz to Preside at World Friendship Aud," *Rough Rider*, November 8, 1934, 1.

Chilean song on guitar. The next year, the World Friendship and Spanish clubs partnered to present Pan American Day, winning praise in the *Rough Rider* for promoting “world peace and international goodwill.” Through songs, dances, and speeches, the Peace club president expected Pan American Day to “establish even closer relations between races in this school.” It showed that students in the Spanish or Japanese clubs could influence the World Friendship club.⁴⁵

While it was very popular in the 1930s, the Peace club did not have many minority members. But the immigrant population of Boyle Heights made Mexican and Japanese students impossible to ignore. Victoria Holguin, the oratory champion who extolled Columbus during “*Dia de la Raza*,” was elected secretary by the 1935 World Friendship club, which included honors student Masako Fukumoto. The 1940 yearbook spent two pages on school assemblies, culminating in a nine-picture montage of the World Friendship club’s “Peace Day Costume Parade,” which included photos of Mexican boys in *sombreros* and Japanese girls in *kimonos*. The caption listed 29 nationalities represented in the ceremonies, starting with Jewish, Mexican, and Japanese. But ethnic minorities played smaller roles in more serious events that did not include costumes. At the 1934 Armistice Day assembly, the only Mexican American participant was Viela Espinoza, who sang after the salute to the flag. Although several Japanese students represented Roosevelt in the *Los Angeles Herald*’s oratorical contest during the Depression, the only Nisei noticed at L.A.’s 1939 World Friendship Federation speech contest came when a “Japanese girl gave two tap dances.” While the Peace club celebrated Roosevelt’s diversity more than any group, the most diverse students seemed silent in the club’s most in-depth discussions.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ “Friendship Club Receives Books from Spain,” *Rough Rider*, November 17, 1933, 1; “Spanish Club Presents Aud: Pan American Day Is Theme for Assembly,” *Rough Rider*, April 20, 1933, 1; “Peace Club Plans Play: Pan American Day Is to Be Celebrated in Conjunction with Spanish Club,” *Rough Rider*, April 5, 1935, 1; “Pan-American Day Observed,” *Rough Rider*, April 12, 1935, 2 (Zanki Papers).

⁴⁶ “Peace Day Costume Parade,” 1940 *Roosevelt Round Up*, 45-46; “Spanish Club to Hold Tilt” and “14 Optimists Given Honor,” *Rough Rider*, January 10, 1935, 1; “Friendship Club Holds Meeting,” *Rough Rider*, January 31, 1935, 1; “Peace Club Hosts Armistice Day,” *Rough Rider*, November 15, 1934, 4; “World Friendship Clubs Gathered at Poly High,”

When the World Friendship Federation did discuss world peace, it referenced Japan and Mexico as military threats, not as nations whose citizens were moving to California. The issue of isolationism dominated the Federation's speech competition, which resembled the oratorical contest on the Constitution won by John Aiso a decade earlier. In 1934, "Peaceful Relations in the Pacific" and "Latin American Contributions to Peace" were two of the seven debate topics and, a year later, after the popular Pan American Day, the contest's main theme was "Pan-American peace." This may have been due to the event's guest speaker, Francis Lederer, also the World Peace Foundation president in 1935. Born in Prague, Lederer became a German movie star in the 1920s who emigrated to Hollywood to continue acting—and to marry a Mexican American who may have piqued his interest in Latin America. When the war in Europe began, keynote speakers grew more isolationist. In 1939, two months after Germany had invaded Poland, Roosevelt's Peace club addressed five resolutions that neglected other nations, stressing that "participation in a war would destroy American Democracy." The intended speaker at that year's citywide contest was a socialist actor who later became one of 19 Hollywood artists blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee. Instead, they invited California's Lieutenant Governor, who equated isolationism and democracy as Russia was invading Finland. "War is essentially murder," he told the Roosevelt assembly. "We have freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of liberties, freedom of religion which we want to keep by staying out of international problems and solving our own problems in the United States of America."⁴⁷

November 2, 1939, 1. In 1935, The Peace club's "World Good Will" assembly included girls from Mrs. Cole's dancing classes, who "illustrate[d] Mexican, Japanese, Russian, and American dances." "Peace Club in Charge of Assembly," *Rough Rider*, May 17, 1935, 1 (Zanki Papers).

⁴⁷ "Peace Club in Charge of Assembly," *Rough Rider*, May 17, 1935, 1; "Rooseveltian Delegates Attend World Friendship Convention," *Rough Rider*, May 18, 1934, 1; "World Friendship Clubs of L.A. Discuss Peace," *Rough Rider*, October 26, 1939, 3; "Lieut.-Governor Patterson Gives Speech at Aud," *Rough Rider*, December 14, 1939, 3 (Zanki Papers).

Three Teachers Turn Citizenship Classes into World Friendship Clubs

Many Roosevelt teachers may have shared these isolationist views, but they urged students to think globally. Some faculty members spoke to the Peace club about their travels around the world. Miss Ida Bel Eby, a Latin teacher, told World Friendship students about her trip to Europe in 1939, on the eve of the war. She addressed diplomacy in recounting a Fourth of July party with the U.S. Ambassador in Paris. But Miss Eby was most animated about Fascist Italy, where the trains were overcrowded, the hotels were in bad condition, and Mussolini was hiring “cheering squads” for public parades. This account of wartime Europe differed from Miss Eby’s 1935 speech to the Japanese club, when she relied on her experience as a language teacher to describe her Pacific travels. After visiting a Nisei student at college and touring Tokyo, Miss Eby decided that Japan’s “scenery was very interesting and like that of England.” In concluding that “the English language was quite common in Japan,” Miss Eby informed the Japanese club that learning English was important for Nisei no matter where they lived. As Roosevelt’s lone Latin teacher, Miss Eby made language a priority when she spoke to the Japanese club but drifted to cultural diplomacy in her talk to the World Friendship club four years later.⁴⁸

Roosevelt’s other avid traveler was Mrs. Helen Bailey, the teacher who had started the school’s World Friendship chapter. She left the faculty after marriage, but returned in 1934 and 1935 to talk about her travels in Mexico. Mrs. Bailey brought paintings to her talks and wore “a Mexican national costume which was made for her by her Mexican friends.” She compared urban and rural living conditions and hinted at her own urban bias by explaining “how the Mexican federal government is starting a plan to educate the Aztec Indians who still speak the Aztec Indian language and are many years behind times.” While Miss Eby insisted that Japanese

⁴⁸ “World Friendship Hear Miss Eby Talk of European Tour,” *Rough Rider*, October 5, 1939, 1; “Nippon Club Hears Talk,” *Rough Rider*, March 15, 1935, 1 (Zanki Papers).

students speak English, Mrs. Bailey believed that indigenous Mexicans could learn other modern languages like Spanish. The World Friendship club welcomed the views of both teachers whose travels had taught them to view their dual roles as U.S. citizens and citizens of the world.⁴⁹

But the faculty expert on citizenship was Asbury Bagwell, who had written the history of the Diploma Plan in 1928. Upon arriving at Roosevelt, Mr. Bagwell started speech competitions in his economics classes, which the *Rough Rider* called “an unusual and effective method of teaching.” In 1933, Mr. Bagwell’s students (mostly Jewish and Nisei) debated an early New Deal program, the controversial National Recovery Administration. This was consistent with the Diploma Plan’s dedication to curriculum about the Constitution and the branches of government. However, as he got to know his new students at Roosevelt, Mr. Bagwell began to address topics other than domestic politics. In 1934, he gave two talks on the “Economic Situation in Cuba Before and After the Revolution” to the honors society and to Roosevelt’s new Latin American History class. And in 1935 he was the guest speaker at two World Friendship club meetings. When he discussed current events with the Peace club, he addressed upcoming World Friendship resolutions about international disarmament. This suggests that the economics teacher considered Cuba and peace treaties to be as important as the New Deal or the naturalization policies he had helped to change in implementing the Diploma Plan a decade earlier. As a teacher in Los Angeles’ most diverse high school in the 1930s, Mr. Bagwell saw students as global citizens.⁵⁰

Mr. Bagwell’s transition from Charles Kelso’s citizenship department to the World Friendship club demonstrates the shift in Los Angeles’ immigrant instruction experiments. Mr. Bagwell began teaching white immigrants in evening citizenship classes in the 1920s to

⁴⁹ “Mrs. Bailey Gives Talk,” *Rough Rider*, October 27, 1933, 4; “Mrs. H. Bailey Talks to Club,” *Rough Rider*, November 10, 1933, 1; “Peace Club Meets Today,” *Rough Rider*, October 11, 1934, 4 (Zanki Papers).

⁵⁰ “Japanese Boy Wins Contest,” *LAT*, April 1, 1927, A8; “A. Bagwell Starts New NRA Contest,” *Rough Rider*, October 20, 1933, 1; “Mr. A.A. Bagwell to Speak to Aldebarans on Cuban Situation,” *Rough Rider*, November 24, 1933, 1; “Mr. A.A. Bagwell Speaker at Social Science Class,” *Rough Rider*, June 1, 1934, 1; “Friendship Club Holds Meeting,” *Rough Rider*, January 31, 1935, 1; “Teplitz to Lead S’35 Peace Club,” *Rough Rider*, February 15, 1935, 1 (Zanki Papers).

supplement his job at Manual Arts High School, where he had judged the Constitutional oratorical contest in 1927, a year after the John Aiso controversy. His transfer to Boyle Heights represented a new generation of Angeleno educators. These New Deal teachers were not like Kelso, the missionary who naturalized only English-speaking students, or Nora Sterry, the devout principal who marched into a quarantine zone to unfurl the flag and Americanize Mexican children. They were secular savants who explored the Pacific Rim. Roosevelt High School teachers summered in Asia and the Americas and shared travel stories with their students. In contrast to Sterry's stern portrait in 1924 wearing a white headdress emblazoned with a cross, one social studies teacher, Mrs. Bailey, made her 1932 lecture fun, organizing her personal photos into "a motion picture [to] depict the customs, life, and habits of the Mexican people." She had a soft spot for the kids of East L.A.; she and her husband adopted three boys through the courts and housed dozens of others informally. Mrs. Bailey admired the countries they came from and she empowered them to take charge of their own education. The rise of World Friendship clubs in the 1930s showed how students were dictating the direction of Los Angeles' citizenship curriculum. This may have been the intention of Angeleno educators during the New Deal, who placed citizenship in a more global context than their Progressive Era predecessors.⁵¹

⁵¹"Mrs. Bailey Gives Talk," *Rough Rider*, October 27, 1933, 4; "Peace Club Meets Today," *Rough Rider*, October 11, 1934, 4; "Cancer Claims Life of ELAC's Helen M. Bailey," *LAT*, September 30, 1976, E4 (Zanki Papers).

CHAPTER THREE

**WARTIME PROJECTS PROMOTE PATRIOTISM AND PROTEST:
RIOTS AND INTERNMENT TURN LANGUAGE EDUCATION
FROM ASSIMILATION TO A CIVIL RIGHTS AGENDA, 1941-1945**

Chapter 3 explores how World War II changed language learning in Los Angeles. In Japanese internment camps, children confronted the contradiction of studying democracy while being segregated from American society. The federal War Relocation Authority banned Japanese language schools from evacuation camps like Manzanar, California, only to reinstate them after the “December Incident.” Meanwhile, two highly publicized acts of violence in Los Angeles aroused Mexican American activists to demand better education. A national discussion about so-called juvenile delinquency began after sensationalized press coverage of the 1942 Sleepy Lagoon murder (in which minor youth incidents resulted in the death of a Mexican American adolescent) and the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943 (when gangs of white sailors attacked Mexican teenagers who were wearing popular broad-shouldered jackets and baggy trousers). In response, East Los Angeles’ Coordinating Council for Latin American Youth demanded that Mexican children have equal access to all school district policies, including the number of Spanish-speaking teachers. I argue that internment and the Zoot Suit Riots were wartime tragedies that turned Progressive Era views of language education upside down. Before the war, Angeleno students, teachers, and administrators looked at language learning’s impact on the Americanization process. By 1945, they were discussing it in terms of school desegregation.

The debate drifted to desegregation because World War II reduced Americanization to a single idea—loyalty. The competing concepts that had coexisted before the war, discussed in

Chapters 1 and 2, were not acceptable in a city at war that demanded ethnic minorities to prove their patriotism at all times. Without language schools, Nisei students could no longer use the mother tongue to negotiate between acculturation and maintaining their heritage. Meanwhile, Mexican American educators who had articulated “ambivalent Americanization” in the 1920s now urged Spanish-speaking youths to join the U.S. Army. Minorities could no longer use Americanization as a rhetorical tool for language learning during the war. Just as Japanese Angelenos were responding to internment, Mexican leaders stood up to charges of juvenile delinquency. Spanish speakers promoted “Pan Americanism” and Nisei soldiers introduced language learning as a military strategy, but these were temporary tactics. As the war waged on, language instruction became increasingly tied to the question of school integration.¹

The stories of Kohei Shimano and John Aiso show how World War II broke down one model of language instruction and built up another. Shimano’s Japanese school closed on December 7, 1941, the day he was arrested. This upset Shimano, who in 1911 had founded the city’s first language school a few blocks from Nora Sterry’s Amelia Street School, which Earl Warren had attended in the 1890s. In 1941, Warren was California’s attorney general and its strongest advocate of Japanese removal. Warren was unaware of Shimano’s Southern California Japanese Language School Association and his efforts to prove American patriotism. Chapter 1 discussed his insistence that *Issei* educators write Japanese-language textbooks for *Nisei* that stressed *Beishu Nichijū*, “primary emphasis on America and secondary on Japan,” even after the Supreme Court ruled that the California Board of Education had no jurisdiction over private school curriculum. Chapter 2 showed that, when he led Nisei study tours, he invited Amelia Street teachers to chaperone the students in Japan. Yet he was arrested hours after the bombing

¹ See David Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture Among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-49* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*.

of Pearl Harbor, and the FBI sent Shimano to detention facilities in Montana, Louisiana, and New Mexico, where he died in 1943 at age 69. He never returned to the city where he spent thirty years teaching Nisei to be proud of their allegiance to America as well as Japan.²

The state's oldest Japanese language school lost its Anglo advocates during the war. After his arrest, the Amelia Street principal (Sterry's successor) who had shared so many of Shimano's students refused to write him a recommendation because she "just couldn't say that he was not a spy or a saboteur." This haunted her later, but it let the government label Shimano a "Japanese male alien enemy." FBI notes filed on Pearl Harbor day showed that investigators used Shimano's language school to question his loyalty. Rather than reporting that the principal's five trips to Japan were all for Nisei study tours, it stressed that Shimano had received a wooden cup from the Emperor, met with a "nationalistic leader," and enjoyed "the warm reception that his party was given by the Army." Such gifts, the FBI implied, influenced Shimano to reverse course from his *Beishu Nichijû* campaign of the 1920s. Citing unknown sources, it alleged that many Japanese language schools stored two sets of textbooks and that the "primary emphasis on America" set was only to show "curious Occidentals" while "practically every page of the other set pledges loyalty to Japan and treason against the American government."³

But another arm of the government began a different kind of Japanese instruction in November, 1941. Weeks before Pearl Harbor, the Army tapped John Aiso to form the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS). By 1945, 6,000 Nisei volunteers had left internment camps, where they could not learn their heritage language, and enlisted in the U.S.

² Embrey interview by Hansen, 102; Togo Tanaka, interview by Betty Mitson and David Hacker, May 19, 1973, #1271, California State University, Fullerton, Oral History, 56-58; Toyotomi Morimoto, "Language and Heritage Maintenance of Immigrants: Japanese Language Schools in California, 1903-1941" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989), 68, 80-93; Air Mail to Central Office of INS, 20 November 1943, Yuji Ichioka Papers, Young Research Library, UCLA (Box 91, Folder 3).

³ Embrey interview by Hansen, 105; "Kohei Shimano Death Report," Lloyd Jensen to Albert del Guercio, May 15, 1944, and FBI notes from arrest on December 7, 1941, Ichioka Papers, UCLA (Box 91, Folder 3).

Army for more rigorous instruction in Japanese history, geography, and military language than Kohei Shimano ever gave in L.A. Aiso was aware of the irony that, fifteen years after Hollywood High School would not let him compete in an oratorical contest because of his ancestry, his Japanese proficiency now made him invaluable to the Army. His Nisei language specialists translated captured battle plans and interrogated Japanese prisoners of war for “every major unit in every engagement from Guadalcanal... to the march into Tokyo.” Aiso earned admiration for using his language skills to defeat his parents’ homeland, and he retired from active service in 1947 as a lieutenant colonel, the Army’s highest-ranking Nisei officer.⁴

The MISLS showed how World War II changed the purpose and meaning of language education. Having proven their patriotism through military service, Japanese and Mexican Angelenos argued that Americanization was no longer a valid attack against learning Spanish or Japanese. In fact, the most racially charged conflicts in wartime L.A. became key components of a rising demand for language learning. This chapter focuses on activists who responded to domestic crises by articulating a reform agenda that, by 1945, had grown to include desegregation and bilingual education. Part 1 traces changing Americanization attitudes as Angelenos mobilized for war in 1942. Part 2 examines Manuel Ruiz, the lawyer who led the Coordinating Council of Latin American Youth, and used the city’s concern for “juvenile delinquency” after the Zoot Suit Riots to argue for more education programs (in English and in Spanish) across L.A. County. Similar backlash from the Manzanar Riot led to the reinstatement of Japanese language schools at some internment camps, as shown in Part 3. These programs lacked the urgency of John Aiso’s Military Intelligence Service Language School, the topic of Part 4, but they revealed the range of priorities that language education now served. Telling these stories together suggests

⁴ Ichinokuchi, “John Aiso and the MIS,” 16, 44; Brigadier General John Weckerling, “Nisei Language Experts,” in *John Aiso and the MIS*, 193; “Fort Snelling: Breaking the Code,” <http://www.nps.gov/miss/historyculture/langschool.htm> (viewed April 1, 2013).

that postwar protest movements were not the first to organize around language learning. The remaking of language instruction during World War II shaped the emotional and political appeal that issues like bilingual education and school desegregation would soon become.

Part I: Language Learning Scrambles Americanization in 1942

Language learning in Los Angeles did not look the same after Kohei Shimano's arrest in late 1941. Of course, the military mobilization following Franklin Roosevelt's declaration of war against Japan transformed the entire homefront. In the city of angels, however, two tragedies triggered racial upheaval that questioned the premise of prewar language programs—Americanization. Japanese evacuation and the murder at Sleepy Lagoon unsettled L.A.'s Nisei and Mexican youths in ways that rendered obsolete Roosevelt High School's World Friendship club. Reacting to the crises of 1942, many Angeleno educators envisioned a new era of language instruction. In some ways, Anglo administrators articulated their reform programs before the city's Japanese and Mexican communities. Everyone's language agenda would evolve further in response to continuing domestic hostilities during the war. But a close examination of initial responses at Roosevelt High School, and by supervisors Afton Nance and Helen Heffernan, show how quickly Americanization left language learning behind after Pearl Harbor.

During the war, loyalty became Americanization's most important attribute. In 1942, teachers turned to it as a diplomatic tool to secure alliances with foreign countries. Patriotism pulled Helen Heffernan away from the California Department of Education, which granted her a leave to coordinate the Office of Inter-American Affairs in Los Angeles. Roosevelt High's "Pan American Day" assemblies became more prominent than the school district's Americanization department as tensions across the Pacific became more pronounced. As the city mobilized into

an industrial homefront, it pushed educators like Heffernan into political positions, giving them more authority to articulate a narrow version of Americanization that ignored earlier nuances.⁵

Nisei leaders could no longer argue that Japanese-language institutions were effective Americanization tools. This lesson was learned by Togo Tanaka, who edited the English section of *Rafu Shimpo*, L.A.'s largest Japanese-language newspaper. Tanaka defended his generation's loyalty in a 1939 *Saturday Evening Post* article, "Between Two Flags," arguing that Nisei were fully Americanized. He cited Japanese language schools as an example, calling them merely "an overdose of school" imposed by Issei parents on their children, not "hotbeds of Japanese propaganda" as many Anglos feared. Tanaka insisted that most Nisei were not interested in the afternoon schools because they "refused to think in Japanese; they thought in English." He responded to questions of Nisei disloyalty by joking about "the great Japanese-American map-remaking plot." In this silly conspiracy, Issei would reassign all American cities Japanese names; for example, L.A. would become *Rafu* because in Japanese "L's" sound like "R's" and *fu* means "city." Many Americans did not find this funny in 1942, when they interned Tanaka at a camp that banned Japanese language schools, undoing earlier efforts toward Nisei Americanization.⁶

Loyalty Trumps Language in Boyle Heights

Student statements in the *Rough Rider* show how the war mixed up Progressive visions of public education. U.S. citizenship dominated the four-month discussion of the eminent departure of their Nisei classmates, but Roosevelt students no longer linked language to Americanization. Their silence on language clubs and classes belied the patriotic optimism of their "melting pot" rhetoric. Japanese and Mexican students alike avoided their heritage languages at school because they feared the repercussions of seeming sympathetic to foreign nations. Internment also caused

⁵ Heffernan's New Job described in *California Journal of Elementary Education* X (February 19, 1942), 129-30.

⁶ Magner White, "Between Two Flags," *Saturday Evening Post* (September 30, 1939), 73-74; Like Afton Nance, Tanaka worked with the American Friends Service Committee's campaign against internment. Tanaka interview by Mitson, 97.

chaos in student government because four student council officers were “Japanese,” as was the senior class president. Yet Nisei leaders not only agreed with Roosevelt’s Anglo administrators about the necessity of internment, they publicly embraced evacuation as a chance to prove their loyalty. Mexican students made similar statements about joining the military in 1942. This paradoxical patriotism in a time of rising prejudice reveals how students struggled to sustain their citizenship during the war. But the broken bond between assimilation and language curriculum let language become a tool for other causes after the Progressive Era.

Roosevelt’s non-Nisei students slowly accepted Americanization as a military necessity. Initially, the *Rough Rider* opposed evacuation. Eleven days after Pearl Harbor, an editorial preached tolerance for the school’s 400 Nisei. The Nisei “not only equaled but in many cases surpassed, other racial groups on the campus in service to the school, in academic achievement and in all around good citizenship,” the editors insisted, and “there is no sane reason why they should not continue to do so.” But by March, the *Rough Rider* reframed evacuation as inevitable and patriotic. “There is nothing that can be done to remedy this situation,” an editor admitted, but “I’m sure that our Japanese students realize the necessity of this action.” In four months, the staff reversed its views on evacuation in the name of assimilation. Reporters still remembered the evacuated Nisei as “some of my most worthy friends” who starred at assemblies, on varsity sports, and in student government. But they no longer questioned internment.⁷

Teachers tried language “tricks” to make relocation more palatable to Japanese students. The principal proposed a “bazaar-type sale day” so Nisei could sell their belongings before leaving L.A. When this garage sale depressed morale, he invited evacuated families to meet with a teacher who had learned “the Japanese people, language, and customs” from three years in

⁷ “Tolerance,” *Rough Rider*, December 18, 1942, 2; “The Colonel Speaks,” *Rough Rider*, April 9, 1942, 2; Murray Rubenstein, “A Tribute to Japanese Students,” *Rough Rider*, April 9, 1942, 1 (Zanki Papers).

Japan. The teacher also helped his Roosevelt colleagues buy discount radios, refrigerators, and even houses close to campus from Japanese families rushing to uproot their homes. More compassion came from the World Friendship club, which asked members to write letters to their Nisei classmates (as it had done to a school in Spain in 1932: See Chapter 2). Teachers thought language and citizenship skills would ease the transition of interned Rooseveltians. But Japanese student leaders stuck to Americanization as they awaited evacuation in the spring of 1942.⁸

By emphasizing assimilation over language, prominent Nisei students were less critical of evacuation than their Anglo classmates. George Maruki, elected senior class president days after the government announced internment, could not state the news out loud. Reluctantly, he told the *Rough Rider*, “I am rather confused as to what will become of me when I leave school.” As relocation became reality, most Japanese leaders hid their fears behind the language of Americanization. Before their departure, three Nisei student council members called evacuation “justified... all believe it is an exceptional way to prove their loyalty.” Just as they avoided Japanese clubs and language schools, some Nisei hoped their loyalty could delay internment indefinitely. Student Body vice president Kazumi “Choo Choo” Tsukimoto tried not to think about internment, advising all Japanese to “keep on working as usual till the actual time comes.” In the last luncheon of her Roosevelt career, Sachico Tsuchido was honored for presiding over the Life Optimist club, which contributed the most books and games to the school’s drive for the United Service Organizations to send gifts to troops overseas. Japanese students stressed Americanization activities like student government (and neglected language learning) to prove their patriotism as they faced the uncertainties of internment.⁹

⁸ *Rough Rider*, March 19, 1942, 3; “Japanese Students Withdraw from School,” *Rough Rider*, April 9, 1942, 1-3; “Mr. Williams Aids Japanese Students,” *Rough Rider*, April 16, 1942, 1; “Why Don’t We—,” *Rough Rider*, April 16, 1942, 3.

⁹ *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1942, 1; “Students Await Evacuation Orders,” *Rough Rider*, March 19, 1942, 1; “Roosevelt Joins in U.S.O. Drive,” *Rough Rider*, March 26, 1942, 3; “Rooseveltians in the Service,” *Rough Rider*, April 30, 1942, 4; “Miss Inquisitive,” April 9, 1942, 2 (Zanki Papers). Eight of those Nisei soldiers and sailors were Roosevelt alums.

Ironically, Japanese relocation rewarded Roosevelt's highest-achieving Mexican American students. But the teens who ran for vacated student council positions adopted the Americanization agenda of their Nisei predecessors. Ruben Holquin, who replaced "Choo Choo" Tsukimoto as vice president, understood how to preserve his status at school. During the Mexican delinquency debate, he was president of *Los Caballeros*, a club of 18 boys who "aim to raise the morale and ideals of Mexican students." Holquin appealed to Spanish-speaking students with a theme that balanced social protest and wartime loyalty. For example, many Mexican students excelled in Roosevelt's art classes. When the principal invited one student to paint a mural outside his office, the *Rough Rider* compared him to Diego Rivera. But the student's "Arabian Nights" theme, with six panels about Scheherazade, did not resemble Mexican murals on nearby Olvera Street, which spoke to the suffering of Mexican Angelenos during the Depression. Holquin himself was an artist, and he won the L.A. American Legion poster contest twice. While he shared Rivera's reverence for art as public expression, Holquin knew a social protest piece was unlikely to win an American Legion award which wanted posters to show "characteristics of a good American," Holquin promised to "endeavor through my poster work to bring to the attention of the public better ways of living." After succeeding Roosevelt's evacuated vice president, he continued the Nisei practice of articulating Americanization.¹⁰

Spanish-speaking student leaders used the language of loyalty to respond to fears about gang violence in 1942. Even before the murder at Sleepy Lagoon, Ruben Holquin tried to prove his patriotism with a clever play on words. Weeks before internment (and his election as vice

¹⁰ *Rough Rider*, May 14, 1942, 1-2; *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1942, 3. Rivera was the most famous Mexican muralist of the 1930s, but the Olvera Street mural was painted by his countryman David Siqueiros in 1932. Siqueiros titled the mural "*America Tropical: Oprimida y Destrozada por los Imperialismos*," ("Tropical America: Oppressed and Destroyed by Imperialism"). Olvera Street officials whitewashed the mural, but Los Angeles restored the mural in 2012. Mandalit del Barco, "Revolutionary Mural to Return to L.A. After 80 Years," *National Public Radio* (10/26/2010), <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130519329> (viewed July 12, 2011). Also see the 2010 Autry National Center exhibition "Siqueiros in Los Angeles: Censorship Defied," <http://theautry.org/exhibitions/siqueiros> (viewed April 1, 2013).

president), he urged classmates to consider a different form of early departure. In his advertising class, Holquin created an honor roll to celebrate students who “walked out” of Roosevelt and “walked right into the United States Army.” This “walkout” was unlike later generations of Mexican youth who questioned school policy, but Anglo adults were still worried about them. That same *Rough Rider* issue ran a front-page story called “East L.A. Educational Problems Discussed by School Leaders.” Los Angeles City Superintendent of Schools, Vierling Kersey, came to Roosevelt High to hear Boyle Heights business leaders declare an “urgent need for educational facilities made necessary by the present emergency and other changes in the social, civic, and industrial life of the community.” These leaders looked to lure burgeoning defense contracts into East L.A., but they did not trust either the students or the schools to supply the work force they would need. This lack of faith did not match Holquin’s portrait of Roosevelt students eager to enlist in the war effort at home and abroad. It spoke to a larger disconnect in discussions about Mexican American youth at the start of World War II.¹¹

Americanization Adjustments at Santa Anita Assembly Center

The distance between Americanization rhetoric and reality was even greater at the Santa Anita and Pomona assembly centers in Los Angeles County. Education was not the first priority of the War Relocation Authority (WRA) after internment began in February, 1942. Within three months, 18,000 Japanese Angelenos had moved to Santa Anita Racetrack. The famous horseracing grounds became California’s 32nd-largest population. The WRA turned tracks and fairgrounds into temporary centers since they were the largest spaces with access to water and power near most Japanese communities. The Army Corps of Engineers spent four weeks altering horse stalls into housing at assembly centers across the Pacific coast for more than 100,000 evacuees to wait while ten larger camps were built further inland. Since it was focused on shelter

¹¹ *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1942, 1-3 (Zanki Papers).

and food, the WRA did not set up formal schooling until the end of May. Those makeshift classes met in the grandstand lobbies facing the racetrack betting windows. The WRA preached a paradox, outlawing Japanese language instruction while arguing that Santa Anita's crude classrooms could acculturate Nisei students. The visits of Vierling Kersey and Afton Nance show how Santa Anita's language learning ban limited Americanization efforts.¹²

Kersey came to Santa Anita on June 26, 1942, to give the keynote address at an all-purpose graduation ceremony. Los Angeles' schools superintendent fulfilled a promise from Roosevelt High's principal to hold "some type of graduation ceremonies if the leaving seniors happened to settle in the same area or could convene in one place." Kersey allowed Niseis to transfer credits from their former schools and complete their degrees, but Santa Anita set up so few classes that only 250 students graduated. Educated evacuees offered to teach the classes, and an Issei history professor from Stanford formed a Parent Teacher Association. By June, 2,470 Japanese Americans had enrolled in courses with 130 volunteer teachers. These classes carried on the Americanization of Nisei children, though it seems audacious to expect assimilation in a camp enclosed by barbed wire with living quarters that lack toilet facilities. But limits to Japanese language policies proved to be popular with the Nisei at Santa Anita.¹³

School administrators applied language learning to their assimilation agenda. With no Japanese classes to offer competing curriculum, assembly center schools articulated an ironic view of Americanization in both languages. Adults signed up for English classes in conversation, reading, writing, pronunciation, and more advanced classes in which "Americanization of the Issei was described as the ultimate goal." By the summer, 220 Issei had signed up for a course

¹² Anthony Lehman, *Birthright of Barbed Wire: The Santa Anita Assembly Center for the Japanese* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1970), 16, 24, 50-51; Tomi Matsumoto to Afton Nance, June 3, 1942, Afton Nance Papers, Japanese American National Museum (Box 1) (hereafter JANM).

¹³ Lehman, 50-51; *Rough Rider*, March 19, 1942, 3. The graduates came from Los Angeles and San Diego Counties.

called “Democracy training,” offered in both English and Japanese. To underscore the paradox of preaching patriotism to incarcerated people, this Americanization class was Santa Anita’s only non-English instruction option. The assembly center banned “Japanese print of any kind,” even translation dictionaries, and the WRA intended to seize all Japanese publications except Bibles. This came as welcome news to the younger generation. An evacuee at another assembly center noted that “Nisei as a whole rejoice that they no longer have to attend Japanese language school.” In terms of Americanization, internment initially succeeded in driving Nisei away from learning Japanese. But the poor quality of classes discouraged them from pursuing an American education, leaving the allure of Japanese cultural classes to linger as the war progressed.¹⁴

Afton Nance noticed the inadequate conditions ignored by Vierling Kersey because she had a deeper relationship with Nisei students than the L.A. superintendent. Kersey’s comments at Santa Anita celebrated an education that few of the center’s 18,000 evacuees experienced. His contact with the Japanese community appeared limited to English-language journalists like Paul Hirohata, who had edited Nisei commencement addresses in the 1930s (see Chapter 2). But Kersey had been California Superintendent of Public Instruction then, and his foreword to the Nisei speeches focused on platitudes about “bridges of understanding.” In contrast, Afton Nance knew several dozen Nisei students very well because she had taught them in her 8th grade English classes at Malaga Cove School in Palos Verdes Estates, a rural seaside community in southwestern L.A. County. A hands-on teacher who was passionate about rural schools, Nance could not accept her students’ evacuation. She joined A Quaker group, the American Friends Service Committee, to protest internment. She also kept in touch with her former students, sending hundreds of letters and care packages and traveling across L.A. County to the Santa

¹⁴ Lehman, 49-51; Charles Kikuchi, *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp*, ed. John Modell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 82.

Anita and Pomona assembly centers. Through these letters and visits, Nance got to know a much different school system than the one Kersey described in his Santa Anita speech.¹⁵

Tomi Matsumoto, for example, chose not to attend the graduation where Kersey spoke. Urged by his former teacher, the 16-year-old enrolled in English and science classes as soon as they opened. Matsumoto wrote Nance that he had a good English teacher at Santa Anita, but he admitted that “it is kind of hard for me” because his dishwashing job left little study time. When Kersey came two weeks later, he ignored Nance’s advice and skipped the ceremony. This meant Matsumoto had to pick up his diploma at the assembly center office, where he learned the WRA did not have his graduation records. Stuck at Santa Anita, he asked Nance to talk to the school board. Matsumoto’s mistrust of assembly center schools deepened the next week when the WRA closed its classes for all Nisei older than 15, who had to take jobs making military camouflage. The diploma mix-up dampened Matsumoto’s interest in Kersey’s Americanization agenda.¹⁶

In fact, he was still learning more from his former teacher than he did from Santa Anita’s inexperienced, evacuated volunteers. His evening school instructor taught English by having students transcribe radio newscasts and correcting their mistakes. Matsumoto admitted that rewriting war reports only “made me understand I must study English harder.” He received more attention from Nance, who urged him to keep writing stories. She brought candies, clothes, and a letter from his old classmates when she visited in May. Matsumoto enjoyed hearing about his friends’ graduation plans, but his response told them he was lucky to have a job washing 3,200 dishes after every meal because the alternative was to work with chemicals in camouflage production. This was not Nance’s fault, but it motivated her to send more baked goods, books,

¹⁵ Nance taught in Palos Verdes Estates, a community that had restrictive housing covenants, including “the usual restrictions prohibiting negroes, Asiatics, and people of other than the white or Caucasian race, except in the capacity of domestic servants.” Tract 6883 *Protective Restrictions Palos Verdes Estates*, California Ephemera, UCLA Special Collections (Box 78, Palos Verdes Estates Folder), 4. The author thanks Laura Redford for this research.

¹⁶ Matsumoto to Nance, May 13, May 26, June 3, and June 30, 1942, Nance Paers, JANM (Box 1).

and teaching tips to former students. He thanked her for the language instruction when he wrote, “I feel guilty to trouble you some more on my English, but I learn so much the way you stuck those study in me I cannot decline your kindness offer.” [sic] Matsumoto was wrote out nightly newscasts for his assembly school classes, but progress stalled without his old English teacher. His Americanization efforts stumbled once he had lost Nance’s language assistance.¹⁷

Office of Inter-American Affairs Links Language Learning to Wartime Challenges

That summer, Afton Nance left Palos Verdes Estates to become a school administrator five miles up the coast in Manhattan Beach. She soon met Helen Heffernan, who had just arrived in L.A. to direct the Department of Education’s Inter-American Demonstration Center Project. This temporary task was one reason the postwar partnership between Nance and Heffernan focused on migrant education programs for Mexican immigrants. Both administrators worked with Japanese children after the war, but their bilingual education initiatives targeted Spanish-speaking children of *Bracero* laborers (See Chapters 4-5). The women who wrote California’s first program in English as a Second Language in 1966 devoted their wartime discourse to international relations. They talked to teachers who wrote about “Pan American” summers in Mexico, Peru, or Brazil to “awaken the interest of our own people” and strengthen ties while the world was at war. When she returned to Sacramento, however, Heffernan realized that her modest plans for Pan Americanism could not combat the language learning biases of Anglo educators towards Mexican American students. After the murder at Sleepy Lagoon, her Office of Inter-American Affairs tacked to an agenda that linked language learning with integration.¹⁸

Helen Heffernan helped form the Pan Americanism movement in 1930 after speaking at several “Friends of the Mexicans” conferences at Pomona College (See Chapter 2). Upon leaving

¹⁷ Matsumoto to Nance, July 7, May 13, April 25, May 14, May 11, February 2, 1942, Nance Paers, JANM (Box 1).

¹⁸ *LASJ*, “Pan-Americanism Now?” February 24, 1941, 15; “Afton Dill Nance Biographical Material,” August 18, 1967, Nance Paers, JANM (Box 2)..

her job as chief of the state's elementary school division in the spring of 1942, she made Pan Americanism her top priority at the L.A. Office of Inter-American Affairs. Heffernan hosted a conference, "Unifying the Americas Through Education," for foreign consuls and scholars at L.A.'s Biltmore Hotel. She had also attended the 1941 Inter-American conference at USC, where teachers talked about improving relations with Latin American nations during the war. The teachers used lofty language, wrote the *Los Angeles School Journal*, and declared that "a disregard for the feelings, the dignity, and self-importance of the other fellow can never make him a good neighbor." The *Journal* noted that teachers who toured South America could offer "a wholesome contradiction to the impression left by Hollywood movies and radio comedians that all Latin Americans are either gigolos or bandits or peons." Heffernan's Inter-American conferences showed that L.A. educators were aware of, and appalled by, Spanish-speaking stereotypes. But they did not articulate a concrete curriculum for Mexican American students.¹⁹

Heffernan found that, though some teachers kept up with language learning pedagogy, most preferred the techniques they had studied decades ago. As editor of the *California Journal of Elementary Education*, she published "The Teaching of Speech to Mexican Children," by the speech supervisor in San Bernardino County, just east of L.A. Referring to Heffernan's Inter-American project and "the enormous program of defense-training education in California," she urged teachers to preach patriotism and citizenship. The supervisor called southland schools "the first line of defense" in training loyal Americans. Despite declaring that Mexican children should learn the "history, customs, and language" of their families, she insisted that "the greatest factor for bringing about this understanding [of loyalty] is the mastery of the English language." She considered learning other languages because "we do not mean to belittle the use of the mother's

¹⁹ "Pan Americanism," Manuel Ruiz Papers, Special Collections, Stanford University (Box 2, Folder 20); *California Journal of Elementary Education* 10.3 (February, 1942), 130; *LASJ* February 9, 1942; "Pan-Americanism Now?" 15, 31.

mother tongue. Instead these children should be taught to speak both languages equally well.”

But, beyond this sentiment, the supervisor did not support the new idea of bilingual education.²⁰

After acknowledging advances in language and cultural sensitivity, the speech supervisor endorsed teaching English with an approach called the “direct method.” She described it in detail, using graphs and sentence diagrams to list the speech errors of Mexican children in intonation and the pronunciation of consonants and vowels. She promoted traditional teaching techniques in Southern California’s segregated Mexican. For example, she wanted instructors to show students that “in English the tongue is placed above the teeth on the gum ridge” to say words beginning with the “dental consonants” *t, d, n, l, r*. Any teacher could “gather the children around her in the reading circle and show them with her own mechanism where to place the tongue on those sounds,” she explained. “To fix this habit, no discrepancy should be allowed to enter into the reading or story period.” This “direct method” diatribe was not as funny as Togo Tanaka’s joke that Nisei wanted to rename L.A. *Rafu*, and it seems unlikely that a visual demonstration could change the speech patterns of Spanish-speaking children. But Heffernan published the article in May, 1942, a month before the Sleepy Lagoon murder. She soon changed her Pan American project to a more inclusive approach that added language learning.²¹

Students of history and popular culture have used Sleepy Lagoon to understand the fear over juvenile delinquency. But the media spectacle of 1942 also influenced old Americanization advocates to link language education to new ideals like desegregation. School reforms were not on the front pages in June, when 19-year-old Frank Torres was shot outside the L.A. Coliseum. The lurid coverage of “zoot suit” youths climaxed in August after José Diaz was stabbed to death

²⁰ Alma Wedberg, “The Teaching of Speech to Mexican Children,” *California Journal of Elementary Education* 10.4 (May, 1942), 216-222.

²¹ Wedberg, “The Teaching of Speech to Mexican Children,” 216-222. Carlos Blanton describes the “direct method” in *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007).

in the Sleepy Lagoon reservoir, five miles south of Boyle Heights, days before he was to begin Army boot camp. The police rounded up 600 Mexican teens, arresting 175 of the boys who wore draped pants, oversized coats, and “ducktail” haircuts. The district attorney brought 19 of these defiantly dressed youths to trial, where nine were convicted of second-degree murder, although the appeals court absolved them a year later. Like Japanese internment, the Sleepy Lagoon trial prompted a rapid rethinking of how language in schools served communities under criticism.²²

Part 2: Delinquency Debate Drives Mexican Activists to Language Lobbying

The shift in language learning from a “Mexicanization” tool to a civil rights issue took place in Los Angeles during World War II. The efforts of Manuel Ruiz, an East L.A. attorney, show both the successes and shortcomings of Spanish-speaking activists who launched ambitious language education campaigns that engaged important local debates. Ruiz responded to Heffernan’s “Pan Americanism” movement by proposing a private Pan American School in 1942. He staked a position in heated juvenile delinquency discussions long before the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943 as co-founder of the Coordinating Council for Latin American Youth (CCLAY). After the riots, Ruiz envisioned language learning beyond the “Mexicanization vs. assimilation” dichotomy. Events on the homefront also allowed him to carve a niche for Mexican American leaders in local politics. His access to officials from City Hall to Capitol Hill showed Spanish speakers that language education could lead to new political opportunities after the war.

Spanish Speakers Appropriate Pan Americanism in Language School Proposals

During World War II, Ruiz drew on Helen Heffernan’s “Pan American” diplomacy to promote two language schools that departed from the “direct method” technique. These ideas

²² Carey McWilliams *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States* (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott, 1949), 212; Beatrice Griffith, *American Me* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), 45; “Zoot Suit Riots: Los Angeles Erupts in Violence,” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/zoot/> (viewed April 1, 2013); Robin Scott, “The Sleepy Lagoon Case Scott, “The Sleepy Lagoon Case and the Grand Jury Investigation” in *The Mexican-Americans: An Awakening Minority*, ed. Manuel Servín (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1970), 105-114.

came from the 1941 Inter-American Affairs conference at USC, his alma mater. Rather than touching students' tongues and teeth, Heffernan's friends argued that Spanish language was integral to Pan-Americanism. They called for Latin American history courses and travel opportunities so students and teachers could bring radio programs and films, along with course catalogs in Spanish, so that Anglo- and Latin-American students could "stimulate understanding through languages, sympathy, personal contacts, and trade." These ideas inspired Ruiz to reshape Pan-Americanism in a flurry of botched efforts. He created a corporation, *Cultura Pan-americano, Inc.*, that tried to establish a Spanish-language library, school, and industrial training program in East L.A. These failures influenced the education reforms Ruiz would later propose when he won appointments to high-profile committees in Los Angeles and Sacramento after the Zoot Suit Riots. He had learned that segregated language schools would not succeed.²³

Ruiz recruited elites to support his Pan Americanism proposals, but financial aid did not follow. In 1940, when he founded *Cultura Panamericano*, he suggested a Spanish-language "center of intellectual activity" in L.A. He wanted a "Spanish-American library in this largest American center of Spanish-speaking population" to be open to the public. In a grant proposal to the World Peace Foundation, he said a library "supervised by persons who do not only speak the Spanish language, but... are imbued with the spirit of Spanish-American culture... would indeed be a boon to the Pan-American ideal." But the foundation and other prestigious non-profits did not fund the library, so Ruiz researched other ways to promote his brand of Pan Americanism.²⁴

The lawyer learned that public officials addressed the issue each April, when schools celebrated Pan-American Day. The governor could not attend the 1941 L.A. ceremony, but he sent Ruiz a proclamation for "schools... to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies." Ruiz

²³ "Suggestions from the Inter-American Conference at USC," January 16, 1941, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 4).

²⁴ Ruiz to World Peace Foundation, June 20, 1940, and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to Ruiz, June 26, 1940, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 6). The Library was endorsed by the former president of Nicaragua.

wrote to Vierling Kersey two weeks later, asking the L.A. school district for \$50,000 to build a modern, earthquake-proof school in Mexico. The superintendent had enjoyed many Mexican-American performances, some by Los Caballeros at Roosevelt High, but he refused to fund the project. Ruiz looked for other ways to mix his Mexican-oriented idea into the school district's agenda. This became more difficult when the city shifted its attention to the war.²⁵

Military mobilization stalled Ruiz's proposed Pan American School for teachers in 1942. Starting an evening school for educators who did not know Spanish lacked urgency after Pearl Harbor. But *Cultura Panamericano* advertised aggressively and, by August, had seven Latino instructors and 100 teachers who pledged to attend weekly Spanish classes. Ruiz wrote a full schedule of classes and planned to open the school by October, but his plan imploded. Without school district support, he had to charge students \$1.50 for each Spanish-language lecture. But he could not find a suitable space for the school. Ruiz set his sights on the Black-Foxe Military Institute, next to the Wilshire Country Club, a private school where celebrities like Charlie Chaplin sent their children. However, after announcing the location, Black-Foxe informed Ruiz that the school found it "impossible to collaborate with you in the inauguration and administration of the several courses in Spanish." The registrar explained that the war had increased interest in the military institute and it could not spare any classrooms day or night. Ruiz realized that linking language instruction to the war effort might help start his school.²⁶

Black-Foxe may have backed out because its instructors were wary of the Pan American School's language program. Its classes clashed with the curriculum Helen Heffernan had just endorsed. Ruiz's language professor taught Spanish using the "direct progressive method," which was nothing like the traditional "direct method." Instead of adjusting jaws and lips, the

²⁵ Governor Olson, April 10, 1941, and Ruiz to Vierling Kersey, April 29, 1941, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 3).

²⁶ "Program for Los Angeles, 1942" and Major Sanford to Ruiz, October 2, 1942, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 9).

professor explained, “the student is permitted to take an active part in each lesson... this method compels him to think in the new language.” Ruiz supplemented such instruction with classes in Spanish art, literature, and his own course called “History and the Future of Inter-American Relations.” This seemed to bother Black-Foxe, which broke its contract despite Ruiz’s pledge that teachers would not “do or say anything inimicable to the established American constitutional form of government.” Seeing that his school was subject to the same prejudice Japanese language schools had faced in the 1920s, Ruiz tried other ways to promote language learning.²⁷

Through connections, the lawyer learned that public schools like Roosevelt High were more open than Black-Foxe Military Institute to promoting language instruction and Mexican-American wartime contributions. Eduardo Quevedo, a Democratic party organizer in Boyle Heights, found an eager audience in the school district’s eastside supervisor, who invited him to provide adult education and citizenship classes with a “verbal picture of Mexican history” in the summer of 1942. Although the recent Japanese evacuation had moved Mexican-American youth into Roosevelt’s highest positions in student government, few of their parents were mobilizing for war or taking night courses. Roosevelt’s evening school principal did not mind sparse attendance in Quevedo’s citizenship classes so long as able-bodied Mexicans enrolled in vocational classes to prove their “enthusiasm and willingness to cooperate fully with our defense efforts.” Roosevelt’s war effort began by inviting Quevedo as a “prominent Mexican leader [to] sum up the important points in the Mexican language.” The principal asked him to bring friends to his lecture and promised to deliver Spanish-language handbills about Roosevelt’s industrial education program to all parents of daytime students. With this bilingual promotion, Quevedo urged Ruiz to recast his language school campaign as a facility for “training in war industries on

²⁷ Dr. Benedict to Dr. Egas, October 5, 1942, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 9).

the east side.” In November, 1942, the school board considered “war training for the Mexican colony,” and the East L.A. leaders tried to link language learning to this project.²⁸

When the city sought funding from the wartime National Defense Training Program in Vocational Education, Ruiz proposed a Pan American Trade School. Aware of L.A.’s growing defense industry, he incorporated earlier language appeals for the Pan American School into a new educational and economic vision. He wrote letters in English and Spanish inviting dignitaries across California and Mexico to celebrate the school’s opening on Pan American Day in April, 1943. Although Governor Warren could not attend, the dedication ceremony included speeches from city school superintendent Kersey, mayor Fletcher Bowron, and the Mexican ambassador, who spoke via live radio broadcast from Washington. In a dual-language letter to *parientes y amigos*, the Anglo principal assured Mexican parents that all Spanish-speaking persons older than 16 could attend the school, “whether they are American citizens or not.” Ruiz promised parents that classes would “fit workers into immediate jobs in war industries—where they will receive the same pay as anyone else,” adding that “the Mexican people of East Los Angeles... can play an important part in contributing to a final united victory.” He used both languages to reach a broader audience and tell all Mexican Angelenos that the sacrifices of war also offered opportunities to integrate themselves into the city’s schools and workplaces.²⁹

But the Pan American Trade School’s short lifespan shifted Ruiz’s efforts from language learning to integrating schools. When it opened on Pan American Day, the curriculum resembled many segregated Mexican schools with vocational classes like auto repair that taught “greasing,

²⁸ Russell Peterson to Eduardo Quevedo, June 23, 1942, and Edith Condon to Quevedo, July 1, 1942, and Howard Campion to Quevedo, November 5, 1942, Eduardo Quevedo Papers, Special Collections, Stanford (Box 1, Folder 10). FROM: “Quevedo Papers Box 1.2 080309”: Russell Peterson to Quevedo, 6/23/42 & Edith Condon to Quevedo, 7/1/42 & Howard Campion to Quevedo, 11/5/42 (Quevedo Papers, Box 1, F 10, Stanford); Sánchez also discusses Quevedo in *Becoming Mexican American*, 250.

²⁹ Program for Dedication Ceremony,” April 13, 1943, and William McGorray to *Parientes y Amigos*, April 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 5, Folder 3).

washing, oiling, polishing.” The courses for L.A.’s large aircraft industry were still waiting for supplies. This may have discouraged many Mexican Americans from signing up. In July, 1943, the school board wrote Eduardo Quevedo that it could no longer afford the trade school because enrollment was not high enough to qualify for federal defense funds. This convinced Quevedo and Ruiz that separate schools would not succeed, whether they focused on language or wartime work. But they could not campaign on school integration when Quevedo ran to represent Boyle Heights in the state assembly. His 1943 election defeat that summer was overshadowed by the Zoot Suit Riots, which erupted a month before the Pan American Trade School closed. The violence pushed Pan Americanism aside and turned Ruiz to a delinquency discussion.³⁰

Zoot Suit Riots Reshape Ruiz’s Coordinating Council of Latin American Youth

Ruiz responded in his role as secretary of the Coordinating Council of Latin American Youth (CCLAY). Statements he wrote with Quevedo show how local crises shifted the rhetoric from Pan Americanism to juvenile delinquency during the war. CCLAY language changed after June 3, 1943, when some 50 white sailors attacked a Mexican youth group, tearing off their baggy zoot suits and clubbing boys as young as thirteen. This set off a week of riots in eastside *barrios* like Boyle Heights, and the LAPD decided to protect Mexican youths by arresting them. This reinforced the idea that L.A.’s “Mexican problem” came from criminalized youths. Juvenile delinquency became the hot topic for Manuel Ruiz. No longer promoting a Pan American Trade School, his CCLAY drew from the delinquency debate as it demanded parks, community centers, and schools. Rather than reflecting the spirit of “Inter-American” relations that Helen Heffernan sought, this new rhetoric pushed Ruiz toward a civil rights agenda.³¹

³⁰ William McGorray to Ruiz, April 7, 1943, and “Progress Report on the Pan American Trade School,” April 1943, Ruiz Papers (Box 5, Folder 3); J. Douglas Wilson to Quevedo, July 10, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 18).

³¹ McWilliams *North from Mexico*, 220-226; Griffith, *American Me*, 45; PBS, “Zoot Suit Riots: Los Angeles Erupts in Violence;” Scott, “The Sleepy Lagoon Case 105-114.

Language drove L.A.'s delinquency debate for young and old, white and brown. Edward Escobar's study of the Los Angeles police and press shows that officials exaggerated concerns about Mexican youths. After Sleepy Lagoon, the words "Mexican" and "delinquency" became nearly inseparable in L.A. newspapers, even as the felony rate fell in 1942 and 1943. Escobar argues that LAPD's racially biased arrest record did not raise eyebrows because the local press withheld the fact that fewer crimes were being reported while whites devoured "coverage of Mexican American crime and the frenzy it created" after the Zoot Suit Riots. But Ruiz relied on bilingualism to state the CCLAY's stance on each event in the delinquency drama. His dual-language ability allowed him to navigate between the compromise calls of Spanish-speakers in the federal government, and the defiant dialect of *Caló*, an underground language that captured the youthful rebellion of Mexican zoot suiters, or *Pachucos*. *Caló* politicized Spanish in new ways during World War II. While Ruiz related to the government's pleas for Pan American diplomacy, his bilingual abilities pushed him closer to the parlance of the *Pachucos*. Such language shaped the CCLAY's demand for education reform after the 1943 riots.³²

To outsiders, *Caló* was a slang that symbolized juvenile delinquency, or *Pachuquismo*. But many Mexican teens proud of the Pachuco label, despite its derogatory stereotypes, were model citizens. An Anglo observer, Beatrice Griffith, pointed out that two-thirds of poor Mexican boys wore zoot suits during the war, but less than five percent of them were classified as delinquent. While she sympathized with the teens, Griffith could not comprehend *Caló*. The dialect came from fifteenth-century Spain, but she described it as "a jargon spoken among

³² Edward Escobar, "Zoot-Suiters and the Cops: Chicano Youth and the Los Angeles Police Department during World War II," in *The War in American Culture: Society and Consciousness during World War II*, eds. Lewis Erenberg and Susan Hirsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 285-297. Ruiz's Washington ally was Alan Cranston, California's future U.S. Senator who headed the Office of War Information's foreign language division during the war. The Pomona College alum had studied Spanish at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. McWilliams credits Cranston for "bringing about a noticeable change in tone and character of newspaper reporting on the Mexican problem." McWilliams, *North from Mexico*, 231; Cranston to Quevedo, July 15, 1943, Quevedo Papers, Stanford (Box 1, Folder 11).

gypsies, ruffians, and prisoners” in Mexico City. She showed the influence of L.A. car culture on Caló by noting Hispanicized English words like *los laites* (car lights) and *las brechas* (brakes), and wrote that “Pachuco talk represents a degeneration of the Spanish language which has resulted from an inadequate Spanish vocabulary and the inability to write in the tongue that is spoken in the home.” After dismissing it as an illiterate argot, Griffith compared Caló to “Negro jive, such as ‘*slick chick*’” and “*he’s sharp, man!*” Griffith concluded that Caló was a language handicap to the average Pachuco “because he cannot adequately explain his thoughts in Spanish to his parents, nor in English to his teacher, employer, or the court.” Thus, the author who used statistics to declare the Mexican delinquency dilemma over viewed the Pachuco vernacular as a primary cause of the public’s misplaced perceptions. But Caló showed that some Pachucos relished in a rebellious dialect, whether or not they were delinquent.³³

The role of language in CCLAY solutions to reform the lives of Mexican boys was determined by the local delinquency debate. When they co-founded the council in 1941, Quevedo and Ruiz made language central to the council’s articles of incorporation, which they wrote in English and Spanish. “It is not our purpose to make language a barrier but instead unite the various modes of expression” to curtail criminal behavior. They invited everyone to weigh in on “the problem of juvenile delinquency, whether they be parents or offspring, and irrespective of creed or tongue.” They were skeptical of past Progressive methods to defeat delinquency, claiming that the CCLAY “can no more indulge in a program of Americanization than it can Mexicanization or Cubanization” to reform youth problems. But the council aligned itself with law enforcement agencies and adopted their positions on juvenile delinquency. Although five of the six board members were Mexican Angelenos, and the CCLAY included “72 civic, fraternal, religious, and other organizations of Spanish-speaking people,” the council concentrated on

³³ Escobar, “Zoot-Suiters and the Cops,” 290-291; Griffith, *American Me*, 45, 55-59.

public safety projects with the LAPD and the District Attorney. The board recruited Stephen Keating, chief of the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Division of the L.A. County Probation Office, to direct the CCLAY. Keating declined at first, but agreed to serve as the council's vice president. This suggested that, if neither Americanization nor Mexicanization could stop juvenile delinquency, Ruiz and Quevedo were content to pass the problem onto local probation officers. The CCLAY's suspicion of zoot suit culture, and the Caló dialect, drove Mexican American elites to doubt the younger generation nearly as much as Anglo Angelenos did in 1941.³⁴

The CCLAY used Spanish and English in its campaign against delinquency. Days after the Sleepy Lagoon murder, Ruiz requested airtime for Spanish-language radio broadcasts. He told the Southern California Broadcasting Association that “gang forays on the east side [were] a partial symptom of the present war and a problem which will become more vital.” Ruiz recommended a Mexican social worker with experience “lecturing by radio to the parents of potentially delinquent minors” in their native language. The next year, the CCLAY held its annual meeting six weeks after the Zoot Suit Riots. Its dual-language agenda included lectures about “Looking to the Future” by the Mexican Consul as well as the county sheriff and the L.A. police chief. Ruiz responded to each controversy in English and Spanish. The CCLAY cemented its elite standing by relying on law enforcement officials and social workers to blame Pachuco gangs for Sleepy Lagoon and the Zoot Suit Riots. Dismissing uneducated youth gave Ruiz respect among Anglo Angelenos who viewed delinquency as the essential “Mexican Problem.”³⁵

Other Anglos defended Mexican youths more than the CCLAY leaders. Carey McWilliams had fought for the Mexican community as head of the California Commission of

³⁴ CCLAY Articles of Incorporation, August 31, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 11); Quevedo to Earl Warren, October 26, 1944, Quevedo Papers, Stanford (Box 1, Folder 12).

³⁵ Ruiz to Dick Connor, August 12, 1942, and Ruiz to David Orozco, August 28, 1942, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 13); *Convocatoria Asamblea General de CCLAY*, July 18, 1943, Quevedo Papers, Stanford (Box 1, Folder 11).

Immigration and Housing until 1942, when newly elected Governor Earl Warren fired the liberal lawyer. After the nine Pachuco suspects were sentenced to San Quentin Prison, McWilliams organized the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee to appeal their convictions. After the war, he contrasted the Pan American projects of Ruiz and Helen Heffernan with the Zoot Suit Riots:

“What the riots did, of course, was to expose the rotten foundations upon which the City of Los Angeles had built a papier-mâché façade of ‘Inter-American Good Will’ made up of fine-sounding Cinco de Mayo proclamations. During the riots, the press, the police, the officialdom, and the dominant control groups of Los Angeles were caught with the bombs of prejudice... The riots were not an unexpected rupture in Anglo-Hispano relations but the logical end-product of a hundred years of neglect and discrimination.”

McWilliams’ dismissive statement implied that Mexican Angelenos were no better off than the Japanese Americans whom Earl Warren had just sent to internment camps.³⁶

But Manuel Ruiz returned to the “papier-mâché façade of ‘Inter-American Good Will’” one more time after the riots. The next month, he accepted superintendent Kersey’s invitation to a ten-day event at Lincoln High School on the east side, the “Los Angeles City and County Schools Workshop for Education of Mexican and Spanish-speaking Pupils.” The riots renewed joint efforts among Anglo and Mexican elites to defeat juvenile delinquency. While the workshops welcomed educators and artists from Mexico through Heffernan’s Office of Inter-American Affairs, they also invited Ignacio López, who had just resigned as Heffernan’s Spanish-speaking director. López led a discussion about delinquency with Ruiz, who represented CCLAY, but other panels featured probation officers and law-enforcement agencies. The agenda also included study groups in which educators examined Mexican “problems of adjustment” and administrative guidance problems in the run-up to the riots.³⁷

³⁶ Scott, “The Sleepy Lagoon Case,” 107-109 and Patricia Adler, “The 1943 Zoot-Suit Riots: Brief Episode in a Long Conflict” in *The Mexican-Americans: An Awakening Minority*, 125-135; McWilliams, *North from Mexico*, 231.

³⁷ Elizabeth Sands to Ruiz, June 10, 1943, and “Los Angeles City and County Schools Workshop for Education of Mexican and Spanish-speaking Pupils,” July 6-16, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 2, Folder 18). In addition to editing the Spanish-language weekly *El Espectador*, López was lead plaintiff in *Lopez v. Seccombe*, in 1943. Although the case desegregated swimming pools in San Bernardino, it was decided by a federal judge in Los Angeles. López’s lawyer won

Language education set this wartime workshop apart from the 1920s “Friends of the Mexicans” meetings. Language held a prominent place in both conferences, but the earlier emphasis on English and Americanization did not appear after the Zoot Suit Riots. Instead, to “promote better relations with our fellow citizens of Latin-American descent,” this workshop spent more time on Spanish. Each morning, instructors taught “sentences and phrases which are of special help to a teacher in registering children and greeting parents who speak only Spanish.” This made Anglo educators more open to learning Spanish after the war. The workshop’s executive committee included Marie Hughes, L.A. County’s specialist in minority group education, and one study group was led by Ruth Ginsburg, a conversational Spanish teacher in Los Angeles. In 1945, Ginsburg and Hughes brought bilingual education and desegregation into the debate over L.A. public schools (See Chapter 4). After the Zoot Suit Riots, this workshop won key advocates of Spanish instruction and shifted Anglo educators’ attention away from the Americanization agenda that had dominated curriculum discussions before the war.³⁸

But Mexican leaders were not satisfied with the workshop’s lip service to Spanish sentences and dances. A month later, the CCLAY seemingly abandoned its cooperation with local law enforcement and argued that the only way to stop Mexican delinquency was “a program of direct action within the community group itself.” It bypassed the school board and appealed to the Board of Supervisors to approve a \$12,000 budget with which the CCLAY would support its own youth reform efforts. Although this resolution did not refer to the role of Spanish language instruction, the CCLAY’s statement seemed to stem from Ignacio López’s funding frustrations with the Office of Inter-American Affairs with a controversial introduction:

Mendez v. Westminster three years later. Philippa Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican-American Rights* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2010), 39.

³⁸ Sands to Ruiz and “Los Angeles City and County Schools Workshop.” Ginsburg later became a language supervisor for L.A. schools. Los Angeles City Schools, *Magazines: 1959-61*, Mary Springer Papers, San Fernando High School Library.

“Juvenile delinquency among American youngsters of Latin-American extraction has inspired Nazi and Fascist sources to adversely exploit Inter-American relations, and emphasis has been made of the fact that persons of Latin-American extraction are victims of American persecution and racial bigotry, giving aid and comfort to the enemy.”

The reference to racial prejudice showed that the CCLAY had problems with the city’s response to the Zoot Suit Riots. Los Angeles was willing to host summer workshops that studied juvenile delinquency as a long-term trend. Mexican-American leaders like Manuel Ruiz were willing to participate in these studies if they saw significant progress in the self-improvement project. The resolution’s loaded language comparing L.A.’s Inter-American relations campaign to totalitarian regimes revealed that Ruiz was ready to take reform into his own hands by the war’s end.³⁹

Part 3: Relocation and Rebellion Amid Language and Loyalty Questions

Of course, Japanese Americans endured more oppressive wartime treatment than did Spanish-speaking youths. The government took a year to plan the mass incarceration of more than 110,000 people, but it quickly closed all Japanese language schools on December 7, 1941. Like the War Relocation Authority, Nisei Angelenos discussed language instruction to articulate their attitudes about evacuation. The range of Japanese language projects during World War II reveals the ways in which Nisei students and Anglo educators used their mother tongue to express different loyalties. State emphasis on schools as sites of citizenship training caused what the historian Thomas James called a “political dilemma” for internment camp curriculum. Much like Mexican-American responses to the Zoot Suit Riots, ideas about language education led to programs that provided hope to Japanese youth who were evacuated from Los Angeles in 1942. Just as Manuel Ruiz turned the delinquency debate into a campaign for Spanish and vocational classes in East L.A., Nisei like Paul Kusuda tried to set aside his forced removal from Los Angeles City College and seize the opportunity to teach interned students. Historian Richard

³⁹ “CCLAY Resolution on Juvenile Delinquency,” August 27, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 3, Folder 15).

Drinnon described such struggles by saying that “the most that can be said is that incarceration had unintended consequences and by-products, not all of which were negative.” Internment made many evacuees engaged citizens, climaxing in the Manzanar Riot. The debate leading up to that incident showed the significance of language learning to Nisei Angelenos, and guided them to pursue policies in the context of civil rights rather than Americanization after the war.⁴⁰

Manzanar Schools Demand Americanization and Deny Japanese Classes

Manzanar had been a thriving ranching area in the eastern Sierra Nevadas thanks to federal irrigation subsidies before Los Angeles built its second aqueduct in the Owens Valley and purchased the surrounding property. In eight months of 1942, Manzanar morphed from a windswept town with breathtaking views of Mount Whitney into the largest community between L.A. and Reno, with a peak population of 10,271 in October. When elementary schools opened in September, 1,001 students entered classrooms that lacked chairs, tables, books, and playground equipment. Sometimes school closed on account of sandstorms. When 1,376 high school students started their semester on October 15, there were no heaters or linoleum to counter the crisp autumn air that filtered through cracks in the floorboards. These conditions encouraged numerous Nisei to apply to college, the army, or any institution that would take them out of internment. Many left before Manzanar schools were fully furnished in the spring of 1943. They did not witness the attempt to prove that Americanization could happen in segregated schools that banned Japanese classes. In some ways, this language prohibition proved to be the last stand for the progressive education that Nora Sterry had promoted before the war.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Thomas James, *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 3-8; Richard Drinnon quoted in Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 94.

⁴¹ John Armor and Peter Wright, *Manzanar: Commentary by John Hersey, Photographs by Ansel Adams* (New York: Times Books, 1988), x-xii; Diana Bahr, *The Unquiet Nisei: An Oral History of the Life of Sue Kunitomi Embrey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 56. David Yoo argues that, “by sending Nisei to the schools, Japanese Americans moved ahead with their lives, hoping to reconstruct their former lives as much as possible within the confines of the camps.... an education at least signaled hope for a brighter future.” *Growing Up Nisei*, 122-123. The 1943 yearbook

Yet many students and teachers tried to recreate the culture, activities, and values of the public schools they had left behind in Los Angeles. The emphasis on citizenship and democracy in Manzanar High School newspapers and yearbooks suggests that faith in progressive education helped some students adjust to the harsh realities of incarceration. Nisei who had held leadership positions in clubs and athletic teams in L.A. were the most likely to graduate at Manzanar. Just as Sterry had braved the *barrio* quarantine to teach immigrant classes at Macy Street School in 1924, Angeleno teachers came to internment schools with missionary attitudes. All children and faculty were aware of the awful facilities, but star students and teachers ignored those conditions in the official records of Manzanar High School. Instead, they produced publications that celebrated Sterry's old Americanization agenda to conceal the shame of studying in segregated schools behind barbed wire. As such, they said little about language learning.

Ironically, internment allowed educated Nisei to take jobs not available to Japanese Americans before the war. L.A. high school graduates like Kusuda had their first opportunity to work as teachers. Squalid conditions were not the only reason Nisei volunteers played an integral role in Manzanar schools. Aside from teaching children in cold classrooms or outside on the dirt, there were few incentives for Anglo teachers to relocate to the California-Nevada border. The WRA offered \$1,620 per year, lower than teacher salaries in L.A. Most of Manzanar's credentialed teachers came from states that paid less than California did. But many Angeleno educators who stayed in L.A. still tried to help their former students start a fledgling school district. A professor from Los Angeles City College drove through the Sierra Nevadas in a one-and-a-half-ton truck with 2,000 books, sports equipment, a phonograph, and records. The

editors recalled that the classrooms were bare and the cold wind and dust shoved their way through the cracks in the walls and floors," and that they had to sit on "cold uncomfortable floors" with no chairs. *Cardinal and Gold*, 1943, Manzanar War Relocation Center Records, UCLA Special Collections (Box 59, Folder 2) (hereafter Manzanar WRC Records).

principal of UCLA's University Elementary School, a friend of Helen Heffernan, asked her school's parents to gather toys and books to send to the camps as well.⁴²

But the compassion of a few Angeleno educators did not find its way into the WRA's official curriculum for relocation schools. Thinking in the pre-war context of progressive education, Lucy Adams, the WRA superintendent, saw the schools as agents of Americanization. Eager to recreate a familiar form of schooling in the camps, Adams failed to consider the differences between established schools and the temporary institutions starting from scratch under incarceration. The WRA allowed instruction in English only—Japanese language schools were not permitted in the camps. Adams did not consult the educational efforts that Nisei volunteers had started at the assembly centers or in the early days of Manzanar. She only hired 50 educated evacuees who had teaching certificates along with about 600 white teachers, along with 400 Japanese-American assistants. The student-teacher ratio was 48 to 1 in WRA elementary schools and 35 to 1 in high schools; while the average ratio for all public schools in the nation was 28 to 1. Combined with inadequate facilities and supplies, the overcrowded classrooms made it virtually impossible for successful instruction in the internment camps.⁴³

Still, many evacuated students seemed eager about Americanization. Relocation center school publications featured the same rhetorical styles that were popular among American adolescents in the early 1940s. The 1942-43 *Campus Pepper* newspaper tried to make Manzanar High seem like a normal school, and the *Cardinal and Gold* yearbook stressed all-American achievements by the class of 1943. That year, every senior at Manzanar had attended a high school in Los Angeles County. Many had studied at Jefferson High near Little Tokyo, or University High on the Westside, but the most prominent prior school was Roosevelt High in

⁴² Yoo, *Growing Up Nisei*, 122; Bahr, *The Unquiet Nisei*, 56; James, *Exile Within*, 30.

⁴³ James, *Exile Within*, 37-43.

Boyle Heights. Students described crucial differences between L.A. schools and relocation center schools. Despite these disparities, successful seniors accepted Americanization curriculum as a key factor in their prospects to resettle in the United States after the war.⁴⁴

The yearbook could not conceal Nisei ambivalence about graduating from high school under incarceration. Seniors expressed the absence of attachment by listing extra-curricular activities at their old schools in Los Angeles alongside a few new clubs at Manzanar High. Many Nisei had participated in World Friendship clubs, Latin clubs, and Japanese clubs at Roosevelt and other city schools. Some even majored in “foreign language” as evacuees. Manzanar High offered classes in Spanish, French, and Latin in 1943, but the WRA refused to offer Japanese classes. Students strived to make Manzanar High as similar as possible to the schools they had attended 250 miles west in L.A. But without World Friendship and Japanese clubs, it was difficult to forget that their senior year of high school was at a relocation center that restricted instruction in the language that their parents had grown up speaking.⁴⁵

While the administration did not dispute the yearbook’s facts, it offered its own narrative. In a 1945 report, WRA staffers blamed Nisei language abilities for the camp’s subpar schools, not the hasty relocation project. The report insisted that the schools had some success despite these language deficiencies. Ignoring student stories about the lack of heaters, chairs, or basic school supplies when classes began in the fall of 1942, the report stressed that “in the fundamentals of the English language our students were about one year retarded as late as 1943.” This credited Anglo teachers, rather than improved facilities, for a slight rise in test scores, because “in spoken language they have made significant progress but are still retarded in enunciation,

⁴⁴ James, *Exile Within*, 61; *Cardinal and Gold*, 1943, Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2).

⁴⁵ *Cardinal and Gold*, 1943, Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2). Diana Bahr argues that, although about 500 students graduated from Manzanar High, “many internees believed these students had been deprived by not receiving diplomas from their original schools.” The state legislature rectified this by passing AB 781 in 2004. *Unquiet Nisei*, 168.

pronunciation, stage presence, etc.” The WRA targeted language learning at an early age, hiring as pre-school instructors Nisei women who were mostly “young English-speaking mothers” and starting a nursery school program that taught “parent education, the speaking of English, and basic democratic principles.” The educators speculated that Manzanar’s elementary students had fewer Japanese-speaking Kibei than Manzanar High did, and a few third-generation *Sansei*, “which gives them a better advantage on English performance.” They were shocked that Manzanar students tested at the state’s average intelligence level “in spite of their reading and language handicap.” But language became even more important after the “December Incident.”⁴⁶

A minority of Manzanar evacuees mounted a vocal resistance movement that staged several protests in December, 1942. This resulted in the WRA distributing a loyalty oath that asked if Japanese Americans would “swear unqualified allegiance to... and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack,” and required all Nisei who joined the U.S. Army to “forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor.” Most internees signed the vow, but some Japanese Americans chose to renounce their citizenship and relocate, yet again, to the segregated camp of Japanese loyalists at Tule Lake near the Oregon-California border. Language instruction mattered more to Tule Lake segregees than it did to the WRA’s progressive educators. But Manzanar teachers and students started to discuss language learning in terms of loyalty rather than Americanization after the 1942 riots.⁴⁷

“December Incident” Diverts Emphasis on Loyalty and Language, 1943-1945

On December 5, 1942, six men beat up the former president of the Los Angeles chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). One instigator had organized a camp Kitchen

⁴⁶ “Education Section Summary,” May 31, 1945, Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2). The report adds that, as the Manzanar High student body dwindled at the end of the war, teachers salaries rose.

⁴⁷ Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar: And Related Readings*, eds. Jeanne and James Houston (Evanston, Ill.: McDougal Littell, 1998), 75.

Workers' Union to show "defiance and contempt for the authorities." This was the peak of internee anger at JACL, the nation's top Nisei organization before the war, for helping the army's evacuation of L.A. Paul Kusuda, an interned college student critical of JACL, described Nisei protest meetings and the thousands who assembled after the cook's arrest. The WRA responded to the "December Incident," a year after Pearl Harbor, by requiring all Japanese Americans to vow loyalty to the country that had incarcerated them. But this chapter will examine how the Manzanar "riot," and the loyalty oath, altered the role of language education in internment. Just as Mexican Americans like Manuel Ruiz proposed new Spanish-language programs after the Zoot Suit riots, Nisei activists used the "December Incident" to insist on reinstating Japanese language schools at the segregated Tule Lake camp. At Manzanar, educated Nisei like Kusuda questioned the WRA's Americanization agenda. But he was just as dubious about foreign language instruction when Afton Nance asked him for advice about learning Japanese. Despite Kusuda's skepticism, the many Manzanar riot responses showed that, like Manuel Ruiz, Japanese Angelinos looked at language learning as a civil right by 1945.⁴⁸

Although Americanization continued in elementary schools, the "December Incident" and loyalty oath scandals slowed Manzanar's adult education program in 1943. Comparing WRA reports on adult education with the papers of Paul Kusuda shows a divide between evacuee instructors and their Anglo administrators. They also show that internees wanted English language instruction to serve more purposes than the WRA's Americanization agenda.

In its "Education Section Summary," the WRA celebrated adult language instruction. The camp began adult education in September, 1942, as Japanese families were still arriving, and an educated Nisei organized 18 adult English classes while Manzanar "was still being settled." English and history instruction fit the WRA's Americanization approach, but the young teacher

⁴⁸ Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*, 68; Paul Kusuda, "December 6," Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

recruited more than 3,000 Issei students by offering courses in commerce, science, and *ikebana*, Japanese flower arrangement. After the “December Incident,” however, evacuees were afraid to attend evening classes. Instruction shut down for two weeks, and adult enrollment decreased after the army issued its loyalty questionnaire. In fact, five Nisei teachers were segregated to Tule Lake. But this did not end Manzanar’s adult education program. Instead, the WRA reassessed its mission and made more effort to serve the needs of the evacuee community.⁴⁹

In 1943, the adult education department defined two goals: to “stimulate relocation” and to keep students attending classes. That summer, Manzanar opened an “Adult English Hall” featuring cooking demonstrations “conducted by both evacuees and Caucasians.” The WRA was proud that it still offered more than 30 English classes in 1945. But it also tried to attract more ambitious attendees by expanding its commercial curriculum to “fully accredited” junior college courses. In contrast to the five adult language instructors who were sent to Tule Lake, the WRA boasted that eleven other teachers had relocated by 1945. The report used relocation and college credits to call the adult education program successful, although this meant that only six Nisei educators were left to teach some 1,500 non-English speaking adults in Manzanar’s final year.⁵⁰

Paul Kusuda was one of the Nisei educators who relocated before 1945. Kusuda’s letters to his former 8th grade English teacher, Afton Nance, challenged the WRA narrative about Manzanar’s adult education and the “December Incident.” Kusuda came to the camp as a sharp but shiftless high school graduate. He had gone to L.A. City College and read liberal publications like *The Nation* when Nance sent them. He did not think highly of standardized tests or establishment groups like JACL. His arguments with JACL leaders showed that some Nisei instructors resisted the WRA’s agenda. Kusuda confronted the first threat to his contrarian

⁴⁹ “Education Section Summary,” Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2).

⁵⁰ “Education Section Summary,” Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2).

thinking during the “December Incident” in 1942, yet he chose to follow his principles. Eastern colleges rejected his student relocation applications, extending his internment by 18 months. This forced him to rethink his positions on education and language. As his letters to Nance suggest, language learning mattered more after the Manzanar riot.

He used Americanization to advocate his tutoring work. In 1942, Kusuda asked the U.S. Commissioner of Education to supply schooling to the nearly 1,700 children at Santa Anita. “To instill and retain American ideas and ideals among the children, an immediate educational program is necessary,” he wrote. Kusuda favored hiring white teachers to “establish closer relations between Nisei and fellow Americans.” But he insisted educated evacuees like himself should tutor students “eager to continue their education which was so abruptly cut-off.” He offered to teach any subject, including Spanish and Latin. Kusuda’s eclectic language interests led to the most playful aspects of his letters to Afton Nance. He sounded like an Americanized adolescent, mixing in Spanish sentences like “*Hasta la vista*.” He sent Nance a Beetle Bailey cartoon of a GI dreaming of exotic women, surrounded by pamphlets in Spanish, Hawaiian, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and French. “I’m prepared to go anywhere they send me,” reads the caption. “I can say ‘Hi Babe’ in half a dozen languages!” Language learning was central to such Americanized humor as well as to Kusuda’s calls to educate younger evacuees at Santa Anita.⁵¹

Kusuda scoffed at the WRA’s early efforts to prepare white teachers for working with the Japanese community. He attended the first adult education department meeting in the Caucasian Mess Hall in September, 1942, to glimpse the new teachers. Some were fresh out of college, others “were attracted by wages which were just a little better than those offered by small communities,” and some wanted to be “as much help as possible to the residents of Manzanar.”

⁵¹ Paul Kusuda to Nance, May 21, 1942, and January 14, 1944, and “Report on Tutoring Classes,” May 22, 1942, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1). He told Nance about Manzanar visitors like Bayard Rustin and Congressman Jerry Voorhis, who represented eastern L.A. County until 1946, when he lost a controversial campaign to Richard Nixon.

The adult education supervisor invited evacuees to the initial staff meeting because he assumed “very few of the teachers had ever come in contact with the Japanese except on an exceedingly casual basis.” He may not have expected the two speakers to stress language learning.⁵²

But language instruction helped both Nisei Angelenos articulate their ethnic experiences. The first outlined the history of Japanese immigration, from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to the “era of Americanization” after 1924. He explained that Japanese language schools did not make the Nisei fluent in their ethnic tongue, but that they remained connected to Japan through family remittances. The second was Frank Chuman, whose 1934 salutatorian address at L.A. High School appeared in *Orations and Essays* (See Chapter 2). Chuman described his own journey from “Persistent Idealism,” his graduation speech title, into a “disillusioning... regarding American and democratic ideals” after internment. But he was confident that Manzanar’s Anglo educators could “revive the spark of the idea of American democracy” because the Nisei loved playing baseball as much as they enjoyed judo. He argued that employment was the biggest problem for Nisei Angelenos, lamenting that many high school graduates had to settle for “fruit stand jobs.” Chuman said that “one way out is for the Nisei to learn the usage of the Japanese language so that he may work with the Japanese here or go to Japan to work there.” This cast learning Japanese as a financial strategy rather than an ethnic tradition. Speaking to white teachers in Manzanar’s segregated dining hall, Frank Chuman framed language learning in economic terms to prove his generation’s loyalty to the U.S.⁵³

Although the two speeches were written for Anglo teachers, their language implications provoked Paul Kusuda, who attended as an aspiring adult education instructor. He admired the first talk about immigration because it was given by a “Nisei of high caliber” who went to school

⁵² “Caucasian Staff Meeting,” September 22, 1942, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

⁵³ “Caucasian Staff Meeting,” September 22, 1942, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

in L.A. but “learned to speak and write Japanese and he is fluent with its usage.” Kusuda had less respect for Frank Chuman, although they were both alums of Los Angeles High. He noted, perhaps jealously, that Chuman’s academic success allowed him to attend UCLA and become one of the few Nisei hired by the L.A. County civil service. Kusuda criticized the L.A. High salutatorian’s speaking skills, calling him “rather wordy, but he doesn’t say very much.” He may have resented Chuman’s appointment as supervisor of Manzanar’s 250-bed hospital. And he disagreed when Chuman described JACL as “non-partisan.” After the war, Chuman would become JACL’s lead counsel and, in 1960, its national president. But Kusuda was one of JACL’s many critics in 1942. He hated that it catered to the establishment and endorsed internment. JACL officers worked “only for personal gains and glories and not for the good of the population as a whole,” Kusuda told Nance, alleging that they had “turned in the lists of former Japanese school teachers” before the arrests on December 7, 1941. Whether praising one internee for speaking Japanese fluently or charging another with unfair attacks on language school teachers, the language question made him more passionate about adult education at Manzanar.⁵⁴

Kusuda’s criticism of JACL colored his experiences in the December riot. Two weeks before the “Caucasian Staff Meeting,” he had debated the former chair of JACL’s Los Angeles chapter. Kusuda questioned his resistance to merge JACL with a new group, the Manzanar Citizens’ Federation. He supported the Citizens’ Federation chairman who, after endorsing “evacuation as a military necessity,” agreed to lead a gang of Manzanar workers to the Idaho beet fields. Kusuda also sided with workers on December 6, 1942, the day after the “Incident.” He noted linguistic pride in the crowd that gathered to protest the arrest of the cook who wanted a Kitchen Workers’ Union. He heard some evacuees shout “Banzai!” while “others whistled or

⁵⁴ Kusuda to Nance, October 8, 1942, and July 29, 1942, and “Caucasian Staff Meeting,” September 22, 1942, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1). One Anglo adult education teacher thought the internees “should not indulge in self-pity.”

sang Japanese airs.” But Kusuda was also concerned about the adult education department, which had organized an open forum discussion with the education director that evening. He and a friend walked to the WRA staff housing to warn the administrator not to come out amidst the riot, risking a hostile interrogation by soldiers in the cold dark evening. As a vocal participant in the Manzanar Citizens’ Federation, Kusuda showed interest in internment camp politics. But his actions during the December riot showed a deeper commitment to adult education as well as a fascination with the Japanese language.⁵⁵

The aftermath of the riot caused Kusuda to reconsider his position on evacuee classrooms as well as camp politics. Kusuda had criticized JACL for its ties to the white establishment. But, after the beating, he was eager to return to work at the adult education department. The violence closed down administrative offices, but Kusuda joined the staff that was assisting at Manzanar High School. He gained admiration for the WRA education director, who helped wait tables in the mess hall, and some of the white “male teachers [who] helped with the dish-washing.” Before the riot, Kusuda felt insulted by JACL’s willingness to defend the government that incarcerated him; but he was even more outraged by disloyal evacuees when he heard that “foul words were said to a few teachers” after school reopened. Ironically, four months after arguing that the Manzanar Citizens’ Federation should exclude JACL and other Nisei who supported the WRA, Kusuda heard he was blacklisted by “the band of ruffians now in practical control” of the camp. A month later, he abandoned his vision of Nisei leadership at Manzanar and focused on his personal postwar plans. When Kusuda wrote Nance in January, he explained his New Year’s goal: “to get free in ’43.” Indeed, by the end of the year he had relocated to Chicago.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Kusuda to Nance, August 3, 1942, and August 4, 1942, “Meeting of the Manzanar Citizens’ Federation, September 9, 1942, and Kusuda, “December 6 Diary,” Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1). Also see Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*, 68.

⁵⁶ Kusuda to Nance, December 8, 1942, December 12, 1942, and January 20, 1943, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

Similarly, the riot complicated Kusuda's views about language education. This is evident in two responses to Nance's confession that she had considered leaving her new job as principal in L.A. County to teach at Manzanar. In November, he warned, "it won't be a picnic," citing the small salary as "a chisel for all the hard work done by teachers." But language loomed larger for Kusuda after the December Incident, when he heard Manzanar police had torn down "Blood Brothers" posters written "in Japanese calling for self-government." In January, he urged Nance to stop trying to learn Japanese. This too reversed his pre-riot opinions that favored Nisei fluency in the mother tongue. Kusuda's new convictions about language learning seemed to be more emotional than his other beliefs.⁵⁷

His insistence that Nance not learn Japanese was surprising. Why wouldn't he welcome his favorite former English teacher? And why would he dissuade a woman who showed more compassion than most of Manzanar's teachers? Kusuda clarified his philosophy by answering Nance's question, "Just how much luck do none-too-bright (but earnest) adult Caucasians have in learning acceptable (non-funny) Japanese?" He called himself an illiterate who could "converse rather poorly" and seemed intimidated by the language. "In Japanese, there are the basic vowel sounds, but consonant sounds are combined in tongue-twisting, brain-battling ways," he wrote. He cited his own Japanese name, Haruo, which whites pronounced "Ha-Roo-Oh" but the correct intonation was "Ha-RLU-Oh." Kusuda conceded that fluency was possible if someone spent years "among people who speak Japanese and only Japanese... even then, there will be a noticeable trace of 'Caucasian accent.'" But he was more skeptical when WRA teachers stopped taking Japanese classes after the December Incident. Even before the riot, Kusuda told Nance, "many dropped out; others did not attend classes regularly. No kidding, the language is

⁵⁷ Kusuda to Nance, November 26, 1942, and January 23, 1943, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

extremely difficult to master.” Japanese language instruction never made it at Manzanar. But it became important at Tule Lake segregation center and the Military Intelligence Service.⁵⁸

Part 4: Proving Patriotism by Proposing Language Schools during Wartime

The Manzanar Riots happened six months before the Zoot Suit Riots, and both events turned educators’ attention away from old Americanization agendas in 1943. Just as Kusuda’s correspondence with Nance shows renewed interest in Japanese language skills after the uprising, Manuel Ruiz’s war records reveal his increasing emphasis on Spanish instruction. These incidents addressed questions of loyalty that unfairly burdened Japanese and Mexican Americans during the war. In their aftermath, each ethnic group looked to language learning to prove what patriotism meant to them. Nisei reactions ran the spectrum from Japanese language schools that served “disloyal” evacuees to devoted soldiers who joined the army and studied Japanese at the new Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS). Manuel Ruiz personally replicated this range of loyalty by reaching out to Earl Warren and joining the governor’s Citizens Committee on Youth in Wartime. Ruiz regretted his commitment when he saw how California was cracking down on juvenile delinquency, and in 1945 he lobbied the governor to desegregate all of the state’s “Mexican schools.” His wartime work with Earl Warren and the L.A. school district led to Ruiz’s postwar pledge against segregated schools.

While Ruiz campaigned for military mobilization and juvenile delinquency reform in East L.A., Japanese Angelenos who left Manzanar started two types of language schools far from the city of angels. Nisei who refused to sign the loyalty oath at Manzanar formed at least ten Japanese language schools at Tule Lake segregation center on the California-Oregon border. Together they taught more than 4,000 children, instilling pride in their identity from behind barbed wire. Other Japanese Americans escaped the evacuation centers by volunteering for the

⁵⁸ Kusuda to Nance, January 23, 1943, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 1).

U.S. Army. The easiest way was to enroll at the MISLS in Minnesota. Under the training of Hollywood High alum John Aiso, more than 6,000 Nisei left internment to study Japanese before sailing to the South Pacific, where they used their parents' language to translate stolen documents and write propaganda that helped the Allies end the war. The Japanese language schools at Tule Lake and MISLS advocated opposite positions about loyalty during the war. But they both rejected the WRA's initial decision to prevent U.S. citizens from learning an enemy language after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Comparing their curriculum and student experiences will show how the purpose and politics of language learning changed during World War II.

Language as Disloyalty: Tule Lake Segregation Camp Restores Japanese Schools

In 1987, Thomas James wrote *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945*. In this thorough history of internment education, Japanese language schools only play a prominent role in James' final chapter about evacuee resistance to white bureaucracy. Language restrictions lessened at all internment camps after the Manzanar Riot, but Japanese instruction flourished most at Tule Lake Segregation Center. James identified at least ten "renegade" language schools at the camp that housed nearly all Japanese "disloyals" by the fall of 1943. The most popular Japanese schools adopted the Americanization curriculum that Kohei Shimano had advocated in the 1930s. But a few vocal evacuees started rival language schools that embraced the "disloyalty" label. James' research of the rapid rise of Japanese schools at Tule Lake illustrates increasing tensions about the relationship between language and loyalty. After decades of insisting that learning Japanese could help Nisei become active U.S. citizens, some segregated evacuees embraced language schools as symbols of resistance.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ James, *Exile Within*, 143, 160. This section draws heavily on James, a secondary source. His research comes from many archives as well as social science records from Dorothy Swaine Thomas and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage* and *The Salvage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946 and 1952), two books this author plans to review further.

Japanese language schools became popular at Tule Lake, in part, because public education did not start until 1944. The WRA reluctantly offered Americanization classes to a population that had already rejected the loyalty oath. Public schools were not compulsory when they finally opened, James notes, and “the contradictions of progressive practice and minority resistance were brought out into the open.” Tule Lake had many Americanized Nisei who “tended to like baseball and jitterbug more than *sumo* and *utai* (the Japanese art of singing),” and preferred conversing in English. He argues that the high school provided a space where they could recreate the culture they had left behind in Los Angeles and even Manzanar. At Tule Lake, however, Americanized adolescents were not the majority, and they tried to hide their school spirit from “pressure boys” who boycotted school. Kibei vigilantes, U.S.-born but educated in Japan, surrounded the high school during a 1944 jitterbug dance, prompting a conflict between “loyal” and “disloyal” youth about their roles in America, Japan, and the postwar world.⁶⁰

The jitterbug incident illustrates how Tule Lake education debates differed from other camps. At Manzanar, Nisei like Paul Kusuda worked with the WRA to improve schools. At Tule Lake, evacuees argued with each other because they did not trust government schools. According to James, in 1944 the Japanese language school population was nearly twice as large (4,300 students) as the Tule Lake public school total (2,300 students). He argues that the rise of private schools reflected “a spectrum of belief and disbelief in the collective symbols being forged” at Tule Lake. The WRA was aware that its schools were unpopular, and it allowed evacuees to form a Japanese Language School Board. The board included accommodationists who worked with the WRA to provide facilities (but not supplies) for Japanese language schools. Like L.A. language schools before the war, Tule Lake’s officially recognized language schools encouraged families to attend public schools by scheduling classes in afternoons and on weekends. This was

⁶⁰ James, *Exile Within*, 145-147. He says “high school was a cultural enclave for many Nisei within the segregated camp.”

a paradox, James explained, because “many of the constituents served by the Japanese Language School Board wanted both Japanese cultural training and American schooling for their children, while openly resisting the loyalty classifications of the government.”⁶¹

As the officially condoned language schools became more popular, they drew more criticism. Many segregees who had refused to declare loyalty were skeptical of any ties to the establishment. While the Japanese Language School Board was unique to Tule Lake, many Nisei dismissed board members as “loyals” who coordinated their calendar with WRA school schedules. Such critics showed resistance, James wrote, by creating their own language curriculum in eight “underground ‘school republics’ operating as self-contained systems against WRA regulations.” These schools and private tutors denounced the accommodations of the Japanese Language School Board and used language instruction to express “hardening ideological lines of protest” in the final year of internment. Many Tule Lake parents found the radical rhetoric at these language schools too severe—but they were also grateful to see fellow evacuees finally protesting their conditions of incarceration.⁶²

These renegade schools set up systems that opposed the WRA and its Japanese Language School Board as much as possible. Unlike the voluntary WRA schools, Tule Lake’s underground schools made attendance mandatory—and held classes at times that conflicted with the public school schedule. Unlike the Americanization agenda at the officially condoned schools, protest schools designed language instruction to train a new Kibei generation of youth who would “return” to Japan immediately after WRA release. Ward 7, a center of WRA resistance at Tule Lake, organized a language school that copied the curriculum of *Kokumin Gakko*, Japan’s prewar elementary school system, which taught martial arts and stressed “discipline, conformity, and

⁶¹ James, *Exile Within*, 145-149. The WRA did not provide the Japanese Language School Board with resources.

⁶² James, *Exile Within*, 149-151.

respect to superiors.” Even if Tule Lake families did not favor such dogmatic Japanese nationalism, many supported underground schools for expressing their long-suppressed resistance in the final year of the war.⁶³

Of course, most Tule Lake language schools were somewhere between the extremes of Ward 7’s Japanese nationalism and the accommodationist culture of the Japanese Language School Board. For example, one language school student was an Americanized Nisei who wanted to sing “Pistol Packing Mama” in English while her classmates recited Japanese patriotic songs. Other language schools offered less divisive subjects and appealed to Nisei interested in Japanese rituals like tea ceremony and flower arrangement. These linguistic expressions of nationalism, for Japan and America, were not new in Japanese language schools. But they had heightened significance in the context of internment camps, especially for evacuees who refused to sign the loyalty oath. Tule Lake Segregation Center celebrated the return of Japanese language schools by offering ten different environments for language learning. While two collaborated with the camp’s public schools, the eight underground schools showed that some Japanese Americans had come to view language learning as a symbol of protest by the end of World War II.⁶⁴

Language as Patriotism: The Military Intelligence Service Language School

But pledging “disloyalty” and winding up at Tule Lake was not the only way for Nisei to escape Manzanar. Paul Kusuda’s resolution to be “free in ‘43” came true that fall when he enrolled at the University of Chicago after a year of incarceration. He was one of many educated students who resettled in Midwestern college towns. Manzanar also posted an army flier that promised training “as interrogators and translators, and shortly after graduation will be sent out to the combat areas” in the South Pacific. More than 6,000 interned Nisei agreed to study

⁶³ James, *Exile Within*, 151-153.

⁶⁴ James, *Exile Within*, 151-153.

Japanese for six months at a Minnesota army camp, where they graduated as non-commissioned officers. The fledgling Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) offered more than a ticket out of Manzanar. In contrast to the “renegade schools” at Tule Lake, this language learning allowed Japanese-American citizens to prove their patriotism.⁶⁵

The founders of the MISLS were John Aiso and Lieutenant Colonel John Weckerling, two Americans who had lived in Japan. Weckerling wanted the chief instructor to be Aiso, Hollywood High’s jilted 1926 oratory champion. When he began the first class in November, 1941, Aiso had two Ivy League degrees and five years of experience teaching and practicing law in Japan. Appointing Aiso was one reason Weckerling was promoted to brigadier general after the war. In 1946, the officer denounced internment as America’s “failure to gauge correctly the patriotism of the Japanese population.” But he looked past popular opinion and discussed the MISLS in terms of war tactics. Like Aiso, the officer had studied and worked in Japan, but he did not share the Nisei’s language proficiency. By 1941, he worried about America’s intelligence capability because “the complexities of the Japanese language are almost beyond occidental comprehension.” In Japan, he had spoken to military officers who “boasted that the Japanese language was so difficult that it constituted a code itself not susceptible of solution by foreigners.” Weckerling wrote the War Department that linguists had to learn two written syllabaries, *katakana* and *hiragana*, along with some 8,000 Chinese ideographs. Explaining the four distinct steps in writing each character “to top off what must now seem to be the ultimate in confusion,” he urged the army to recruit Japanese Americans at once. “Looked upon with great

⁶⁵ “Recruiting for Army’s Language School,” November 28, 1942, and December 1, 1942, Karl Yoneda Papers, UCLA Special Collections (Box 30, Folder 1); Kusuda, “Personal Recollections of Chicago: 1943-1949,” June 2009, <http://www.asianwisconsin.com/0609PaulKusuda.html> (viewed April 1, 2013). Nisei Angelenos who left Manzanar by joining the MISLS included Karl Yoneda, Sho Onodera, Nobuo Yamashita, and James Oda, who became a military language instructor. Manzanar also sent an Anglo Angeleno to MISLS. The *Campus Pepper* student newspaper reported that Paul Kess had studied French and German as a Foreign Language major at UCLA, and that he had learned a lot of Japanese as a Manzanar teacher. *Campus Pepper* April 20, 1943, 3, Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 4).

suspicion before and immediately after the outbreak of war,” Weckerling recalled, “the Nisei justified the confidence of those who knew them and supplied the answer to one of our most vital war problems—the need for efficient interpreters and translators of the Japanese language.”⁶⁶

The MISLS expanded rapidly throughout the war. Aiso planned his first class at the Presidio military base in San Francisco with a \$2,000 budget and orange crates as desks. On November 1, 1941, he began instructing 45 Nisei students and 15 others, including white officers. In May, 1942, after the military had evacuated the Pacific coast, MISLS moved to Camp Savage in Minnesota. The Midwest was more welcoming to Nisei students, but the camp was a center for homeless men during the Depression and, “in some respects, the facilities were poorer” than the internment camps. But former Manzanar evacuees not only graduated from MISLS, they also became instructors under the supervision of Aiso, whom students called *kocho-sensei*, Director of Academic Training. By 1944, the school had outgrown Camp Savage and moved to Fort Snelling, near St. Paul, a permanent facility with more than 125 classrooms. The original class size of 60 language learners was only one percent of the 6,000 students who graduated from MISLS by the end of the war. In terms of attendance, the MISLS was more successful than all of Tule Lake’s Japanese language schools combined.⁶⁷

At the school’s peak, Aiso supervised a comprehensive language instruction outfit that operated with military precision. By October, 1945, MISLS had 1,836 students in residence taking classes five days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and resuming from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Japanese instruction only paused on Wednesday afternoons for military training and on Saturdays for language exams. The curriculum grew to include Japanese history, geography,

⁶⁶ General Weckerling, “Nisei Language Experts,” 186-189; “Fort Snelling: Breaking the Code.” For more wonderful anecdotes about Aiso and others, see James McNaughton, *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006).

⁶⁷ Ichinokuchi, “John Aiso and the MIS,” 16-17.

military language, general conversation, and translation. Aiso designed lessons with captured documents, maps of the South Pacific, Japanese military terminology, and radio monitoring. With these written, visual, and audio sources, Aiso's instructors taught students reading, writing, interrogation, translation, and interpretation of the political, economic, and cultural background of Japan. Such training helped Nisei linguists bring all of these skills to "every major unit in every engagement from Guadalcanal... to the march into Tokyo."⁶⁸

Aiso only created this advanced curriculum after the army realized that it was necessary. When Col. Weckerling hired him in 1941, he assumed "there would be sufficient Japanese-speaking Nisei so that only a few weeks' review in general Japanese vocabulary... military terminology and combat intelligence would be required." But a survey of the first 3,700 Nisei to attend MISLS found that only three percent were "accomplished linguists," four percent were "proficient" and three percent spoke "fair" Japanese. This proved that the Nisei generation was truly Americanized, despite the fears about disloyal Japanese language schools in Chapter 1. Still, the military was selective in its MISLS admissions policy, leaning on the loyalty tests that had launched the Manzanar Riots in 1942. Even John Aiso underwent screening before the army appointed him to train Nisei evacuees to become interrogators, interpreters, translators, propaganda writers, and radio broadcasters.⁶⁹

The opening of MISLS signaled that Americanization itself was an evolving concept. Getting this job offer was a new experience for Aiso, whose election as student body president of a Hollywood junior high school had caused such an outrage that the parents demanded a student council shutdown in 1923. Aiso's patriotic speeches won the Southern California constitutional oratory contest in 1926, but the white runner-up got to represent Hollywood High at the national

⁶⁸ Ichinokuchi, "John Aiso," 16, 44; Weckerling, "Nisei Language Experts," 193; "Fort Snelling: Breaking the Code."

⁶⁹ Weckerling, "Nisei Language Experts," 190-191.

championships in Washington, D.C. After graduating from Brown University and Harvard Law School, he went to Japan, where he received better treatment from bankers and diplomats than he had from New York law firms. Aiso was one of many Nisei who worked in Japan in the 1930s and, like his ex-patriate peers, he did not plan to join the U.S. military. He moved back to Los Angeles in 1941, planning to practice law and get married. Aiso hated to think about the impending war after his history of discrimination. Thus, a month before Pearl Harbor, he hesitated when Col. Weckerling asked him to start MISLS from scratch.

But something changed when “the tall, lean West Pointer stood up, put his hand on John’s shoulder and said, ‘John, your country needs you,’” Aiso’s colleague recalled. “John had never been told by anyone that America was his country. To the contrary, John had been told again and again that America did not need him.” Aiso could have turned down the job offer. If thousands of Tule Lake segregees could refuse to sign a loyalty oath in the heat of the war, why couldn’t a faithful Nisei refuse a military post before Pearl Harbor? Aiso’s aide insisted that he accepted the job to show the country that Japanese Americans were vital to the national interest:

“Colonel Weckerling was saying to all Japanese Americans, ‘We consider you to be loyal American citizens. We respect you... We ask that you perform a vital task in national defense that no other American can do. Your country needs you.’”⁷⁰

By agreeing to teach Nisei soldiers, Aiso showed that Japanese language instruction did not have to follow the rebellious message of disloyalty that some Tule Lake schools embraced. Instead, the Military Intelligence Service Language School was the ultimate symbol that American citizens could protect and defend the homeland by learning a non-Western heritage language.

Wartime Committee Compels Ruiz to Redefine Delinquency and Desegregation

Just as John Aiso applied Japanese language skills to serve his country, Manuel Ruiz used his expertise on delinquency to prove his patriotism during World War II. As the only

⁷⁰ Shig Kihara, “That Day Will Be Long Remembered,” in *John Aiso and the MIS*, 206; Ichinokuchi, “John Aiso,” 12-16.

Spanish-speaking representative on the Governor's Citizens Committee on Youth in Wartime (CCYW), he tried to make Mexican education priorities central to school reform. However, while the war gave Aiso military funds to form a language institute, the CCYW restricted Ruiz's ambitions for a Spanish language school. So he moved away from promoting Pan Americanism and toward more controversial civil rights issues. By 1945, the attorney advocated desegregation of all "Mexican schools" across California. Ruiz's wartime campaign for consensus causes like military mobilization and juvenile delinquency reform gave him confidence as an activist as well as a healthy mistrust of the status quo. Just as there were similarities between the renegade Japanese language schools at Tule Lake and Aiso's MISLS in Minnesota, Ruiz's work with Earl Warren and the L.A. school district led to his postwar pledge against segregated schools.⁷¹

Spanish-speaking leaders leapt at every chance to include Mexican-American youth in the war effort. This enthusiasm was apparent to Anglos as early as 1942, when Los Angeles City College hosted a Youth Defense Conference. "Let's NOT get excited," the conference director warned Eduardo Quevedo when he asked for "a capable Mexican boy and girl over 16 years of age" to represent the Coordinating Council of Latin American Youth. But Ruiz had reason to get excited the next year, three months after the Zoot Suit Riots, when Governor Earl Warren appointed him to the CCYW. With this new title, Ruiz and Quevedo began a bilingual recruiting spiel for Mexican soldiers to draw the delinquency label away from Mexican Angelenos. They went to Garfield Elementary School in eastern L.A. County during National Education Week. Quevedo addressed the P.T.A. in Spanish before Ruiz gave an English-language lecture, "Allegiance to America Through Service to Youth." He also showed a motion picture about military training for Mexican youths who enlisted in the army. Spanish-speaking parents in

⁷¹ Mark Brilliant also records Ruiz's account in *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 82-84.

attendance may have heard hypocrisy in a program that asked students to sacrifice their lives for a nation that had sent them to segregated schools. But Quevedo and Ruiz resorted to this dual-language loyalty campaign in hopes of bolstering future civil rights requests.⁷²

Delinquency dominated discussion at the CCYW, which likely invited Ruiz because he agreed with state officials that the Zoot Suit Riots were rooted in a larger “Mexican problem.” He used his CCYW status to call for reforms ranging from probation officers to community centers to better schools. Ruiz “unhesitatingly” accepted Earl Warren’s appointment in 1943, and he met California’s Governor, Attorney General, and Superintendent of Public Instruction in Sacramento. But the first meeting showed him that the CCYW looked to law enforcement instead of schools to deter delinquency. “The transient youth problem in Los Angeles is comparatively under control,” an LAPD deputy chief told the committee, “probably because Los Angeles picks up children during school hours who are not in school and either turns them over to the school if they are regularly enrolled or gives them special treatment if they are not.” The CCYW listened to LAPD more than Ruiz, who argued for community collaboration. Citing a successful relationship with the Office of War Information’s foreign language division chief, Alan Cranston, Ruiz advocated alliances between the Office of Inter-American Affairs, the L.A. Probation Department, and the city’s Mexican Chamber of Commerce. This would have created a connection between law enforcement, East L.A. business leaders, and Helen Heffernan’s office, which had its own Spanish-speaking director. But it never occurred.⁷³

Rather than balancing enforcement and education, punishment became the CCYW’s central focus. Its secretary was Karl Holton, inaugural director of the California Youth Authority.

⁷² George Hjelte to Ruiz, February 14, 1942, and Robert Kenny to Ruiz, September 27, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folders 12 and 1); H.P. Blome to Quevedo, Quevedo Papers, Stanford (Box 1, Folder 11).

⁷³ Ruiz to Earl Warren, October 7, 1943, Robert McKibben to Ruiz, October 13 and 22, 1943, Kenny to “Mr. Westphal,” December 14, 1943, and “Minutes of First Meeting, CCYW,” November 1, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 1).

In his new position, Holton expanded a youth farm labor camp experiment he had started in L.A. in 1942. The legislature gave him control of three youth correctional schools—including California’s oldest juvenile institution along with schools in eastern L.A. County (Whittier) and neighboring Ventura County. In 1944, Holton started another wartime work program with the Pasadena school district. The San Gabriel Valley Citrus Association hired the Pasadena YMCA to bring transient teens to rural L.A. County for “harvest camp.” Boys could sleep on cots in Covina High School after a day of picking and packing oranges. This was not child abuse, Ruiz learned from a fellow CCYW member, who was also the San Diego school superintendent, because “in wartime youth accept more responsibility.” Having read this report, Ruiz took pains to prevent Mexican adolescents who got in trouble from going to such labor camps. After three years of courting the establishment, the East L.A. lawyer began to clash with California officials about which juveniles were delinquent and how they should be reformed.⁷⁴

To put off the probation emphasis, Ruiz petitioned his own CCYW with old proposals. He invited eleven Mexican Americans to join CCYW members like Karl Holton on another group with a long title, the Committee for the Betterment of the Welfare of Los Angeles County Youth of Latin American Ancestry. Ruiz requested \$100,000 for social, musical, and athletic activities along with leadership training and social work services. But his budget was also bilingual. It set aside \$5,000 for a youth newspaper written in both Spanish and English and \$10,000 for a Spanish-language radio program. As with the Pan American Trade School, he couched his language ideas in wartime rhetoric to appeal to the CCYW, arguing that the Zoot Suit Riots “has given aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States.” To break down the racial overtones of the delinquency discussion, Ruiz believed his plan “would assist in the

⁷⁴ Karl Holton, “Progress Report on the Work of the California Youth Authority,” April 20, 1944, and John Carroll to Ruiz, January 7, 1944, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 1).

successful prosecution of the war by limiting the effects of enemy action.” But the East L.A. lawyer could not convince the CCYW to fund his \$15,000 language proposals.⁷⁵

He was also frustrated with the CCYW’s school reform ideas. While the Citizens’ Committee campaigned to save the standard school day, it rejected Ruiz’s emphasis on racial integration. By 1943, military mobilization made California start splitting school into “double sessions,” sending separate sets of students to the same school in the morning and afternoon. The CCYW admitted that double sessions could divert educational facilities and labor towards the state’s growing defense industry, and it argued that this policy could not be based “on the amount of material and man power saved.” It investigated the impact of double sessions on curriculum, finding that shortened school days would increase “truancy which eventually leads to delinquency.” In a 1944 letter to Governor Warren, the committee chairman reported unanimous condemnation of the double sessions because “these are days in which youth need full-time constructive activity and leadership.” However, he refused Ruiz’s request to look into several discrimination cases in L.A. public schools. At the end of 1944, eight months after his statement to save the school day, the chairman wrote Ruiz that all “items on racial or nationality discrimination in California schools will be referred to the State Department of Education and the appropriate legislative committee.” Upon reading this letter, Ruiz realized more than just the limits of the Governor’s wartime committee. He also decided to redirect his efforts on behalf of Mexican-American youth toward the integration of public schools in postwar California.⁷⁶

Thus, the school desegregation campaign that would dominate national news in the 1950s arrived in Los Angeles as the war came to a close. In April, 1945, Ruiz announced the formation

⁷⁵ “To the Governor of the State of California, CCYW,” Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 2).

⁷⁶ To Ruiz, December 28, 1944, McKibben to Warren, April 13, 1944, and “Arguments Against Double Sessions in the Schools,” December 14, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 1). Brilliant writes that the CCYW urged Warren to repeal the school segregation law in November, 1944. Ruiz does take credit for this in his later writings, but the committee quickly dropped its desegregation demand the following month, as shown in McKibben’s letter. Brilliant, 82.

of the first Latin American legislative lobbying organization. While this integration initiative would influence lawsuits like *Mendez vs. Westminster* (1947) and *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), it also revealed what Ruiz had learned during the war. As with the CCLAY, he drew on his ties to East L.A.'s Mexican elite, like Spanish-speaking business leaders and the Mexican consulate. As with the CCYW, Ruiz relied on assistance from Anglo officials in Sacramento. In fact, months after the Governor's wartime youth committee decided not to publicly comment on racial discrimination in schools, Ruiz remembered with rose-colored nostalgia that the CCYW had "received the desegregation measure favorably." Similarly, wartime events drove Earl Warren's behavior during the desegregation debate. As Warren watched the return of Japanese American citizens whom he had evacuated, he embraced racial integration as a fundamental right. The Japanese themselves, after three years of isolation, reacted differently to desegregation than Mexican activists like Ruiz did. By focusing on the role of language education in postwar Los Angeles, the next chapter will provide a context with which to understand these different approaches to the heated discussion about school desegregation from 1945 to 1960.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ AIRMAIL to "Evans, Mexity," April 30, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RISE OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION: CIVIL RIGHTS RHETORIC LINKS LANGUAGE AND INTEGRATION, 1945-1952

Paul McCormick was a judge who had served on California's Southern District Court for 21 years when World War II ended. Appointed by President Calvin Coolidge, the Irish Catholic was a Progressive teetotaler who had attended mass with Mexican Angelenos for 35 years. His court had presided over the "Teapot Dome" scandal of the 1920s, a plagiarism charge against the Charlie Chaplin movie *Modern Times*, and citizenship hearings in which he occasionally naturalized Hollywood celebrities. In one decision that sentenced a Chinese drug addict to three years in prison, McCormick stated that it was "particularly vicious to sell narcotics to a white man. Trade in opium between orientals is not as dangerous." Despite this racial bias, so many Angelenos respected the Republican jurist that, in 1943, California's Democratic Senator urged President Roosevelt to name him to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. However, since FDR selected another nominee, Paul McCormick remained in Los Angeles after the war, where he made two rulings that shaped debates about language learning and public education in the postwar era.¹

In 1946, he issued the first federal court ruling against school segregation in the case *Mendez v. Westminster*. Historians have celebrated this court-ordered desegregation of four school districts in Orange County for its influence on the more famous 1954 opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education*, when the Supreme Court unanimously struck down racially separate schools. But a closer analysis of McCormick's text shows that his conclusions about segregated schools came from more radical questions about language learning. Before the *Mendez* trial, the

¹ Philippa Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican-American Rights* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 65-68.

judge assumed that “Mexican” and “Spanish” were different dialects. However, as McCormick spoke to more Mexican-American plaintiffs and their interracial legal team, he came to believe that the best way to teach immigrants English was to integrate them into schools with white students. The judge remembered this language acquisition testimony after his *Mendez* opinion was upheld, if modestly adjusted, by the Ninth Circuit Court in 1947. That same year, in a separate trial, McCormick ordered the U.S. territory of Hawaii to reinstate the Japanese language schools it had banned during World War II.

While scholars stress the significance of language in the *Mendez* decision, the case has rightly found its way into civil rights folklore as an early desegregation decision. Long before Earl Warren authored *Brown* as Supreme Court Chief Justice, he read McCormick’s decision as Governor of California, prompting him to support the integration of previously “Mexican” school districts in the southland. Philippa Strum’s detailed account of *Mendez* shows that language and citizenship mattered more than racial discrimination in this early desegregation trial, which ignored educational access for black, Asian, and Native American students. Mark Brilliant’s comprehensive history of California’s multiracial makeup in the “wide civil rights movement” also emphasizes the significance of *Mendez*, but he argues that the governor learned about language discrimination when he met Manuel Ruiz in 1943. This chapter will revisit Ruiz’s postwar lobbying campaign, which resulted in Warren desegregating schools for all races four days after the final *Mendez* verdict in June, 1947. But it will also look at Los Angeles’ reintegrated Japanese community, which benefited from the *Mendez* ruling on language education in other ways. Rather than narrowing desegregation to exclude races other than white and Hispanic, I argue that verdicts and legislation allowing language instruction in the 1940s fueled the rise of bilingual education as a civil rights issue in the 1960s, the topic of Chapters 5

and 6. These efforts framed school desegregation in the context of language learning, allowing Mexican and Japanese Americans to stand against discrimination after World War II in ways that they could not do during the Americanization era, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.²

Chapter 4 traces the link between language instruction and integration in Los Angeles from 1945 to 1952. Part I provides context for *Education for Cultural Unity*, a 1945 publication by the California Elementary School Principals' Association. After an interracial protest led by Roosevelt High School students that winter, school administrators combined this new desegregation demand with their own agenda to introduce bilingual education into the postwar curriculum. But Mexican Americans and Japanese Americans also had their own postwar integration ideas. Part II probes Manuel Ruiz's transition from proposing a "Pan American" language school in 1943 (see Chapter 3) to forming California's first Mexican American lobbying organization in 1945. Mark Brilliant argues that Ruiz's relationship with Earl Warren resulted in a law that ended segregated schooling in California in 1947, but his lobbying for language instruction altered discrimination across an entire region. From 1946 to 1952, George I. Sánchez hosted nine meetings of the Inter-American Conference on the Education of Spanish-Speaking People in the Southwest, which used the popular school desegregation debate to demand acceptance of a new scholarly concept called bilingual education. Part III discusses how Japanese schooling developed differently as Nisei and *Sansei* (third generation) citizens returned to Los Angeles after the war. Afton Nance published an article in *Education for Cultural Unity* about reintegrating Nisei students like the ones she had taught in Palos Verdes Estates before internment. The 1945 principals' publication was edited by her former supervisor in the coastal school district, and his survey of fellow teachers was one of the first practical experiments in

² Strum, Mendez v. Westminster; Mark Brilliant, *The Color of American Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 58-88.

bilingual education. These developments place Paul McCormick's two decisions about foreign language learning within the context of the postwar period. Although the return of Japanese language schools and the integration of Mexican American students did not happen overnight, the Angeleno judge's evolving attitudes toward the two communities demonstrate the link between language learning and desegregation in postwar Los Angeles.

Part I: School Desegregation and Bilingual Education from the Bottom Up

While Earl Warren and Paul McCormick played an important part in integrating public education, the initial desegregation drive in L.A. city schools was a grassroots effort led by teenagers at the end of World War II. It began one afternoon in December, 1945, when Polytechnic High School invited the anti-Semitic agitator Gerald L.K. Smith to speak. Hundreds of student protestors converged on Poly High's downtown campus in the most intense student strike before the Chicano Blowouts of 1968 (see Chapter 5). Differing accounts show that this campaign for racial tolerance came from student leaders who stood up to school board resistance.

Leo Frumkin, a sixteen-year old junior at Roosevelt High who organized the event, ran from a school board meeting to "start screaming at the cops" as they arrested other students. That got Frumkin apprehended, too, and he joined "I don't know, 8, 9, 10 kids piled into the police car." He remembered sitting in the jail for several hours with about forty students and listened as more angry teens spilled onto Georgia Street, "probably a couple hundred kids out there screaming and yelling... 'Let 'em go. Let 'em go.'" The city's health education director saw more students and fewer cops, saying the scene included::

"All the exciting elements of a red-hot political rally plus an old-time carnival: Klieg lights, sound trucks, loudspeakers, flags, placards, milling crowds, policemen, and phalanxes of actively bellicose 'pickets.' To enter the building one had to force his way through a solid battalion of these men and women, boys and girls, marching breastbone to shoulder-blade, and to the accompaniment of jeers, catcalls and occasional shoves."

Frumkin and the school board's doctor reflected conflicting approaches to racial tolerance in the schools. The youth activists urged the school board to protect racial tolerance while the administration advocated Smith's freedom of speech. Language learning was not a concern in the Smith strike, but such student organizing showed school officials that they needed to address civil rights issues at home now that the wars abroad were over.³

Frumkin and his friends in Boyle Heights tried to make their march for racial justice a symbol of integration as well. Frumkin recruited his Jewish classmates at Roosevelt High by denouncing Smith's pseudo-fascism, building a base of 500 students ready to strike. Then he drove to Jefferson High in South L.A., which had become a mostly black school after Japanese internment, jumped on a lunch table, and told the students "to protest this guy who wants to put you on the back of the buses and who is anti-black." On the day of Smith's speech, Frumkin led the Roosevelt rank-and-file on a three-mile trek from Boyle Heights to the Fourth Street Bridge. They walked away from Canter's Deli and the taco stands on Brooklyn Avenue, crossed the Los Angeles River, and marched through Little Tokyo—which had become a "Bronzeville" during the war. The Jefferson students joined them at the school board building near Bunker Hill, after an eight-mile trip from South Central. "The black kids would start jumping off the street cars and swelling the picket lines," Frumkin recalled, "because that was their only way of getting there." He had befriended Mexican and Japanese American classmates before the war, but Frumkin said that Jewish and black students made up the majority of protestors in 1945. Although not all ethnic groups participated, he was proud to have organized a racially integrated student strike.⁴

³ Leo Frumkin, interview by Kenneth Burt and Sojin Kim, September 19, 2001 *Boyle Heights Oral History Project* (Japanese American National Museum), 4-6 (hereafter JANM); John Goffin, "Free Speech," *Los Angeles School Journal* (hereafter *LASJ*) 29.16 (January 28, 1946), 22-23.

⁴ Frumkin interview by Burt, 4-6; Glen Jeanson, "Gerald L.K. Smith," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 86.2 (Winter, 2002), 27; Caroline Luce, "Reexamining Los Angeles 'Lower East Side': Jewish Bakers Union Local 453 and Yiddish Food Culture in 1920s Boyle Heights" in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, ed. Karen Wilson (Los Angeles: Autry National Center of the American West with University of California Press, 2013).

In addition, Frumkin's fellow activists forced the school board to adjust their attitudes about racial inclusion after World War II. Although the city's health education director claimed to "pity the high school boys and girls who picketed Smith and the Board of Education so enthusiastically and so fruitlessly," he attended the event to "see for myself how a rabble rouser rouses the 'rabble.'" Finding the rhetoric repugnant, he left early because "no emotional expression can exhaust nervous energy like hate." The doctor was one of many administrators whom the 1945 protest pressured to address minority education. In the summer of 1946, for example, the *Los Angeles School Journal* invited Afton Nance and other supervisors to a series of workshops on "Racial and Cultural Tensions in Los Angeles." But, as Smith spoke at Polytechnic High, Marie Hughes was planning a conference on intergroup relations that the L.A. County Superintendent of Schools would host a few days before Christmas. Weeks after Jefferson and Roosevelt students had been arrested downtown, educators from Pasadena to Compton began to consider intercultural education, desegregation, and the postwar problem of racial equality.⁵

Marie Hughes Plans for Postwar Desegregation and Intercultural Education

Intercultural education was trending to teachers across the country in 1945. But the L.A. conference was unique because Marie Hughes had a personal stake in the project. In 1940 she brought nineteen years of administrative experience in New Mexico schools to California. As L.A. County's specialist in minority group education, she was shocked to see so many segregated schools. When Hughes coordinated this conference with Helen Heffernan's old Office of Inter-American Affairs (see Chapter 3), she did not shy away from discussing discrimination. The report admitted that "elimination of group isolation and school segregation"

⁵ Goffin, "Free Speech," 22-27; "Workshop on Racial and Cultural Tensions in Los Angeles," *LASJ* 30 (January 27, 1947), 34; "Intercultural Education," *LASJ* 30 (April 14, 1947), 27; "The School's Responsibility for the Improvement of Intergroup Relations: Report of Conference, December 20-22, 1945" (Office of Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, with Office of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs) (hereafter "Intergroup Relations Conference").

was a major goal because “the pattern of ‘island neighborhoods’ ... is familiar to all who know Los Angeles County.” Hughes identified all minority groups subject to segregation, including Japanese Americans, but she made specific suggestions for the most excluded students, Mexican Angelenos. The conference advocated merging Anglo and Mexican middle schoolers into one building, even if the classes remained segregated, so they could “make adjustments” to each other before high school. It also recommended eight “procedures which build competence in intergroup education,” telling teachers to, among other things, “attack directly the myth of racial superiority through discussion and reading.” The conference concluded by praising the initial desegregation decision in *Mendez*, which was currently on its way to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal. Hughes called her colleagues “practical school people” ready to end discrimination in L.A. County. In many ways, this conference allowed her to expand upon the desegregation defense she had just articulated in July as an expert witness in the *Mendez* trial.⁶

In particular, Hughes used her *Mendez* testimony to address postwar understandings about language acquisition. “Children learn a language through hearing it and having a motive, a reason, for using it,” she insisted, advising McCormick that “the best way to teach English is to give many opportunities to speak English, to hear it spoken correctly, and have reasons for speaking it, and to enlarge the experiences which demand English.” She applied these ideas at the L.A. County conference, telling teachers to study their school community by asking questions like “What language is spoken in the home?” Segregated schools left Spanish speakers “forever handicapped,” she argued, because “they have no opportunity to learn the language and to become at home with other groups... as they move on to high school, they are timid, afraid,

⁶ Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 111-115; “Intergroup Relations Conference,” 11-13, 20-23. Hughes’ bibliography suggested many popular titles like *Americans All: Studies in Intercultural Education* (1942). For a more comprehensive history, see Diana Selig, *Americans All: The Cultural Gifts Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

confused.” Comparing the practice of “Mexican schools” with new language instruction theories helped Hughes make a convincing case for intergroup education.⁷

The *Mendez* plaintiffs made Hughes their last witness because her experiences in language instruction portrayed the virtues of integrated schooling. “There is no doubt, in my judgment, that children in the mixed schools, that is, children in association with Anglo-American children learn English much faster and much more expertly than they do in a segregated school,” she stated. Hughes hammered home this point by arguing for the mental stimulus of mixing students who speak different languages in all school situations, including recess and lunch. “Children who speak another language, such as Spanish, when in association with children speaking English have a reason to learn and to speak English,” she explained. “Moreover, they hear English spoken, and you cannot learn a language and learn to speak it well without hearing it.” L.A. County’s specialist in minority education made *Mendez* a landmark desegregation lawsuit by arguing that language learning was central to intergroup education.⁸

Marie Hughes was not the only Angeleno who linked language instruction to the new national trend of intercultural education. She was one of 300 L.A. educators who belonged to the California Elementary Schools’ Association when it printed *Education for Cultural Unity* in 1945. Along with Hughes’ conference and the student strike, this volume showed that Americanization was no longer the central issue in L.A. schools after internment and the Zoot Suit riots. But unlike earlier publications, Angeleno administrators introduced new ideas about bilingual classrooms. The degree to which language instruction innovations shaped, and were shaped by, racial integration became clear in the 1945 principals’ publication.⁹

⁷ “Intergroup Relations Conference,” 12-13, 20-23; Hughes quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 116.

⁸ Hughes quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 116.

⁹ Carey McWilliams called *Education for Cultural Unity* “one of the best handbooks yet issued in the field of intercultural education.” He also described Hughes as “a tireless and effective worker in the field of intercultural education on the West Coast.” McWilliams, “Round-Up,” *Common Ground* (Winter 1947), 95-96.

Principals Demand Desegregation, Define Bilingual Education

Although *Mendez v. Westminster* is remembered as a school desegregation case, when it came to trial in 1945 it was a product of postwar liberal pedagogy. To set this context, the historian Gilbert Gonzalez explains that “the California courts heard the *Mendez* case in a period of policy shift toward ‘intercultural understanding.’” *Education for Cultural Unity* explained this policy by boasting that “the elementary school is doing a real job in promoting democratic feelings toward all races and cultures.” While intercultural innovation was the explicit topic of the principals’ first postwar volume, it also introduced a new catchphrase to California teachers—bilingualism. That subject was personally selected by the editor, N.D. Myers, the school superintendent in Palos Verdes Estates, a coastal community south of Los Angeles with a history of racial segregation. In addition to soliciting essays from prominent civil rights leaders of all ethnicities, he called on his old employee Afton Nance, who had left Myers’ district after her Japanese students were relocated in 1942. While the editor asked Nance to propose an education plan for thousands of Nisei students who were returning from internment (see Part III), he conducted his own survey about beginning bilingual education in L.A. County. Further analysis of *Education for Cultural Unity* shows that language learning and school integration equally influenced Angelenos’ ideas of “intercultural understanding” after the war.¹⁰

It is fitting that Myers asked Helen Heffernan, along with another L.A. principal, to write the article “Intercultural Education in the Elementary School.” Intercultural curriculum, they explained, should help kids “become understanding, participating, contributing members of a world organized on the basis of social and economic justice and international collaboration.” To teach tolerance, they recommended children’s books, folk songs, and art activities from various

¹⁰ Gonzalez quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 158; Ben Watkins, “President’s Message,” *Education for Cultural Unity: Seventeenth Yearbook*, ed. N.D. Myers (Oakland: California Elementary School Principals’ Association, 1945).

ethnic groups. Bringing a range of traditions into the same lesson would show students that “people are more alike than different” and that “to be different does not mean to be inferior.” The curriculum celebrated America as “a nation of many diverse cultures,” but Heffernan admitted that discrimination still existed. She even seemed to justify segregation based on language:

“In California, there is a large group of children whose first language experience is with another than the English language. In addition to the serious social adjustment these children must make as members of minority groups, they are also confronted with the difficult problem of learning a new language.”

Heffernan wanted to end “destructive” segregation “gradually through processes of community education.” This tentative step toward integration showed the tensions between language learning and school segregation in 1945. The state supervisor of elementary education who had headed the L.A. Office of Inter-American Affairs during the war was not sure how students who spoke other languages could fit into her progressive vision of intercultural education.¹¹

Language was just one reason desegregation looked different in Los Angeles. Myers invited major writers from across the country to comment on intercultural education, including prominent African Americans like Langston Hughes and Alain Locke. But integration efforts in L.A. stood out because they brought together more than just blacks and whites. *Education for Cultural Unity* featured the Los Angeles Youth Project, which began two months after the Zoot Suit Riots to help L.A. avoid the violence of recent race riots in Detroit and Harlem. With the aid of Manuel Ruiz, the project’s Youth Festival Committee united more than 800 people from 25 different neighborhoods to organize an All-Nations Festival in Boyle Heights. Like an ethnic street fair, the festival featured dancing and story-telling, but “one of the most interesting and far-reaching was a program in which three minority groups, Mexican, Negro, and Jewish, held a round-table discussion of their common problems.” By engaging a conversation between three

¹¹ Helen Heffernan and Corinne Seeds, “Intercultural Education in the Elementary School,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 76-84. For more examples, see Elis Tipton, “San Dimas Intercultural Program,” below (pp. 156-157).

racial groups, a curriculum director contended, the California festival had gone further than its eastern counterparts in cultivating intercultural understanding.¹²

Education for Cultural Unity also offered a forum through which authors hypothesized why many progressives promoted intercultural education yet remained reluctant to end racial prejudice. Spanish-speaking activists argued about the relationship between language and Americanization. Sociologist Ruth Tuck described language as deceptive, because a generic Mexican “may speak imperfect English, or not at all, but he is familiar with payroll deductions, taxes, and easy payments.” While Tuck was skeptical about any Mexican’s ability to adjust, even “if he spoke unaccented English,” Ernesto Galarza argued that school was central to success. The chief of the Bureau of Labor Statistics told fellow Californians that “the American public school cannot be underestimated in this process of acculturation.” While segregated schools existed in the southwest, Galarza insisted that they “never took hold uniformly and uncompromisingly... the American creed of equality of opportunity left many doors unlocked.” The federal bureaucrat turned Tuck’s language analysis on its head. Setting aside Spanish-speaking abilities, he questioned the popular phrase “Mexican problem.” Since many “Mexicans” like him were born in California, he wrote that “it would be just as legitimate to speak of the ‘American problem’ apropos of the Mexicans.” Looking at language through their own lenses, Tuck and Galarza gave different opinions about how to improve public schools after the war.¹³

Meanwhile, Larry Tajiri took a totally different approach to intercultural education. Contrary to Galarza, his article called public schools one of many “barriers to acculturation,” along with language, “foreignness,” and residential segregation. Tajiri had taken flak as Nisei

¹² Beulah Dana Bartlett, “A Pattern for Community Cooperation: A Summer Program—Los Angeles Youth Project,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 100-102; “Letter to the Los Angeles Community Welfare Federation,” August 7, 1943, “The Los Angeles Youth Project Board,” March 14, 1945, and November 22, 1943, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 12).

¹³ Ruth Tuck, “Mexican-Americans: A Contributory Culture,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 108; Ernesto Galarza, “The Mexican Ethnic Group,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 35.

editor of *Pacific Citizen*, JACL's national publication, for endorsing internment during the war. In *Education for Cultural Unity*, however, he critically recalled California's public schools "before E-day" in 1942. Evacuation had convinced him that he did not have an assimilated childhood, despite being part of "a growing American-born and English-speaking generation" in suburban Los Angeles in the 1920s. He participated in annual Japan Days as a child, showing off his *judo* and *kendo* skills, and he joined the Japanese club as well. He cited similar activities for "the Chinese club, the Negro group and the Mexican American." Tajiri lamented that "these organizations were encouraged to hold their own social functions and, in doing so, retarded any impulses among its members for fraternization outside their own racial group." He insisted that ethnic activities in high school celebrated segregation instead of building "bridges of understanding." Just as Japanese evacuees were returning to California, the JACL editor wanted the state's schools to start over from scratch. This included language instruction.¹⁴

N.D. Myers may have introduced the idea of bilingual education to California educators. In 1945, the term referred to English language instruction for non-native speakers, but it did not yet include scholarship about the cognitive development of bilingual children. In the yearbook's bibliography section, "Problems in Bilingualism," only two of the ten publications came from California teachers, and one was the San Bernardino speech supervisor who had wanted to show Spanish speakers that, for certain words in English, "the tongue is placed above the teeth on the gum ridge" (See Chapter 3). In contrast to such "direct method" tactics, Myers sent out his survey "to stimulate interest in research and experimentation on the bi-lingual curriculum." Rather than defining bilingual education himself, he deferred to experts like Helen Heffernan (who had edited the San Bernardino supervisor's article) and Ruth Ginsburg, a Spanish teacher in Los Angeles who coordinated language workshops with Marie Hughes during the war. The

¹⁴ Larry Tajiri, "Barriers to Acculturation," *Education for Cultural Unity*, 25-28.

majority of Myers' respondents believed the public was ready for bilingual education in elementary schools. But they also shared stories in which communities contested bilingual programs. Myers' selective survey was subjective and anecdotal—but it indicated California's initial ideas that evolved into Afton Nance's bilingual classrooms of the 1960s.¹⁵

The survey results revealed the complexity of bilingual education. There was no consensus about what it should look like. Most experts told Myers “facility” in a second language was the least important aim of bilingual learning behind more social outcomes like giving “the minority group pride in its cultural heritage” and “a better command of English.” Some were skeptical about California's “bi-lingual tradition” and argued against any new language programs. Despite these extremes, Myers asked critical questions about bringing bilingual learning to Los Angeles. Who should teach in a bilingual classroom—homeroom teachers, specially trained instructors, or parents? In what grade should the bilingual program start? Most importantly, which languages should be included? He underscored the topic's controversy by describing “parent agitation” against classes in Spanish, German, and French. Myers did not mention what happened to the Japanese language schools of his former Nisei students who were just starting to return to Southern California. His survey showed how Anglo administrators were weighing bilingual education in 1945. The resulting discussion about how to teach English to immigrant students shows the extent to which L.A. educators drew from a broader desegregation debate as they defined a new bilingual curriculum after World War II.¹⁶

Part II: Mexican Americans Link Language Learning to Desegregation

Other Angelenos like Paul McCormick applied new notions about language acquisition to shape the course of national school integration policies in *Mendez v. Westminster*. His initial

¹⁵ Wedberg, “The Teaching of Speech to Mexican Children,” 218; “Problems in Bilingualism,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 124; N.D. Myers, “Foreign Language Instruction at the Elementary Level,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 72-75.

¹⁶ Myers, “Foreign Language Instruction at the Elementary Level,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 72-75.

opinion in February, 1946, was recommended reading in civil rights circles even after the Ninth Circuit narrowed its desegregation decision a year later. Philippa Strum has shown that groups like the American Civil Liberties Union and the brand-new Community Service Organization, which opened in L.A. and Orange Counties in 1947, re-circulated McCormick's conclusion that education "must be open to all children by unified school association regardless of lineage... a paramount requisite in all the American system of public education is social equality." Although this was not as elegant as Earl Warren's declaration in *Brown v. Board of Education* that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal," the judge raised radical questions about schools that were segregated due to language proficiency. This section examines how David Marcus, the Méndezes' attorney, and his clients changed McCormick's understanding of the Spanish language. Further analysis of how Manuel Ruiz and Marie Hughes wove language learning into their school desegregation demands from 1945 to 1952 shows how L.A. educators built bilingual education into their integration initiatives. While Mark Brilliant has suggested that language instruction was central to *Mendez*, I argue that McCormick's evolving view of language education led him to an emphatic opinion against segregated schools that became a model for civil rights lawsuits in California and across the country.¹⁷

Mendez v. Westminster: Language Lessons from a Desegregation Lawsuit

David Marcus' history with issues of language and discrimination began before *Mendez*. The son of a Jewish immigrant, he encountered anti-Semitism at USC Law School in the 1920s. Marcus married a Mexican immigrant and they taught their children to speak Spanish as well as English. His daughters attended Pasadena public schools and were "introduced to society" at the 1952 Las Damas Pan Americanas Debutante Ball. Marcus specialized in immigration and

¹⁷ Paul McCormick, "Conclusions of the Court," United States District Court, Southern District of California, Central Division, February 18, 1946, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 4), 7-8; Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 123-133, 151-153; Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 67. Strum cites Judge Frederick Aguirre's account of *Mendez*, 149-51.

criminal law, and he represented the Mexican consulate after their Spanish language schools had closed in the 1930s (See Chapter 1). He was familiar with civil rights litigation before the Méndezes hired him, having won the Southern District Court's first desegregation lawsuit in 1944, which ended separate swimming pools in the county east of Los Angeles. When Marcus first met Méndez, he informed his client about California's Education Codes, which codified discrimination, and prepared to confront Orange County schools with other arguments. Since segregation by race was still legal, Marcus made his case about segregation by language.¹⁸

The L.A. lawyer's most effective trial questions addressed language learning. They came in an exchange with one school superintendent who had written a master's thesis titled "Segregation of Mexican School Children in Southern California." Marcus challenged his claim that Spanish-speaking students had a "bilingual handicap" requiring separate instruction. He asked why the superintendent segregated Mexican Americans for language but integrated Japanese and Filipino immigrants into white classes, and was incredulous when the superintendent suggested that bilingual children were "retarded." Marcus reminded the official that children who speak both Spanish and English have "more comprehensive knowledge, at least linguistically speaking," than monolingual students—and he got the educator to agree that older children who learned a fourth or fifth language could excel academically. These questions showed that language instruction was central to Marcus' cross-examination. He was convinced that integration could only help Spanish-speaking students learn English. And Marcus was happy to highlight the inherent paradox of calling bilingual students "handicapped" and "retarded."¹⁹

During the trial, Marcus' logic persuaded McCormick that speaking Spanish was not a handicap. His Irish Catholic identity colored his sense of racial difference at the first pretrial

¹⁸ Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 39-41. Marcus represented Ignacio López in the lawsuit that desegregated swimming pools in San Bernardino County (see Chapter 3, 108-109).

¹⁹ Marcus quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 82-84, 106-107.

hearing, when the lawyers discussed what terms they could use in questioning. McCormick denied Marcus' request to refer to segregated students as children of "Anglo Saxon descent" and "Mexican descent" because these categories did not account for "Celtic children" like himself. The judge insisted on the terms "English-speaking" and "Spanish-speaking," which gave Marcus headaches. In the trial's early stages, McCormick interrupted Marcus to make sure he called Anglo students "English-speaking." But the plaintiff probed the judge, asking if bilingual Mexican students still counted as "Spanish-speaking." McCormick considered the question before responding that "Spanish speaking pupils... are not efficient in English," but Marcus insisted his clients' children spoke English fluently. This double discussion of language, in terms of proficiency and identity, moved McCormick to reconsider the meaning of "language." At the outset, however, he was willing to reason that segregation by language ability was acceptable even if dividing students by race was not. This meant Marcus' clearest path to victory was proving that Mexican students were fluent English speakers who deserved desegregation.²⁰

The lawyer looked to his clients to change the judge's understanding of language. McCormick revealed his uncertainty about race and language in a confused statement at the pretrial hearing, when he said "a person may be of Spanish descent or origin, ancestry, and yet speak English perfectly as far as grammatical expression is concerned and as far as knowledge of the language is concerned, but yet they do have an accent." So Marcus mentioned Spanish when Gonzalo Méndez took the stand. After a recess, the judge took over questioning and asked the Mexican-American witness if his wife, a Puerto Rico native, spoke English:

"A [Méndez]: She speaks English a little like me, with a little broken accent or dialect, you might call it.

Q [McCormick]: Well, of course, that would be natural. That would apply not only to the Mexican people. Any person of Latin or Slavic or Teutonic origin, or perhaps of other

²⁰ McCormick quoted in *Strum, Mendez v. Westminster*, 66-74.

origin, would naturally have some. It might be an accent or a brogue... I don't mean the accent. I mean the ability to express one's thoughts in words in the English language.

A: She can carry on a good conversation in English...

Q: Well, did you and she have any difficulty in understanding each other in what you call your Mexican language and what she would call her Spanish?

A: No, your Honor. We have no difficulty, although she claims that they talk a better Spanish in her country than my country, but it is all the same Spanish.

Q: You mean it is fundamentally and basically a derivation of the Spanish language?

A: Yes.”²¹

The judge's belief that there was a “Mexican language” separate from Spanish seems shocking in retrospect. But McCormick learned from his mistake and gained respect for the plaintiffs. Marcus must have sensed the significance of this exchange, because he called Felicitas Méndez next. When the defense asked if it could stipulate that she would verify her husband Gonzalo's testimony, Marcus said he had mainly called her so McCormick could hear her speak English. The judge admitted that “she seems to have a pretty good knowledge of the vernacular... as it should be spoken.” Before she stepped down, Méndez told McCormick how it felt when the school board denied her children's request to register at the white school. “We got kind of sore, especially me,” Felicitas said. “We always tell our children they are Americans, and I feel I am American myself, and so is my husband, and we thought they shouldn't be segregated like that, they shouldn't be treated the way they are.” This testimony about language and citizenship seemed to shift McCormick's sense of the main questions on trial. His questioning turned from the plaintiffs to defense witnesses, specifically the superintendent who subscribed to the “bilingual handicap” concept. If Mexican children had no access to English in a Spanish-speaking home, the judge asked, shouldn't they go to school with English-speaking students to learn the language? These relatively radical conclusions about desegregation in 1946 may have come from McCormick's conversations with the Méndezes about language and patriotism.²²

²¹ McCormick and Méndez quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 74, 101-102.

²² McCormick and Méndez quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 102-107.

Indeed, language acquisition played a central role in McCormick's desegregation decision. After asserting that English proficiency was "the only tenable ground upon which segregation practices... can be defended," the judge disproved the theory. After the trial, McCormick was convinced that segregation had the opposite impact on language instruction. "The evidence clearly shows that Spanish-speaking children are retarded in learning English by lack of exposure to its use because of segregation," he wrote. He did allow separate classes for some students with "foreign language handicaps," but only if there were a "credible examination" of language use by ability only—not by race. However, McCormick added that "such methods of evaluating language knowledge are illusory and are not conducive to the inculcation and enjoyment of civil rights... in the United States." His hesitation about credible language tests may have emerged after Gonzalo and Felicitas Méndez showed how much he had to learn about foreign languages like Spanish. It also indicated the extent to which language learning influenced the nation's first school integration ruling in federal court.²³

Before and After Mendez: Mexican Angelenos Propose Integration Projects

Language played a different role in the desegregation of Los Angeles schools because integration looked different in L.A. County than it did in Orange County districts like Westminster. Segregated "Mexican schools" still existed in East L.A. in 1939, where six of the 14 eastside elementary schools had an estimated 80 percent Spanish surname enrollment while Mexicans made up less than 35 percent of the population at the remaining eight schools. Under such conditions, it was not surprising that roughly half of Mexican Angelenos dropped out of school between the ages of fourteen and sixteen in the 1930s. During World War II, progressive educators like Elis Tipton introduced integration agendas that used language programs to produce positive learning environments. Discrimination continued after the war, but Manuel

²³ McCormick, "Conclusions of the Court," 7-8, 10; McCormick quoted in Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 125-126.

Ruiz turned school integration into a statewide political agenda. Ruiz effectively ignored the language learning programs he had promoted earlier (see Chapter 3) and focused on a different kind of “language,” the text on which California’s desegregation legislation would one day be written. Although Ruiz was less interested in Spanish language instruction than he had been during the war, his lobbying effort persuaded Governor Earl Warren to sign legislation desegregating schools across the state, making integration an integral aspect of the bilingual education agenda that began to attract scholarly interest in 1945.

Education for Cultural Unity featured a story by Elis Tipton, principal of San Dimas Elementary School north of Pomona in eastern L.A. County. She celebrated the San Dimas Intercultural Program, her collaboration with Spanish-speaking youth in a town of 2,700 citrus farmers, 20 percent of whom had Mexican heritage. Since San Dimas was so small, the segregated Mexican classes met in a small frame building behind the main elementary school, although the two schools shared a playground, where “ever-growing tension manifested itself in frequent fighting” after 1937. Mexican Americans who reached seventh grade went to the white middle school, where they benefited from better classrooms while suffering heightened racial prejudices during the Depression. In 1940, Tipton’s star seventh and eighth graders were determined to desegregate the school. So they formed an intercultural club that included every Mexican-American middle schooler and “as many other children as cared to join.” The “practice of segregation was abandoned” when school opened in the fall of 1943, the principal proudly reported, and “the expected storm of protest did not occur.” By working with their white classmates, Mexican-American students made integration a reality in three years.²⁴

While the intercultural club used recreation to attract interest, its language initiatives made integration permanent. When it looked like “adult prejudice could quickly undo all the

²⁴Elis Tipton, “The San Dimas Intercultural Program,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 93-96.

good work the school might accomplish,” the community arranged an adult intercultural club called “Americans All” and offered monthly meetings with Mexican-American potluck suppers, movies, and lectures in both Spanish and English. San Dimas started an integrated summer school in 1942 with music, dancing, art, and Spanish classes for all ages taught by two Latin American instructors. The adult classes climaxed with a dinner for 150 guests, including the L.A. County school superintendent and Jerry Voorhis, a San Dimas educator who served in Congress for five terms until Richard Nixon defeated him. There were no complaints when Tipton’s school desegregated in 1943—in part because the “Americans All” parents had met Mexican students who “spoke English exceptionally well.” Still, she admitted, a major problem was “the language handicap of the Spanish-speaking children,” who made up 45 percent of the school. In 1944, Tipton secured funds from the Office of Inter-American Affairs to hire two Mexican-American teachers to teach English to Mexican students. She even started a story hour for Spanish-speaking nursery school students, who responded to the bilingual presentations with what Tipton described as “an eagerness to learn never exhibited by our Mexican American children.” Thus, one of L.A. County’s early integration initiatives came from a language learning experiment.²⁵

Mexican Angelenos also directed a statewide desegregation campaign, but the only role “language” played here was in the wording of political legislation. Governor Warren signed a law repealing the remaining segregation statutes from the California Education Code weeks after the Ninth Circuit Court upheld McCormick’s *Mendez* decision in 1947. This was the culmination of a two-year lobbying campaign by Manuel Ruiz to revise the state education code. Ruiz’s correspondence with Warren as well as state senators and assemblymen suggests the centrality of school desegregation after World War II. It is significant to note the absence of language learning from this law, which was passed just five years after the East L.A. lawyer had fought for

²⁵ Tipton, “San Dimas Intercultural Program,” 94-99.

a separate Pan American School of Spanish-language instruction (See Chapter 3). Ruiz's campaign showed how Mexican educators had shifted their attention from Americanization toward school integration, which would shape postwar scholarship about bilingual education.²⁶

The lawyer turned to desegregation because it promised more political connections. But he had been disappointed when his colleagues on the California Committee for Youth in Wartime, including the Attorney General and Superintendent of Public Instruction, made only vague promises of future legislation. So Ruiz had no regrets when Warren did not renew his committee appointment after the war. Instead, he formed the first Mexican-American lobbying organization in U.S. history with as much fanfare as he could create. As a lobbyist, Ruiz fostered new relationships with the governor and East L.A.'s other representatives in Sacramento, Democratic Assemblyman William Rosenthal and Republican Senator Jack Tenney, who chaired the state's Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities from 1941 to 1949. Working with a Jewish liberal and California's leading anti-Communist may have created a tenuous alliance. It also showed the makeshift nature of Mexican-Americans' political agenda after the war. While Ruiz left language learning out of his political lobbying to avoid extra roadblocks, his desegregation campaign became ingrained in postwar theories about bilingual education.²⁷

Looking to the state education code, the lawyer lobbied for a narrow form of integration. He asked the East L.A. legislators to repeal Section 8003, "which authorizes school districts in California to segregate children of Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Mongolian origin." He argued that some school districts labeled Mexican Americans "Indian" and sent them to separate schools. When the politicians proposed a compromise—removing "Indian" from the text—Ruiz

²⁶ Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 82-83.

²⁷ Ruiz to Warren, October 7, 1943, McKibben to Ruiz, December 28, 1944, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 4, Folder 1). For Tenney, see Scott, "The Sleepy Lagoon Case," 107-109; McWilliams, *North from Mexico*, 231, and Martha Kransdorf, *A Matter of Loyalty: The Los Angeles School Board vs. Frances Eisenberg* (San Francisco: Caddo Gap Press, 1994), 45.

had to reconsider his priorities. Was he willing to allow Chinese and Japanese Americans to remain segregated so long as Mexican students could share classrooms with whites? What response would he get from Earl Warren, who had endorsed Japanese internment three years earlier? What did Section 8003 mean by “Indian,” anyway? Ruiz resolved to distinguish Mexican Americans from other ethnicities, naming his lobby the National Origins Council of America. Emphasizing indigeneity, the Latin-American lobby tried to discuss desegregation without race by focusing on language, equality, and, ultimately, bilingual education.²⁸

In his initial press release, Ruiz showed that his main concern was to integrate Spanish-speaking students. The only discrimination he described affected “Latin American pupils ‘on the grounds that they may have some Indian blood.’” He cited segregated school districts in southern California, where “Mexican-American pupils in many instances have been required to attend school in dilapidated structures, far from their homes.” The report listed segregated schools across the southland, including the Méndezes’ school in Westminster. But Ruiz highlighted El Monte in eastern L.A. County, a school district with five elementary schools, “but pupils of Latin American extraction are required to use a tumbledown building.” This may have explained why a quarter of the city’s elementary school students were Spanish-speaking, but less than three percent of El Monte High School’s 1,400 students were Mexican. Despite discrimination in L.A. County towns like El Monte, Ruiz conceded that “the Los Angeles city school system has not practiced segregation except in isolated instances.” This showed that he was less concerned with the segregation of black students in South Central L.A., or the reintegration of Japanese internees. He would settle for desegregating only the “Mexican schools.”²⁹

²⁸ “Evans, Mexity,” April 30, 1945, and Ruiz to Senator Slater, May 15, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

²⁹ “Airmail to Evans, Mexity,” April 30, 1945, and May 14, 1945, “Wire Story, Dateline Los Angeles,” and Ezequiel Padilla to Ruiz, June 5, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

But his correspondence with state lawmakers showed the complexities of this compromise. While David Marcus was fighting for desegregation before Judge McCormick in 1946, Manuel Ruiz was negotiating a trickier track toward equal education. In seeking support from the state assembly, the senate, and finally the governor, the Latino lobbyist tried out other definitions of desegregation. In 1945, he persuaded Assemblyman Rosenthal to change the wording of Section 8003. This was his first achievement as a lobbyist, but it also undermined his moral authority. In 1946, Ruiz recruited Jack Tenney by appealing to the state senator's fears of "un-American activities." The East L.A. lawyer also corresponded with Earl Warren, who finally repealed the segregation code in 1947. Some historians credit the governor's action as a response to the *Mendez* ruling two months earlier; others suggest that Warren viewed desegregation as a way to counteract his wartime endorsement of Japanese internment. But Ruiz's role in Warren's repeal shows the tumultuous path that moved Mexican Angelenos from promoting Spanish language schools during the war to bilingual education as a civil right by the 1950s.

Working with William Rosenthal forced Ruiz to reflect on his political priorities. The legislator wanted to please one of his most active constituents in East L.A. But Rosenthal resisted full repeal of Section 8003. Instead, responding to Ruiz's charge that some school districts segregated Mexican students by calling them "Indian," he simply deleted the offending label and revised Section 8003 to say, "any school district may establish separate schools for children of Chinese, Japanese, or Mongolian parentage." Rather than hold out for repeal, Ruiz decided to work with Rosenthal's revision, although he lamented that "one can't very well carry on a crusade" for a bill that treated Asian Americans as second-class citizens. But Ruiz resolved to accept the limited revision and stress students' country of origin rather than racial identity.³⁰

³⁰ William Rosenthal to Ruiz, January 17, 1945, and Ruiz to Rosenthal, January 20, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

He spent two months playing with the text, trying to classify Mexican and Indian students in language that was “more creative and in keeping with the popular sentiment of Western Hemispheric Brotherhood.” Rosenthal’s final draft banned “separate schools for children who are descendants of natives of any of the other countries of North America, Central America or South America.” Instead of emphasizing the segregation of Chinese and Japanese children, the bill boasted the expanded access for the Latin-American community that Rosenthal (and Ruiz) represented. The lawyer stressed the bill’s international implications in a letter to the assembly education committee, reasoning that integration was critical at a time “when the nations of the earth are gathering at San Francisco” to negotiate the United Nations Charter. Ruiz even wrote a letter in Spanish to Mexico’s U.N. delegation, urging them to make the short trip to the state assembly in Sacramento, because “segregation prevents assimilation, and thereby defeats the purpose of this nation’s good neighbor policy.” As a lobbyist, the lawyer looked to foreign relations, rather than language learning, to demand desegregation after the war.³¹

But Ruiz lacked support in the state senate education committee, where a tie vote killed the bill in 1945. This led the lawyer to try a variety of tactics. He appealed directly to school districts, urging voluntary integration. That spring he secured a pledge from the El Monte school board that it would redistrict “without gerrymandering in such a way that certain schools... be predominantly Mexican in character” before reopening in the fall. Ruiz reported that Los Angeles schools were already desegregating, even if he could not convince state senators that Rosenthal’s bill held “significance for Inter-American affairs.” So he told senators that Mexican students were just like earlier European immigrants who, in the public school “melting pot”, had Americanized. Ruiz speculated that “if immigrant Italians, French, or the children of some other

³¹ “Airmail to Evans, Mexity,” April 30, 1945, and May 14, 1945, “Wire Story, Dateline Los Angeles,” and Padilla to Ruiz, June 5, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

national origin had been similarly segregated, the process of assimilation into our national life would have been retarded over several generations.” He excused the history of Mexican discrimination in California schools, saying that “segregation was originally started because of the language barrier... this, however, is no longer necessary and in fact retards their [Mexicans’] education.” Ruiz tried to have it both ways with language. The promoter of a Spanish-language Pan American School during the war now argued that Mexican children were assimilated English-speakers who could only succeed if they attended integrated schools. Ruiz was willing to use language in any way that would help white Angelenos accept his community.³²

The senate education committee accepted the limited integration bill, on its third attempt, in 1947. But Warren wanted desegregation on a grander scale. His legislative aide asked Ruiz why Mexicans cared about a law that only “applies to American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and Mongolians.” Ruiz reminded Warren that the Assembly bill was defeated on a day when he was hosting Mexico’s Foreign Relations Minister at the governor’s mansion. Ruiz also recalled a 1945 encounter in which Warren “stated in strong terms that it was your belief that Section 8003 of the Education Code ought to be repealed.” Just three years after advocating the Japanese evacuation from California’s coast, Earl Warren wanted to end the state’s system of segregated schools. But parliamentary rules prevented Warren, and Ruiz, from repealing the offensive code in 1946. That made 1947 a key moment in the history of school desegregation. While Warren waited for Rosenthal’s and Tenney’s bills to sweep through the Assembly and the Senate, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals confirmed Judge McCormick’s ruling that Westminster school district could not discriminate against Mexican students like Sylvia Méndez.³³

³² “Airmail to Evans, Mexity,” June 20, 1945, Ruiz to El Monte School District Board of Trustees, May 14, 1945, Ruiz to Harold Kingley, May 20, 1945, Ruiz to Senator Slator, May 15, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

³³ Ruiz to Warren, October 1, 1945, Ruiz to Beach Vasey, October 8, 1945, Vasey to Ruiz, October 15, 1945, Ruiz to Warren, October 31, 1945, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 3).

Integrating Bilingual Education into the Fight for School Desegregation

One of the witnesses in *Mendez*, Marie Hughes, helped build academic support for bilingual education as public opinion swung in favor of integrated schools. A few months after testifying in *Mendez*, and a week before her L.A. County conference on intergroup education, she met Professor George I. Sánchez in Texas. The linguist organized the “First Regional Conference on the Education of Spanish-Speaking People in the Southwest” in December, 1945. Like Hughes’ minority education office in L.A. County, Sánchez engaged the trend toward intercultural education, which he called “the keystone in the structure of cultural relations between the United States and the other American republics.” When he proposed that the conference continue discussing Mexican-American education issues as a journal, the attendees elected him editor. He edited nine volumes from 1945 to 1951. By addressing all education issues that Spanish-speaking students confronted, these papers produced some of the earliest articles advocating bilingual education. Marie Hughes made sure that they investigated the relationship between language learning and school segregation. This section will address how Spanish-speaking educators took on the twin tasks of desegregating schools and overhauling language education. By 1951, Hughes and Sánchez saw the two issues as an integrated whole.³⁴

Sánchez gradually linked language instruction and integration. The 1945 conference addressed each issue independently. Language helped him redefine so-called “Mexicans” as “Spanish-speaking people,” since the majority were actually American citizens. Although language was likely this group’s “most common denominator,” Sánchez said the “Spanish-speaking” label had limits as well. While he admitted that two million people in the Southwest called Spanish “their mother tongue, their vernacular, ... in fact, for some the home-language is

³⁴ George I. Sánchez, “First Regional Conference on the Education of Spanish-Speaking People in the Southwest,” *Occasional Papers of Inter-American Education* 1 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1946), 3.

English; for others a part-English, part-Spanish vernacular is the rule.” This linguistic range reflected the diversity of “Spanish-speaking people,” but it was not the most pressing issue when the first panel published a “Statement of the Problem” in 1945. Hughes and Sánchez signed onto the urgent plea for a “socio-economic survey” to measure how each state’s “pattern of segregation, isolation, and discrimination” affected Spanish speakers. They cited California’s school statistics, where Spanish speakers made up 30 percent of elementary school enrollment but less than eight percent of secondary school students. They addressed the “language handicap which constitutes an ever-present and powerful barrier to full participation in civic life.” But this was one of many “other problems” in the final paragraph. Language and segregation appeared side by side throughout this inaugural conference, but Hughes and Sánchez did not yet see them as inseparable elements to improving the education of Spanish-speaking students in 1945.³⁵

That initial meeting emphasized “the problem of bilingualism” as an academic concept. For the first time, experts argued that bilingual education was a professional skill that required training “in every respect—teacher education, curricular reforms, research, texts, etc.” More important, they explained that non-English speakers needed to learn academic subjects in their own language at the same time as they improved their English vocabulary. In 1945, it was still novel to call “the teaching of Spanish to Spanish-speaking children in the elementary schools... a desirable practice having various worthwhile results.” The panelists even suggested that Anglophone students would benefit from a bilingual classroom, and they agreed that “the greatest value to all concerned would result from teaching Spanish to mixed classes of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking children.” But school integration was still secondary to the innovative idea of bilingual education. The panel, which included an education professor from the University of Southern California, urged “more experimentation” in bilingual curriculum

³⁵ Sánchez, “First Regional Conference,” 7, 12-13.

after the war. Such language acquisition research was original at that first conference, but it became central to schools of education across the Southwest after 1945.³⁶

Language was also one of many tools to integrate the schools. Marie Hughes reported this in the panel she chaired, which recommended five remedial measures to take on “the way to complete elimination of the segregated school.” Her integration plan called for teacher training in five fields, but only listed “preparation of reading and language materials” after skills such as “devotion to democratic ideals” and “understanding of the social and psychological problems involved in minority-group and lower-class status.” These tools might keep some students from dropping out of segregated schools, but L.A.’s minority education specialist sought more specific reforms as well. Although Hughes mentioned the undecided *Mendez* trial at which she had just testified, she also urged “such intermediary steps as moving the seventh and eighth grades... to the ‘Anglo’ school, assemblies, play days, picnics, musical participation, and other forms of inter-communication” to let Anglo and Mexican-American students feel comfortable with integration. When she described segregated schools as “a direct impediment to the improvement of our relations with Spanish-speaking people in international affairs,” Hughes hinted that integration was more urgently needed than bilingual education. Her hesitation to link language learning to desegregation showed that the two programs were not on the same page in 1945.³⁷

However, Marie Hughes made that connection the cornerstone of her comments at Sánchez’s 1951 conference, “Concerning Segregation of Spanish-Speaking Children in the Public Schools.” This time, the two educators attacked segregation by showing how it hurt English language acquisition. In Hughes’ remarks, language instruction provided the most persuasive evidence that segregated schools were “educationally unsound and undesirable.” She

³⁶ Sánchez, “First Regional Conference,” 14-15. For further information on the rise of bilingual education in Texas, where Hughes wrote this report, see Blanton, *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas*.

³⁷ Sánchez, “First Regional Conference,” 16-18.

called the idea that Spanish-speaking children could learn English in a classroom without English-speaking peers a “false assumption.” Spanish-speakers struggled to learn English in this environment because they lacked “a chance to *hear* the language spoken... and there is no incentive to speak in English” in segregated schools. As she had told McCormick during the *Mendez* trial, Hughes explained how children developed language skills by “associating freely with youngsters of their own age on the playground, going to and from school, during the lunch period, and so forth.” L.A.’s leading minority group educator went one step further in 1951, insisting that segregation actually retarded language acquisition. “The wonder,” she concluded, “is that so many of our Spanish-speaking people have become bi-lingual.”³⁸

At the same time, Hughes looked at language learning as the best reason to integrate schools. Segregation was as bad for Anglo students as it was for minorities, she argued, because it taught both of them “the myth of superiority and inferiority.” The supposedly superior pupils also stood to benefit from integration. “English-speaking children very much need to hear another language spoken,” she stated, “so that they will recognize that other languages are a part of the reality of the world.” Here, Hughes echoed the intercultural arguments that her California colleagues had made in *Education for Cultural Unity*. L.A.’s curriculum coordinator still pushed this pedagogy in 1951 because it was “even better when they attempt to learn another language.” This reflected the range of postwar proposals in language learning. Unlike the Americanization emphasis on teaching only English to immigrant students, progressive educators like Marie Hughes demanded foreign language instruction for white students in the era of integration.³⁹

George Sánchez seconded the idea that learning multiple languages benefited all students. But he used this principle to attack the argument that segregation by language was “illogical,

³⁸ Marie Hughes quoted in George I. Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation of Spanish-Speaking Children in the Public Schools,” *Occasional Papers of Inter-American Education* 9, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951), 50-52.

³⁹ Hughes quoted in Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation,” 52-54.

without foundation in fact, or contrary to sound educational theory.” While Hughes spoke from her experience in L.A., the Texas professor turned this language theory inside out, revealing racial biases in the pro-segregation side. As her editor, Sánchez was sick of seeing his opponents use the “so-called language problem” to justify segregation. In response, he decided to analyze English acquisition to prove that language was “an arbitrary, poorly thought-out, pseudo-scientific excuse” for segregation. One reason he gave was that Spanish-speakers who learned English now had an educational advantage over purely Anglophone peers. He also questioned the “assumption that all the English-speaking children... in the regular school know more English than all the supposedly Spanish-speaking children... in the segregated class or school.” Any minority who could command English as well as a white student should be in the white school. These insights into language acquisition as an educational process also served as an attack against those who believed that language differences justified racial discrimination.⁴⁰

Sánchez picked apart each opposing argument with expertise and common sense. As Hughes had done in *Mendez*, he challenged districts to prove that low language abilities justified the need for segregated schools. But he went further than Judge McCormick’s call for language tests by arguing that such assessments were arbitrary. “What is the standard of English proficiency which governs the point at which segregation begins and ends?” he asked. “Are all English-speaking as well as Spanish-speaking children measured against this standard?” The lack of language tests exposed racial bias, but Sánchez showed the lunacy of segregation that differed in individual school districts. Why would some districts separate all Spanish-speakers while others only segregated elementary schools? What about districts that separated races in different classrooms in the same building? “The very lack of uniformity,” Sánchez insisted, “is irrefutable evidence that the educational destinies of these Spanish-name children are being made

⁴⁰ Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation,” 23-27.

the butt either of amateurish, or wholly misguided... reasoning.” By demanding standards and fairness, the professor applied academic principles to his plea for integration.⁴¹

Sánchez’s segregation critique articulated emerging ideas about language acquisition and bilingual education. He questioned educators who thought schools “should revolve around the question of whether or not a given... group of children know English.” Rejecting this policy as “English *versus* Education,” Sánchez said students learned important lessons that did not emphasize English proficiency in many activities, from math and history to music recitals and the cafeteria. This interest in separating language and cognitive development also supported his integration efforts. “Even if English could be learned best under segregation,” Sánchez supposed, “there is no doubt but that the rest of education would suffer.” He continued that cognitive development trumped language proficiency in elementary school because, “at the very worst, the Spanish-speaking child needs only to acquire some 600 words in order to do as well in the first grade as his English-speaking fellow students.” Sánchez was confident that most Mexican Americans already knew these words in Spanish and, with minimal tutoring, could keep up with their Anglophone classmates. Rejecting the so-called “vocabulary deficiency,” the professor proved that language ability was no longer a valid excuse for segregated Mexican schools.⁴²

He insisted that desegregated schools required a very minimal bilingual education program. Sánchez started with the language tests that he and Judge McCormick had agreed upon. He wanted a narrow exam which “should measure, not English in all its aspects, but *the English which is basic to the school activities of that class.*” (Emphasis in original). He had already argued that non-English-speaking students were capable of most elementary school activities, but Sánchez said this test would determine which students needed extra language lessons. He cited

⁴¹ Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation,” 28-31.

⁴² Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation,” 23-31.

speaking drills to help change “the child’s pronunciation of *thees* to *this*.” To show that Mexican children were not unique, the Texan added that Anglo youth required similar sessions in “correcting *payner* to *painter*, or *ya’ll* to *you all*.” Sánchez sought only slight changes because merely attending schools with white children would make language acquisition easier for Mexican Americans. Spanish speakers could develop their English skills at recess and in gym class, but they would also benefit from better self-esteem. Calling it “contrary to American educational principles” for draining students’ desire to come to classes that made them feel inferior, the professor pinned his integration pitch on language learning. The “deleterious effect of segregation upon language development constitutes one of the principal obstacles to the educational growth of Spanish-speaking children,” Sánchez stated. “If one adds to this the undesirable psychological and emotional effects of segregation upon these students, the sum is a formidable handicap.” Thus, by 1951, the Mexican American scholar had inverted the phrase “language handicap” from a justification of segregation to a repudiation of it.⁴³

Sánchez had carried the language learning argument to its logical extension in the desegregation debate. He had publicly supported the plaintiffs in *Mendez* in 1945 as well as in a Texas school integration case in 1948. Correspondence with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People showed that Sánchez saw language instruction as central to school desegregation. After the NAACP, along with JACL, had written amicus briefs for *Mendez*, Thurgood Marshall asked Sánchez for affidavits from the Texas lawsuit as he prepared to argue what would eventually become *Brown v. Board of Education*. But Sánchez was skeptical. “I doubt very much that the affidavits which I have would be of any assistance to you,” he told Marshall, because they reject “the pedagogical soundness of segregation that is based on the ‘language handicap’ excuse.” Sánchez stuck to this position five years later, before Marshall

⁴³ Sánchez, “Concerning Segregation,” 33-39.

argued *Brown* at the Supreme Court, insisting that it was different from the two Mexican American lawsuits of the 1940s. “Our cases really were on the ‘due process’ clause,” Sánchez insisted, referring to nonstatutory, language-based segregation of Spanish-speaking students. This distinguishing of desegregation suits seems puzzling today, but Mexican American activists were not the only ones who made narrow links between language and integration. As Japanese Americans returned from combat and internment camps, they looked at language learning as an opportunity to resettle in Los Angeles rather than as a vehicle to desegregate schools.⁴⁴

Part 3: Postwar Reintegration of Nisei and Japanese Language Schools

While Marie Hughes drew upon the language experiences of her students in L.A. schools to support integration initiatives in Sanchez’s conferences and *Mendez v. Westminster*, a former teacher from L.A. County fought for a different kind of integration after the war. Throughout 1945, the federal War Relocation Authority (WRA) closed internment camps and allowed Japanese evacuees to resettle in cities across America. In March, the day before David Marcus filed *Mendez v. Westminster* in federal district court, the WRA director sent camp education materials to California’s Superintendent of Public Instruction to help local “school officials dealing with the adjustment problem that will prevail with the return of these children to normal school work.” Three months later, at the final commencement ceremonies of Manzanar High School, the camp’s Buddhist minister and Catholic priest delivered the Baccalaureate in Japanese and English, respectively. Language education did not factor into that evening’s speeches about the reintegration of the Issei, Nisei, and *Sansei* (third-generation) into American society. However, as the *Nikkei* (all generations of Japanese emigrants and their descendants) reflected on their language restrictions under incarceration, educators like Afton Nance insisted that inclusion

⁴⁴ Sánchez quoted in Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 84-85.

and assimilation were more pressing policies than language instruction. Japanese Angelenos like Mary Oyama illustrated how language ability facilitated school reintegration.⁴⁵

Afton Nance offered a practical perspective on Nisei reintegration. Her article in *Education for Cultural Unity*, “The Return of the Nisei,” argued that public schools could balance Nikkei desires for full inclusion with worries about post-evacuation resentment. She called on “California educators to take a position of leadership in the reintegration” of Japanese children because it was teachers who had Americanized them in the first place. As a rural schools supervisor in Riverside County who had taught Nisei students in Palos Verdes Estates before the war (see Chapter 3), Nance first proposed her plan for reintegration in a speech to Southern California principals in Ontario, just east of L.A. County. There, she reunited with N.D. Myers, her former supervisor at Palos Verdes Estates who was editing *Education for Cultural Unity*. Myers may have introduced her to Helen Heffernan, who was on her way to Japan as an educational consultant. When Heffernan hired Nance at the State Department of Education three years later, it showed how Nisei reintegration had put teachers in leadership positions.⁴⁶

Nance argued that many evacuated students suffered little, if any, assimilation setbacks in internment camp schools. She praised the schools’ “strong academic records” and was even surprised by the “somewhat greater participation in the democratic procedures of student government and class activities” available to Nisei students who no longer competed against classmates of other races. But Nance insisted that the Americanized students deserved most of the credit for creating strong learning environments. Recalling her communication with students at Manzanar and Poston relocation camps, she said there was “almost a desperate clinging to

⁴⁵ D.S. Myer to Superintendents & Principals of Schools, March 1, 1945, Carey McWilliams War Relocation Authority Correspondence, Honnold/Mudd Libraries, Claremont College (Box 7, Folder 8M); “Annual Commencement: Manzanar High School,” June 2, 1945 Manzanar WRC Records, UCLA (Box 59, Folder 2).

⁴⁶ Afton Nance, “The Return of the Nisei,” *Education for Cultural Unity*, 65.

American ways, and letters from children in the centers to former playmates and teachers show they turn with longing to the life they knew ‘on the outside.’” For Nance, it was a foregone conclusion that Japanese Americans had the right to return to California. Dismissing a debate about delaying reintegration, she devoted her talk to a specific question: “How will they [Nisei children] be accepted when they return to California schools?”⁴⁷

Nance expected only minor problems for the returning students. “Individual cases of maladjustment will doubtless occur,” she admitted, and “some withdrawing tendencies may be expected, even aggressive behavior, as the pattern of camp life has tended to break down parental control.” Teachers should treat difficult Nisei kids like any struggling student, although they were aware that three years of incarceration for “a whole people, accused of no crime,” affected children of all races. “In some schools the precautionary measure of discussing the situation with the key pupils was taken,” Nance noted, “but in most cases the Tomis and the Kazues have come in, taken their places in the schoolroom, and waited their turns ‘up to bat’ on the grounds. The schools on the whole have done a good job of making democracy work.” But anti-Japanese sentiments still lingered, and Nance insisted that prejudice presented a “need for principals and teachers as community leaders.” This prompted her vision of postwar reform:

“Opposition to the return of the Japanese American group will not come from schools, but from our adult groups. We, as educators, have an obligation to be informed ourselves, . . . so that we will make the streets of California towns and villages safe and pleasant places for young Melvin Shiramizu, whose father died for the principles of democracy taught in some schools.”⁴⁸

Nance knew a number of ways to combat anti-Japanese advocates through school programs, but she was more passionate about public education as a tool of democracy. “We must make real for these young Americans of Japanese ancestry the faith that we gave them” before

⁴⁷ Nance, “Return of the Nisei,” 65-66; Nance, “The Re-Integration of American Children of Japanese Ancestry into the Schools,” California Southern Section Principals’ Association, February 24, 1945, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2).

⁴⁸ Nance, “Return of the Nisei,” 66-68; Nance, “Re-Integration of American Children” Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2).

the war, she said, referring to her past students in Palos Verdes Estates. “Most of us have stood at the flag salute with these Nisei boys and girls—we have held out the promise of ‘liberty and justice for all.’” But Nance was also proud that her L.A. County classes included Anglo and Mexican students alongside the Nisei, boasting that “before the evacuation these children were daily being taught in the schools that democracy meant freedom and justice for all, regardless of color, race or creed.” She believed that reintegrating the Nisei was part of the larger project of desegregation spreading across California in the wake of the *Mendez* trial that summer. Schools needed to show the state that integration could work, Nance argued, because “until the streets of California towns and villages are safe and pleasant places for Melvin Shiramizu, they are not safe for Rudy Garcia, for Tommy Holland, colored, or for any white child you know.” The English teacher did not link language instruction to her reintegration agenda, but she showed that the returning Nisei were integral to school desegregation after the war.⁴⁹

Mary Oyama shared Nance’s view. A Nisei activist and writer, Oyama had spent the war with her husband and son at Santa Anita Assembly Center in Los Angeles and Heart Mountain Relocation Camp in Wyoming. She wrote about her family’s return to L.A. in *Common Ground*, a liberal journal that included authors of color to face intolerance and foster among its readers “unity and mutual understanding resulting from a common citizenship.” The journal published Oyama’s essay, “A Nisei Report from Home,” alongside progressives like Pearl Buck, Langston Hughes, and Carey McWilliams. McWilliams praised *Education for Cultural Unity* in his regular column for *Common Ground*. The liberal lawyer from L.A. called the 1945 principals’ yearbook, in which Afton Nance had explained how reintegrating Nisei students was a first step toward desegregating schools, “one of the best handbooks yet issued in the field of intercultural education.” Mary Oyama may not have seen Nance’s article, but she agreed that Nisei

⁴⁹ Nance, “Return of the Nisei,” 66; Nance, “Re-Integration of American Children” Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2).

reintegration was part of a larger project that would reshape education in California. And she used her son's language experiences to give the ultimate integration endorsement.⁵⁰

In Oyama's multiracial neighborhood, the school was the site where reintegration was tested. Upon Mary's return to L.A., white friends met her at Union Station and took her family home, where "our Negro American friend Jean, who had been living in our house the years we had been away, was in the kitchen picking up the last of her belongings." In comparing pleasant reunions with old friends to her young son's return to a city he barely remembered, she could only hope that "adjustment to school would be just as simple." Seven-year-old Rickey went to a school where the principal knew many Nisei from L.A. and had visited Japan before the war, but the students did not know what to make of their new Japanese American classmate. Rickey complained that students didn't know whether he was Chinese or Japanese. Mexican American boys called him "Chino." But in the end, playground discussions helped the students make sense of their similarities. Oyama explained that Rickey used language ability to assert his identity:

"He told his fellow pupils that if he were Chinese he'd speak Chinese, wouldn't he, and if he were Japanese he'd speak Japanese... Later, when some one would inadvertently let out a 'Chino,' Eddie Olivas, his loyal Mexican American friend, would jump to his defense. 'Ricky's a good guy! If he wuz Chinese he'd be in China. If he wuz a Jap, he'd be in Japan. But he's *here*—see? *So what!*' ... The children learned soon enough by Rickey's speech and actions that he was just as American as any of them."⁵¹

Unlike Mary Hughes' application of language instruction in the name of school desegregation, language acquisition played a modest role in Mary Oyama's integration outlook. She worried when new neighbors were reluctant to socialize at first, but her husband learned that

⁵⁰ Carey McWilliams, "Round-Up," *Common Ground* (Winter 1947), 95-96. He also described Hughes as "a tireless and effective worker in the field of intercultural education on the West Coast." For more on Oyama, see Valerie Matsumoto, "Seeking 'Deirdre': Gender Roles, Multicultural Relations, and Nisei Women Writers of the 1930s," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 12.1 (1991), 19-32.

⁵¹ Mary Oyama, "A Nisei Report from Home," *Common Ground* 6.2 (Winter, 1946), 26-27. This transfer of residence was not always smooth in Little Tokyo, which was called Bronzeville during the war when many black families moved into evacuated houses. See Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

they had just moved from Puerto Rico and “could not speak good English” yet. After exchanging plants and pet food, the Japanese and Puerto Rican families became close friends. Oyama was also overjoyed with the generally kind receptions Angelenos gave her family in the early months of reintegration, calling the many welcome-home parties “Exhibit A’s in interracial or inter-American friendship projects.” Her article concluded by quoting Dillon Myer, the War Relocation Authority superintendent, that “the evacuation ‘has helped the Nisei to discover America and America to discover the Nisei.’” Oyama endorsed Afton Nance’s agenda to make Nisei reintegration a platform to end racial prejudice in California schools, but she did not promote foreign language instruction with the vigor of Mexican American activists. However, Angeleno efforts in Japan and the Hawaii territories made important links between Japanese language learning and school integration early in the postwar civil rights movement.⁵²

Overseas Americanization: MISLS Graduates Prove Patriotism in Combat

While educators and parents planned the reintegration of interned children into Los Angeles schools, General Douglas MacArthur looked to veteran linguists as he oversaw the military occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1951. MacArthur asked white and Nisei Angelenos to offer their expertise in language education as he developed a school system that supported his plan for postwar Japan. He relied on the 6,000 graduates of the Military Intelligence Service Language School to teach soldiers and officers the nuances of Japanese society. MIS officers’ postwar work achieved two breakthroughs for the Japanese-American community back in L.A. By helping MacArthur reform schools in Japan, they improved U.S.-Japanese relations after the war. MIS language work across southeast Asia persuaded a myriad of G.I.s that Nisei volunteers were patriotic Americans. The stories of Helen Heffernan, John Aiso, and many heroic MIS officers explain the role that language instruction played in the U.S. occupation of Japan.

⁵² Oyama, “A Nisei Report from Home,” 28.

MacArthur asked Heffernan to supervise the elementary schools of occupied Japan. This was not the first time she had taken a leave from her office as chief of California's Division of Elementary Education. Heffernan's work with the "Friends of the Mexicans" in the 1920s had prepared her to head the Office of Inter-American Affairs during World War II (See Chapters 2 and 3). After all, she remained in California and was familiar with the Spanish-speaking population. But Heffernan had spent little time with Nisei students in Sacramento before she flew to Japan in the fall of 1945, shortly after co-authoring an article in *Education for Cultural Unity* with a Los Angeles elementary school principal (See Part 1). In Tokyo, she faced new challenges "in overcoming hostilities and suspicions, in securing facilities, and in coping with language barriers and military regulations as interpreted by military minds." But Heffernan worked with Japanese educators to re-write children's books as well as books on child growth and development. She also arranged for an exhibition of children's art from California to go on display in a bombed-out department store in Tokyo. After returning to Sacramento, Heffernan remembered speaking with Japanese children about American phenomena like her red fingernails. She was proud to have "worked in Japan not as a conqueror, but as one who sought to turn their educational system away from militarism, Shintoism, and racial hatred."⁵³

Heffernan may have learned the quirks of Japanese education from a fellow Californian, John Aiso. The MISLS Director of Academic Training had begun to speak about Japanese occupation as early as 20 months before the surrender. In November, 1943, Aiso sat on a panel about "International Problems After the War" with Vice President Henry Wallace. The army used his address, "The Postwar Reconstruction of Japan," to test public reaction to many policies MacArthur implemented after 1945. To spread democracy across the Pacific, Aiso argued, "Japan's military might must and will be destroyed, but the peace-loving elements of her society

⁵³ "Helen Heffernan Honor Grove," October 1, 1966, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2), 10-11.

must be given opportunity for normal life and growth.” While acknowledging that Japan’s emperor system relied on “insane militarism” that threatened American security, Aiso insisted that “no republican form of government could function successfully until such time as the populous [*sic*] has been trained for allegiance to concepts (such as embodied in our Constitution) rather than allegiance to ruling personalities.” The lawyer from L.A. laid out ideas for legal, agricultural, and tax reforms to set a path to civil society. Most of these proposals became part of Japan’s new constitution during the U.S. occupation.⁵⁴

But for policymakers who heard the speech—including Helen Heffernan—the most important reform was education, which Aiso called “the greatest factor in social reconstruction.” After teaching language in Tokyo and Minnesota, he wanted to end Japan’s prewar school system, whose sole purpose was “to train useful subjects of the Emperor, not so much a quest for truth.” His education agenda gave Heffernan and MacArthur two paradoxical tasks. On the one hand, Aiso argued, “this wall of intellectual isolation must be battered down and the Japanese given opportunity to engage in the free commerce of ideas and intellectual co-operation.” But stopping censorship did not mean the end of government intervention. Instead, the MISLS man advocated Franklin Roosevelt’s vision of an active government. In the midst of war, Aiso insisted that the Japanese “are entitled to freedom from want, equal opportunities of earning a livelihood in keeping with their ability to produce goods or render services” and “freedom from fear, fear of oppression and discriminatory treatment from the white man.” He hoped Helen Heffernan’s new elementary schools would contribute to all those goals.⁵⁵

Aiso’s speech about education reform spread the values that had helped him succeed from Los Angeles to Japan. But the activities of MIS alumni across southeast Asia may have

⁵⁴ John Aiso, “The Postwar Reconstruction of Japan,” *John Aiso and the MIS*, 19-23. The 1943 panel also included the president of Princeton.

⁵⁵ Aiso, “The Postwar Reconstruction of Japan,” 19-23.

accomplished more for the Nisei image in America than they did for children in Japan. The language school's student population peaked in October, 1945, two months after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when the military needed even more Japanese translators. Appreciation for MISLS began long before the occupation with Aiso's prescient 1943 speech. Since it was a public panel, he wore civilian clothes to keep the school a secret, but the host introduced him as an American of Japanese ancestry who "is performing specially important service" and whose views on postwar Japan are "too often overlooked." When the army's intelligence chief visited Fort Snelling the next year, he decided Aiso was also overlooked in other ways and promoted him to Lieutenant Colonel, the highest-ranking Nisei officer during the war. In 1946, before MISLS moved to Monterey, California, to begin training students in Korean and Russian, General MacArthur asked Aiso to join him in Japan. To purge the Japanese government of its most threatening imperial officials, Douglas MacArthur relied on investigations and opinions of loyal Japanese Americans—genuine war heroes—like John Aiso.⁵⁶

Many MIS alumni won military decorations, including five Silver Stars, 50 Bronze Stars, and 15 Purple Hearts. One Silver Star went to Kenji Yasui, who owned an import-export company in L.A. Yasui was a Kibei who went to college in Tokyo and took on a dangerous mission in Burma behind enemy lines in 1945. After swimming to an island full of Japanese soldiers, he pretended to be a Japanese officer named Colonel Yamamoto. "Japan has lost the war," Yasui told them in their native language, "lay down your weapons and follow me." Two soldiers blew themselves up with hand grenades and a third tried to kill him. But Kenji continued the ruse, barking out orders to swim across the river and surrender. "Afterwards he learned the Japanese had 20 rounds each and had a bead on him when he came ashore," recalled a former

⁵⁶ Aiso, "The Postwar Reconstruction of Japan," 19-23. The MISLS is now the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, home of the Aiso Library, <http://dlilibrary.monterey.army.mil/judgeaiso.htm> (viewed July 8, 2011).

State Department language officer in Tokyo. “Only because he started shouting military commands in Japanese did they hold fire.” Yasui earned the nickname “little Sergeant York” (a World War I hero) and, like John Aiso, was awarded the Legion of Merit. When MIS records became declassified in 1973, Aiso’s former students learned that Harry Truman had called them “our human secret weapons” and that, according to General MacArthur’s chief of intelligence, “the 6,000 Niseis shortened the Pacific war by two years.”⁵⁷

But these honors did not mean Nisei linguists felt accepted by the U.S. military. Upon graduating from MISLS, the army assigned these new officers to separate combat units so that every mission had a translator. Many white soldiers were not comfortable working with Japanese Americans. MIS alums “may have been the only soldiers in history to have bodyguards to protect us from our own forces in combat zones so we would not be mistaken for the enemy,” Aiso explained. Nisei soldiers found that language could cause discrimination just as easily as it could aid assimilation. They provided invaluable services by interrogating prisoners and translating captured maps, orders, letters, battle plans, and publications. But their extensive training in Japanese language and culture made some G.I.s suspicious about their ultimate loyalties. The combat experience of MIS linguists in the Pacific shows how all language experiences, positive and negative, prepared Nisei soldiers for the problems they would face in postwar Los Angeles.⁵⁸

After the war, MISLS alum James Oda of North Hollywood hinted that discrimination hurt the military more than the Nisei linguists. He was among the first fourteen Japanese Angelenos who responded to a MIS recruiting flier in the Manzanar mess hall in December, 1942, and Aiso appointed him Instructor of Propaganda Writing the following spring. In a 1982

⁵⁷ “Field Promotions,” *John Aiso and the MIS*, 195; Charles Hillinger, “The Secrets Come Out for Nisei Soldiers: Japanese-American Role in Military Intelligence Service Finally Told,” *LAT*, July 20, 1982, F1-F4; Jordan Steffen, “White House Honors Japanese American WWII Veterans,” *LAT*, October 6, 2010, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-veterans-medal-20101006,0,3141243,print.story> (viewed April 20, 2010).

⁵⁸ Aiso quoted in *John Aiso and the MIS*, 177.

article, he confirmed the popular wartime rumor that U.S. intelligence had cracked Japan's military codes. Oda argued that Nisei linguists made the "first grand coup" of the war in the Solomon Islands in 1942, when Angeleno Isaw Kusuda and two comrades found a thick military document in a Japanese submarine that had run aground on Guadalcanal. The Nisei officers translated a list of Imperial Navy ships, air squadrons, and bases in use during the Battle of Guadalcanal. They also found a Japanese Navy code book which they photographed and sent to Washington for thorough scrutiny. Oda also acknowledged the service of a separate linguistic minority, American Indians. Bilingual Navajo and Cherokee "code talkers" used their heritage languages to transmit telephone and radio messages to Allied bases across the Pacific theater. But Oda added that the Japanese Army had its own "code talkers" who used local dialects to deliver strategic secrets. This personal familiarity with Japanese, even more than linguistic proficiency, made the Nisei officers excellent intelligence analysts across the South Pacific.⁵⁹

But Aiso's language school remained classified during the Cold War, so MISLS linguists could not claim credit for their heroism for three decades. Oda attacked the U.S. Navy for rejecting the Army's MIS model of recruiting Japanese Americans and admitting only white students to its language school. The Navy viewed Nisei officers as national security risks unfit to interrogate prisoners, but this limited the number of linguists who joined the Marine Corps landings from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima. Oda argued this racist policy explained why the Marine Corps' casualty list in landing operations was ten times higher than Army casualties, calling it "one of the black spots of the Pacific war." Oda also addressed the Navy's claim that white officers broke Japan's diplomatic code, called Magic or Murasaki, before Pearl Harbor. The propaganda instructor admitted that U.S. cryptanalysts had solved most of Magic by 1940, before

⁵⁹ James Oda, "The Exploration of the Magic Code," *John Aiso and the MIS*, 98-105; "Recruiting for Army's Language School," November 28, 1942, and December 1, 1942, Yoneda Papers, UCLA (Box 30, Folder 1).

Japanese Americans could join the Navy, but not all. “It makes one wonder how fast a team of competent Nisei linguists could have cracked the Japanese enemy code if given a chance,” he hypothesized, adding that “the problem of deciphering Magic was child’s play as compared to the cryptographic method of the Japanese Army.” Oda’s postwar analysis of Nisei intelligence work shows how wartime diplomacy impacted the politics of language during the Cold War.⁶⁰

Nisei linguists were also effective at interrogating prisoners of war. Aiso, Oda, and other MIS instructors had trained them to treat Japanese captives “as individual human beings... rather than as animals or fanatical enemy soldiers.” Angeleno Karl Yoneda kept records from the Office of War Intelligence in India, where he wrote literature to lure soldiers away from the Imperial Army. The propaganda appealed to hungry Japanese soldiers with photographs of American cans of rice and corn alongside soy sauce and chop sticks. “You are like rats in a trap with no place to flee,” Yoneda wrote in Japanese. “Here is hot rice to fill your stomach. Sashimi and pickles.” Other propaganda included surrender passes that sympathized with potential defectors. “You have only two fates,” the passes read. “Annihilation... Or good treatment behind the Allied lines. Think it over. Ghosts in *Yasukuni* cannot help Japan. Death without meaning is only for fools.” Such passes showed that MIS officers knew that many Japanese men believed they would meet their family and fellow soldiers in *Yasukuni*, or “peaceful country.” The passes “never used the word ‘surrender’ in Japanese because we did not want to humiliate them,” Yoneda explained. “We always used a phrase such as... ‘We will not reveal your name. We will protect your life with honor.’” The Nisei linguists’ hoped their familiarity with Japanese culture would put the prisoners at ease and lead to effective interrogation.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Oda, “Exploration of the Magic Code,” 98-105. For further comparisons between MISLS and the Navy language school during World War II, see James Stone, David Shoemaker, and Nicholas Dotti, *Interrogation: World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq* (Washington, DC: National Defense Intelligence College Press, 2008), 67-68.

⁶¹ Stone, Shoemaker, and Dotti, *Interrogation*, 71-74; No. 11: “Is Your Stomach Empty?” Book “A” issued to Karl Yoneda, Ledo OWI, March 24, 1944, and No. 17: “Surrender Pass No. 1,” Ledo OWI, April 1944, and “Propaganda Work

Many MIS veterans had fond memories of the enemies they met. When Tad Ichinokuchi was assigned to the court martial of Tomoyuki Yamashita, who had conquered Malaya and Singapore earlier, he befriended the general's personal interpreter by lending him a Japanese-English dictionary to translate testimony in prison each evening. "He's quite a nice fellow and I often try to bring him a cigarette while we talk of Japan," Ichinokuchi admitted. But the Japanese Angeleno was also curious about the cultures of Yamashita's victims. He was moved by eye-witness accounts of the "Tiger of Malaya's" conquest because "testimony given by a Filipino in his native Tagalog tongue is certainly a beautiful piece of oratory." As a translator, he regretted that the Tagalog, "when interpreted by a slow stuttering interpreter, who pronounces his t's with a hissing 'ssh' sound, the testimony loses the shade of its colorful eloquence." Participating in interrogations and military trials showed Ichinokuchi the power of learning a foreign language.⁶²

Ichinokuchi worked to balance his interest in Japan with his American loyalties. During the trial, he asked why only two Nisei linguists were assigned to General Yamashita's defense team while the prosecution had fifteen interpreters and translators. But his court-martial records reveal an assimilated Angeleno full of good-humored fascination. "The whole thing is just like a Hollywood movie," Tad told a friend back in L.A. "First tears and sobs and then horror and laughter... This is your Manila Correspondent, Tad Ichinokuchi, signing off." He had grown up on a ranch in Norwalk, a rural town in southeastern L.A. County, where he picked strawberries with Issei, Nisei, and Mexican laborers. He had two childhood idols: Takeichi Nishi, the Japanese equestrian show jumper who won a gold medal at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1932, and John Aiso. Although Nishi became a Lieutenant in the Japanese Imperial Army, he remained

in CBI for OWI," February 2, 1946, Yoneda Papers, UCLA (Boxes 30 and 31); "Yasukuni Jinja Yushukan," <http://wgordon.web.wesleyan.edu/kamikaze/museums/yushukan/index.htm> (viewed October 5, 2011).

⁶² Ichinokuchi, "Court Martial of General Yamashita," *John Aiso and the MIS*, 142-143. This is a re-published a letter from Yamashita's court martial on October 31, 1945. This contrasts with the 21st-century interrogations witnessed by Ali Soufan, a Lebanese-American FBI agent who questioned *al-Qaeda* captives. Soufan, *The Black Banners: The Inside Story of 9/11 and the War Against al-Qaeda* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

popular in the U.S. When he died at the Battle of Iwo Jima in 1945, Aiso's linguists broadcast daily appeals to Nishi to surrender. Ichinokuchi once traded a month's ration of U.S. beer for "a kilo of rice and a can of Del Monte brand sardines." The sardines were an American product, but the Japanese American was desperate for *sashimi* and rice, although he "was too dumb to know that cooking rice in your helmet could take the temper out of the metal." These anecdotes show the complexities of Nisei linguists' outlook towards America and Japan, and the lessons about language they learned during the war and the occupation of Japan.⁶³

But bilingual Nisei were not always appreciated for their service. In 1947, General MacArthur invited Roger Baldwin to survey the state of civil liberties in occupied Japan and Korea. Baldwin, the founder of the American Civil Liberties Union who had organized the legal defense of teaching evolution in the "Scopes Monkey Trial" of 1925, was interested in the contributions that Japanese Americans were making to MacArthur's occupation. His remark that Nisei "constitute a bridge between Americans and Japanese invaluable in the process of democratization" echoed the "world friendship" agenda that Angeleno educators of all ethnicities had espoused before the war (see Chapter 2). The ACLU director had parochial assumptions of nationalism, insisting that all Asians believed America was a stronger nation, and that "the Nisei play upon the Japanese attitude of looking up to America, accentuated now by the Occupation." But Baldwin embraced their language skills as essential to MacArthur's mission. "The Nisei are, of course, exceedingly valuable aides to the U.S. authorities. Their bilingual abilities open jobs as interpreters, translators, and censors," he boasted. Noting the high demand for "educated bilingual Nisei residents" in postwar Japan, Baldwin was blown away by the patriotic duty that brought Japanese Americans born in the U.S. back to their parents' homeland. "One has only to

⁶³ Ichinokuchi, "Court Martial of General Yamashita," 142-143, Ichinokuchi, "John Aiso and the MIS," 1-2, 125-127.

glance through the special Occupation telephone directory in Tokyo for American officials, sprinkled liberally with Japanese names, to appreciate the importance of Nisei service.”⁶⁴

This did not mean the U.S. government rewarded all Nisei who lived in postwar Japan. In 1947, about half the 10,000 Japanese Americans stranded in the heavily bombed islands could not get the U.S. consulate to reinstate their citizenship. Baldwin sent the Japanese American Citizens League to meet and help any Nisei in this predicament, and a single newspaper ad in Tokyo’s English-language daily, *The Nippon Times*, drew thousands of responses. The civil liberties leader learned that four activities could deprive any American of U.S. citizenship, including working and voting in an enemy country. Baldwin believed the service of Nisei soldiers in the U.S. military proved the patriotism of most Japanese Americans, who volunteered to fight for the country that had just incarcerated their families. The ACLU and JACL took these citizenship restrictions seriously and, just as they had done in recent amicus briefs for *Mendez v. Westminster*, the civil liberties groups used language education cases to expose the injustice.⁶⁵

Baldwin challenged the laws against foreign employment and voting rights. He did not understand why the U.S. stripped citizenship from Nisei who voted for MacArthur’s occupation government, which democratized Japan. “They thought they were doing something to promote ‘Americanism,’ only to find it lost them their citizenship,” he lamented. “Scores were grief-stricken when the U.S. consul to whom they applied for U.S. papers told them the cost of their enthusiasm.” But Baldwin was more outraged by the restrictions placed on Nisei who had participated in public education. “I met young Japanese American women who had taught school in Japan during the war,” he said, “only to discover when they came to claim their U.S.

⁶⁴ Roger Baldwin, “The Nisei in Japan,” *Common Ground* 8.4 (Summer 1948), 27-28.

⁶⁵ Baldwin, “The Nisei in Japan,” 24-27. He acknowledged the Tule Lake segregates who refused to sign the loyalty oath, but Baldwin said most “disloyals” who “had voluntarily gone back to Japan, now expressed regret” and missed California (See Chapter 3).

citizenship that those in public school jobs had lost it while those in private school jobs kept it.” It fit the ACLU’s mission to defend public schoolteachers in enemy nations, but it is also easy to understand American uneasiness about reinstating citizenship. Thus, the U.S. government gave expatriate Nisei who taught in Japan’s state schools during World War II the same status as the Tule Lake segregees who refused to sign loyalty oaths (See Chapter 3).⁶⁶

Postwar Activism Links Language Learning and Integration in Law and Politics

While John Aiso and other Nisei set up a new school system in Occupied Japan, even more Japanese Americans were preparing for their postwar return to the Pacific Coast. The sheer magnitude of internment forced the former evacuees to focus on reintegration rather than more dramatic reforms like language learning or racial segregation. In Boyle Heights, for example, Leo Frumkin tried to radicalize his Nisei classmates when they returned to Roosevelt High School. In the fall of 1945, before he knew that the school district had invited the fascist Gerald L.K. Smith, Frumkin made Nisei reintegration a focal point of his race for student body president. The Jewish leftist upset the Roosevelt principal by calling Manzanar a concentration camp in his campaign speech. He befriended one Nisei on the football team, and convinced him to come to a Socialist youth group. He came “for maybe 5-6-7 months,” Frumkin recalled, but “his parents were just terrified, and understandably. They had just come out of the camps... So we never pressed him to go any further than just the youth group.” This is one reason no Nisei joined his student strike several months later. However, Japanese American activists found less radical ways to rally for language learning opportunities in postwar L.A.⁶⁷

The MIS linguistic work in Japan, along with the reintegration efforts of Afton Nance and Mary Oyama in Los Angeles, shaped the local language learning agenda after the war. While

⁶⁶ Baldwin, “The Nisei in Japan,” 27.

⁶⁷ Frumkin interview by Burt, 14, 31.

Nisei worked with other Angeleno activists in the ACLU on civil rights cases such as *Mendez v. Westminster*, the Japanese American Citizens League's organizing tactics were less confrontational than Mexican American advocates like Manuel Ruiz. Perhaps this was due to the intensely patriotic position MIS veterans had taken in rebuilding their parents' homeland on American principles of liberty and equality. Maybe it was simply the fear that internment could happen again at any time. But the fact also remains that Nisei leaders enjoyed more legal and titular success than Spanish speakers did between 1945 and 1955. For example, while Ruiz's lobbying efforts struggled to convince Earl Warren to integrate public schools, the governor named John Aiso the nation's first Japanese American judge outside of Hawaii. The island territories provided another legislative victory for Nisei activists in 1948, when discriminatory wartime legislation that banned private foreign language schools was thrown out by a judge in California's Southern District Court. The judge who reinstated Japanese language schools in Hawaii, Paul McCormick, was the same man who had ordered the integration of Orange County schools. This chapter will conclude by evaluating how McCormick's views on language education were informed by the testimony he had heard in the *Mendez* trial two years earlier.

While Mexican Americans were demanding school desegregation, the JACL did not risk its reputation in the public education debate. The Nisei organization's agenda against student absenteeism matched Manuel Ruiz's initial response to L.A.'s juvenile delinquency scare after the murder at Sleepy Lagoon (see Chapter 3). In 1946, the JACL joined with the school board's truancy detail to track down girls from Brentwood and Long Beach who were ditching school. In 1950, it kept a low profile when the Jewish Anti-Defamation League asked JACL to help mobilize voters in the student body elections at Los Angeles City College, which they feared was under the influence of Gerald L.K. Smith. Just as Nisei students had stayed away from the

protests that Leo Frumkin planned when Smith spoke at Polytechnic High School in 1945, there were no demonstrations during the 1950 LACC campaign, which Tom Suzuki easily won. That same year, however, the JACL joined L.A. city schools for a series of summer workshops that included participation in interracial panels, an address at a Nisei church, and a radio broadcast about intercultural education. The Nisei leaders were reluctant to speak up for truant teens or oppose anti-Semitic speakers, but in 1945 they eagerly accompanied Afton Nance and other school administrators to promote the popular proposals in *Education for Cultural Unity*.⁶⁸

Of course, many Japanese Angelenos did join the fight to integrate public schools. In 1943, the Munemitsu family looked to lease its 40-acre farm in Westminster before relocating to an internment camp. By signing the lease, Gonzalo and Felicitas Méndez helped the Munemitsus maintain ownership. Profits from farming asparagus and chili peppers also gave the Méndezes enough resources to hire an attorney and sue the Westminster school board for segregation. When the Munemitsus returned in 1946, they allowed the Méndezes to remain on the farm to finish the harvest—and the first year at an integrated school. But that was only one informal way in which Japanese Americans joined the desegregation debate. The JACL and ACLU filed a joint amicus brief in *Mendez*, arguing that the racially prejudiced testimony of the Garden Grove school superintendent threatened all students of color because, “if appellants can justify discrimination on the basis of ancestry only, then who can tell what minority group will be next on the road to persecution.” Relying on a war reference to drive the point home, they reasoned that “if we learned one lesson from the horrors of Nazism, it is that no minority group, and in fact, no person is safe, once the State... can arbitrarily discriminate against any person or group.” It is not surprising that the ACLU and JACL compared school segregation to the Holocaust after

⁶⁸ Scotty Tsuchiya, “L.A. Regional Office Report,” January 22, 1946; Tats Kushida, “Annual Report,” May 1, 1951, JACL History Collection, Japanese American National Library (hereafter JANL) (Box 2).

World War II. But it is also likely that Japanese families like the Munemitsus remembered their own internment experiences during their neighbors' desegregation lawsuit.⁶⁹

In 1948, a year after the Ninth Circuit Court heard his *Mendez* decision, McCormick was one of three federal judges who heard *Mo Hock Ke Lok Po v. Stainback*. Two Chinese school teachers took on a 1943 law passed by the Hawaiian Legislature called "An Act Regulating the Teaching of Foreign Languages to Children." The law was a local response to Pearl Harbor, closing the island's Japanese and Chinese language schools. Hawaiian Nisei were not interned, but their Japanese schools were "permanently abandoned" and "their buildings were voluntarily turned over to the government or charity organizations." After the war, three Chinese language schools sought to resume their programs by challenging legislature. Since Hawaii was still a territory, the case was decided in California, where McCormick and a Southern District Court colleague were joined by Judge William Denman from the Ninth Circuit Court. The appellate court's most liberal member, Denman had dissented from the majority opinion in *Korematsu v. United States*, which found Japanese internment constitutional. When his colleagues upheld *Mendez* with a ruling that was more moderate than McCormick's initial decision, a disappointed Denman wrote a concurring opinion insisting that any form of racial discrimination was unconstitutional. JACL attorneys must have been overjoyed when Denman joined McCormick in L.A. to decide Hawaii's language school law in 1948. Sure enough, the two judges who had most favored desegregation in *Mendez* reinstated the foreign language schools.⁷⁰

Just as desegregation was replacing Americanization in the postwar public school debate, the judges refuted Hawaii's assertion that learning foreign languages impaired immigrants. They

⁶⁹ Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 36, 133-135, 159-161.

⁷⁰ Milton Konvitz, "Law Restricting Teaching of Foreign Languages Held Unconstitutional," *Common Ground* (Winter 1949), 99-101; Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 141-146; Drew Pearson, "Washington Merry-Go-Round: California Discrimination," May 11, 1947, 3-4 (American University Archives and Special Collections), <http://www.aladin0.wrlc.org/gsd/collect/pearson/pearson.shtml>, (viewed October 4, 2011).

looked at language acquisition principles to counter the law's claim that the "use of foreign languages by children of average intelligence... definitely detract from their ability to properly understand and assimilate their normal studies in the English language." Putting pedagogy first, the judges argued that many children in Hawaii tended to "frame their thoughts and to express them in three distinct languages." Those included English, the heritage language, and pidgin, or "an extension of the lingua franca of the China, South Asiatic, and Malayan coast cities in which the foreign residents conduct their personal and commercial relations with the lesser educated resident nationals." Aside from the axiom that children who think in a foreign language should continue cognitive development in that language, the judges insisted that English speakers would benefit from studying Greek and Latin. Then McCormick and Denman rejected the notion that foreign language learning was not meant for "children of average intelligence":

"We do not agree with the defendants that such a denial to... such a large proportion of children of the constitutional right to secure a foreign language for them is warranted to secure the elimination of the harm it seeks to avoid for those of lesser ability. It is for the brighter ones that there is the greater gain in such attainment—again not only in personal mental growth and satisfaction and in increased business opportunities but, now, in opportunities in service to his government's need of foreign language experts."⁷¹

By stressing "international intercourse," the judges linked their language learning decision to a popular point in the desegregation debate. This nod to diplomacy, at the start of the Cold War, made intercultural education relevant to foreign policy discussions among political elites. A month after voting on *Mendez* in the Ninth Circuit Court, for example, Denman wrote to Earl Warren, urging him to repeal the State Education Codes. After pointing out that the U.S. Ambassador of India was married to a Mexican American, the judge told the governor that "everyone who has any knowledge of the vigilance of the Latin American Embassies in Washington knows that within a month every ambassador will have been informed of the

⁷¹ "An Act Regulating the Teaching of Languages to Children," n.d., Frank Chuman Papers, UCLA Special Collections (Box 530, Folder 5).

Westminster” case. When Warren decided to revise the education codes, the *Washington Post* reported, he told a state senator that “I personally do not see how we can carry out the spirit of the United Nations if we deny fundamental rights to our Latin American neighbors.”⁷²

Decided by the same judges in Los Angeles in 1946 and 1948, respectively, the *Mendez* and *Mo Hock Ke Lok Po* lawsuits showed the significance of language learning in the school desegregation debate that started the civil rights movement. In *Mendez*, Paul McCormick argued that integration was the best way to help Mexican American children learn English. After William Denman defended McCormick’s radical ruling in the Ninth Circuit Court, he used talking points from California elementary school principals, in *Education for Cultural Unity*, to push Earl Warren to remove racial segregation from the State Education Codes in 1947. In his memoirs, Warren suggested that his passion for school integration, so eloquently stated in *Brown v. Board of Education*, reflected his regret for authorizing Japanese internment during World War II. It is not as easy to explain the causes and effects of the 1948 lawsuit in which McCormick and Denman declared Hawaii’s limits on learning foreign languages unconstitutional, but it is reasonable to assume that both judges remembered the opinions they had just written in *Mendez*. Chapter 5 will examine how school integration efforts proceeded in Los Angeles after *Mendez*, but it will also analyze how bilingual education became common in California after *Mo Hock Ke Lok Po*.⁷³

⁷² Pearson, “Washington Merry-Go-Round: California Discrimination,” 3-4.

⁷³ Earl Warren, *The Memoirs of Earl Warren* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977). These claims have been disputed. See Richard Rodda, “Earl Warren’s Flawed Memories,” *California Journal* (November 1977), 378-379; G. Edward White, “The Unacknowledged Lesson: Earl Warren and the Japanese Relocation Controversy,” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Autumn 1979), 613-629, <http://www.vqronline.org/articles/1979/autumn/white-unacknowledged-lesson/> (viewed May 21, 2013).

CHAPTER FIVE

LANGUAGE LEARNING AS POLITICAL PROTEST:

MOBILIZING FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN EAST LOS ANGELES, 1960-1967

In the fall of 1963, Sal Castro got his first full-time job as a social science teacher in the Los Angeles city school district. The assignment at downtown Belmont High School was a homecoming in more ways than one, even though Castro was not a Belmont alum. He had been born in East L.A. thirty years earlier, and often visited his father in Mazatlán as a child, but the U.S. Army veteran had grown up downtown, close to Belmont, graduated from a nearby Catholic high school, and done his student teaching at Belmont. More interestingly, Belmont was only six blocks away from the old Polytechnic High campus, where Jewish and black students had demonstrated against an anti-Semitic speaker in 1945 (See Chapter 4). Castro channeled the charismatic leadership and organizing tactics that Leo Frumkin had used at Roosevelt High two decades earlier. The Belmont faculty quickly labeled its newest member an “outside agitator” who kept asking questions about the school’s racial inequality. But even Sal Castro did not realize that his first—and only—semester at Belmont would become a test run for the famous “Blowouts” of 1968, when thousands of Mexican American students would walk out of five high schools in East L.A. to demand, most prominently, bilingual education.¹

Unlike his two Mexican American colleagues at Belmont, Castro confronted the many injustices that 65 percent of their students suffered. As a volunteer counselor for Spanish-speaking parents, he noticed that no Mexican American kids were in the advanced English class, or on the student council. Castro decided to recruit his own candidates, but the student council

¹ Mario García and Sal Castro, *Blowout! Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 89-95, 337-338.

faculty sponsor disqualified each Mexican American application even though their grades were high enough to stand for election. After Castro convinced the vice principal to reinstate the students' eligibility, he organized them into an ethnic ticket, which they named the Tortilla Movement. But the young teacher crossed the line at the student council assembly when all candidates gave their campaign speeches. Castro had advised the students to end their speeches with a sentence in Spanish, asking their Mexican-born classmates to "*por favor voten por mí* [please vote for me]." Apparently, students were not allowed to speak in foreign languages at Belmont assemblies, so the principal stopped the assembly after the first Tortilla Movement speech. She suspended Castro the next day, and the district soon transferred him to Lincoln High in East L.A. A young reporter named Ruben Salazar cited the incident in a story he wrote for the *L.A. Times*. The politics of that story suggest the tensions that influenced the Chicano movement, a new generation of Mexican American organizing, as it drew national attention in 1968.²

Most scholars of the 1968 Blowouts have been social scientists analyzing the growth of grassroots organizing in the Chicano community. By emphasizing contemporary interest in bilingual education during the civil rights movement, this chapter places the walkouts into the continuum of language experiments in Los Angeles schools. Just as earlier Angelenos had promoted programs like the Home Teacher Act during the Progressive Era, L.A. educators inserted language learning into desegregation debates at the local, state, and national level in the 1960s. On the Eastside, the buildup to the Blowouts did not begin with the Tortilla Movement assembly at Belmont High, but activists like Sal Castro recognized the organizing power of Spanish and demanded bilingual/bicultural curriculum. In Sacramento, Afton Nance confronted the *Bracero* labor program as she worked to reform California's rural schools. Just as she had

² Ruben Salazar, "New School Plan Sees Bilingualism as Asset," *Los Angeles Times* (hereafter *LAT*), February 25, 1964, E2-3; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 95-100. Castro claims that he was a new teacher who he did not know about the Spanish-language ban at assemblies, but he admits that, "even if I had known about this, I would have ignored it anyway."

supported her old Nisei students while they were interned at Manzanar, Nance devoted herself to migrant children as a consultant for the state Department of Education from 1948 to 1966. She introduced California's first program in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in 1963. But Chicano leaders and progressive Angelenos were not the only ones interested in language instruction. In 1967, at the urging of Superintendent Max Rafferty, Governor Ronald Reagan signed a law intending "to insure the mastery of English by all pupils, but to permit bilingual instruction." This became the blueprint for the federal Bilingual Education Act that President Johnson would sign the next year, as the reactionary Rafferty won California's Republican primary for U.S. Senate. From Boyle Heights to Sacramento to Washington, these events reveal the central role language learning played in popular protests and elections in 1968.³

Part I: Angelenos Offer Early Examples of Bilingual Education Before 1968

Sal Castro's Spanish-speaking assembly was not the only event that addressed language instruction in California in 1963. While he tried to change the culture at his new school in L.A., two other Angeleno educators launched experiments that laid the groundwork for state and national legislation a few years later. Although Afton Nance had moved to Sacramento, she teamed with another former L.A. County educator, Helen Heffernan, to address the problem of schooling migrant children. After promoting wartime projects in both Japanese and Spanish language instruction (See Chapter 4), they embraced an even more progressive approach in rural school districts in 1962-63. California's pioneering program in English as a Second Language implemented ideas about racial and linguistic integration that progressives had advocated in

³ "Helen Heffernan Honor Grove," October 1, 1966, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2); Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed*, 229-234. In addition to Castro's autobiography, other studies of the Blowouts include Marguerite Marin, *Social Protest in an Urban Barrio: A Study of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1974* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1991); Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Chicana School Resistance and Grassroots Leadership: Providing an Alternative History of the 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts" (Ph.D. Dissertation, UCLA, 1997); Henry Gutierrez, "The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation: Los Angeles, 1962-1970" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1990); Kaye Briegel, "Chicano Student Militancy: The Los Angeles High School Strike of 1968," *An Awakened Minority: The Mexican-Americans*, 2nd Ed., ed. Manuel Servín (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1974), 215-225.

Mendez v. Westminster two decades earlier. But a more radical vision of language instruction came from Helen Heffernan's daughter, a teacher education specialist at USC, where Patricia Heffernan Cabrera opened the Rural-Migrant Teacher Corps (RMTC) in 1968. This program sought to immerse L.A. County teachers in the language and culture of the migrant communities they served. The summer retreat for intensive Spanish instruction was a far cry from the Americanization classes that Home Teachers had taken a half-century earlier. The Rural-Migrant Teacher Corps showed that a new generation of Anglo administrators was advancing the practice of language instruction. Whereas Helen Heffernan had been prepared to incorporate ESL classes into desegregated schools, her daughter insisted that the burden of language acquisition lay primarily with Anglo teachers who had to communicate with Spanish-speaking students.

From Manzanar to Bracero Children: Afton Nance Defends Migrant Students

After World War II, Afton Nance was attracted to language education for different reasons. Although she kept in touch with former Nisei students like Paul Kusuda, who had discouraged her from coming to Manzanar to learn Japanese, Nance's new job as rural schools supervisor in Riverside County introduced her to children from other ethnic groups, especially migrant families from Mexico. She developed a "model intercultural program" in Riverside schools, inspired by the first black professor at the University of Chicago. The Riverside intercultural program impressed Helen Heffernan, who hired Nance as a curriculum consultant at the California Department of Education in 1948. Nance naturally admired Heffernan's work with General MacArthur on elementary schools under the Japanese occupation, but she also learned about her new boss' wartime work at the Office of Inter-American Affairs (See Chapter 4). Over the next two decades, Nance remembered her Nisei students while fighting for Bracero children.⁴

⁴ "Afton Dill Nance Biographical Material," August 18, 1967, Nance Papers, JANM (Box 2). The black professor, Dr. Allison Davis, was a co-author with Nance in *Education for Cultural Unity* (see Chapter 4). Nance was a strong advocate

Her first efforts echoed earlier language experiments. She was still in touch with an anti-internment organization from World War II, which sponsored a 1956 survey about the educational needs of seasonal, Spanish-speaking farm families who took their children out of school to work in the fields. In one county church volunteers set up a school bus outside the migrant camps and offered “make-up” classes to the child workers. There was one key difference between this “make-up” bus and *La Escuelita*, the roving classroom in San Bernardino County in 1928 (see Chapter 1). Thirty years later, the instructors were credentialed teachers who spoke Spanish fluently. Unlike the earlier Americanization program, Nance’s allies believed that “teachers with a speaking knowledge of Spanish and experience in teaching bi-lingual children are a great asset to school for seasonal farm workers.” As Nance addressed the challenges of migrant children, she showed respect for Mexican culture. In 1960, she inquired about the Migrant Citizenship Education Project, which taught migrant workers how to apply for naturalization and how to protect their status as citizens. Although Nance moved onto other projects, her inquiries suggested that, in contrast to the L.A. Diploma Plan’s English-only emphasis (see Chapter 2), bilingual education could help immigrants initiate their own pathways to citizenship.⁵

Nance’s new project led her to study the challenges of migrant education. At the state’s second annual Conference on Families who Follow the Crops in 1960, she outlined a list of proposals to offer continuing education and special high school programs for migrants. In 1961, the Governor’s Advisory Committee on Children and Youth approved her proposed “Study of the Education of Children of Migratory Workers.” Nance surveyed superintendents across the

for the *Bracero* program, which authorized migrant farmworkers to enter the U.S. as temporary contract laborers. In 1961, she corresponded with James Roosevelt, Congressman from Los Angeles (and Franklin Roosevelt’s oldest son), in support of Public Law 78, the final two-year extension Congress granted to the Bracero program. National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Records, Bancroft Library (Box 6, Folders 16-17, and Carton 22, Folders 3, 16-26).

⁵ Dorothy Goble, “Education Today—Self-Sufficiency Tomorrow: Report on the Educational Project for Seasonal Farm Families in Santa Clara County, California, 1955-1960,” 2, 8, 13-14, and “Migrant Citizenship Education Project,” December 10, 1958, Florence Wyckoff Papers, Bancroft Library (Carton 5, Folders 47 and 46). The anti-internment group was the American Friends Service Committee (see Chapter 3). The Migrant Citizenship project had ties to Saul Alinsky.

Central Valley and visited six migrant school centers. She started by defining a migrant child as a student “whose parents work as seasonal agricultural laborers and who attends at least two schools in different districts during the school year.” This basic label helped her view Braceros with respect. It also achieved Nance’s goal of “keeping the study close to the educational needs of children,” leading to California’s first program in English as a Second Language.⁶

The education consultant conveyed her sympathy through statistics and personal interviews. Nance narrowed her survey to “the nature and extent of the retardation” of migrant children in schools. As in the roving schoolbus example, this “retardation” study resembled the 1928 survey from Chapter 1, but Nance’s follow-up questions showed that she would not accept inequality for migrant students. Instead, she asked rural superintendents how they were meeting Bracero children’s specific needs, such as language instruction. She also solicited ideas about how her Sacramento office could help migrant children, and for federal legislation that would help rural schools with their itinerant students. But Nance believed her on-site visits to six migrant school centers were more important than the surveys she sent to administrators. She went beyond measuring enrollment changes by interviewing each school’s superintendent, attendance worker, school supervisor, nurse, teachers, and middle schoolers. The questions show that Nance treated Bracero children with the same respect she had shown Paul Kusuda and his Nisei classmates at Manzanar. The survey ended with writing prompts for Bracero children such as, “The School Which Helped Me Most.” Just as she had pushed Nisei students to write her letters from internment camps, Nance still wanted migrant children to learn how to articulate their educational struggles and demands through the written word in the 1960s.⁷

⁶ Nance to Florence Wyckoff, January 20, 1961, “Proposed Study of the Education of Children of Migratory Workers,” n.d., Wyckoff Papers, Bancroft (Carton 5, Folder 48).

⁷ “Proposed Study of the Education of Children of Migratory Workers.”

Veteran Reformers Introduce English as a Second Language in 1963

Nance's study culminated in her collaboration with Helen Heffernan to establish California's first instructional program in English as a Second Language. The veteran educators introduced their ESL vision at San Jose State College in the summer of 1963, several months before the L.A. school district transferred Sal Castro for urging students to speak Spanish during an assembly at Belmont High. Their report articulated three elements of language learning that would make bilingual education central to Castro's Chicano movement a few years later. First, they endorsed the language acquisition techniques linguistics scholars had developed in the postwar era. Second, adopting the plaintiff arguments from *Mendez v. Westminster*, they insisted that racially integrated classrooms would help immigrant students gain English fluency. Finally, in urging language instructors to study and appreciate the culture of Spanish-speaking peoples, Heffernan and Nance embraced the notion that all children were better students when they took pride in their ethnic identity. Examining the ideas that came out of California's initial ESL conference provides the pedagogical and political context out of which emerged the East L.A. Blowouts and the federal Bilingual Education Act five years later.⁸

The pioneering conference proposed a variety of experimental ESL activities. In Santa Clara County, for example, schools designed social science lessons that would be meaningful to ESL students by teaching them about the diverse populations that had settled the agricultural areas around San Jose. To study the "cultural and economic aspects of life" for California's Spanish speakers, Nance invited a Mexican American activist who told the teachers about the organizing campaigns of César Chávez and the Community Service Organization. Instructors designed field trips to the canneries in Monterey as well as units about the immigrant groups who

⁸ Helen Heffernan and Afton Nance, "'Report on Conference on Teaching English as a Second Language,'" June 24 – July 14, 1963, San Jose State College, Wyckoff Papers, Bancroft (Carton 26, Folder 25) (hereafter "ESL Conference").

had come from Japan, Hawaii, and Mexico. ESL teachers called for “a special library” of children’s books in many languages along with a range of activities in “oral communication,” from reading and writing to dance, art, and music. The conference called for teacher training in advanced linguistics and debated the “impact of television on the Mexican-American child.” Heffernan herself led two discussions that gave divergent views about the nature of her new ESL program: “The Dropout Problem and the Elementary School” and “A Good Educational Program for Spanish-Speaking Children.” This shows that administrators like Heffernan and Nance were willing to try their ESL experiment in a variety of school environments.⁹

But the most innovative ideas came from ESL teachers themselves. One teacher had felt “helpless when a non-English speaking child would come to my room,” but the panels prepared her to identify the “handicaps” ESL students suffered. She praised reformers for experimenting with ESL, noting that it was “easier and safer to prohibit the speaking of Spanish on the school grounds and in the school than to take the imaginative step of teaching both English and Spanish” in the same room. Another instructor intended to organize classes into groups with two Anglo students for each Mexican American because “this ratio will provide a grouping which encourages the use of English.” At the same time, these integrated, majority Anglo classes should still teach an “understanding of the minority culture” because “the Mexican-American child should be proud of his heritage.” She wanted to “encourage teachers to use the talents and resources of the Spanish-speaking children.” This teacher hoped that teaching ESL would help students “feel proud of their native language and determined to maintain fluency in it.”¹⁰

Ideas from these first ESL teachers pushed Nance to frame the program in a context of contemporary reform. In 1966, she invited Helen Heffernan to give the keynote speech at a

⁹ Heffernan and Nance, “ESL Conference,” 3-11.

¹⁰ Heffernan and Nance, “ESL Conference,” 9-12.

conference on Mexican American children in Ontario, just east of L.A. County. Titling her talk, “The Promise of the Future for California’s Spanish-Speaking Children and Youth,” the supervisor spoke of language education as a vehicle for reform. Heffernan advocated ideas she had learned from the new organization TESOL (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages) which had begun holding annual conferences in 1964. She stressed Head Start for Mexican American families because English learners deserved “an opportunity to acquire the language of the dominant culture” before kindergarten, when they begin to develop cognitive abilities. The supervisor also addressed the benefits of children who master two languages in nursery school. “From this group comes our brightest hope of developing truly bilingual people to help us meet our problems of international relations more effectively than we are now meeting them,” she stated. Then Heffernan listed a number of language learning experiments as “a test of our inventiveness and ingenuity.” This included tutoring in language and reading, stocking school libraries with Spanish-language books, films, and audio tapes, and even “study trips to widen the horizons of children—in the immediate community for the younger children, further afield for the older ones.” While she did not specify which Spanish-language programs she wanted the state to endorse, Heffernan did want to “provide classes in Spanish for Spanish-speaking children so they can attain literacy in their own language.” All these proposals showed that she supported new academic theories about bilingual education.¹¹

Heffernan was excited about new language learning programs in Los Angeles. The L.A. school district had just published a 213-page manual, *Background Information Related to the Mexican-American Child*, to help teachers avoid stereotyping Spanish-speakers. This manual, she argued, marked “a change of attitude, an acceptance of social responsibility on a national,

¹¹ Helen Heffernan, “The Promise of the Future” in Afton Nance and Mary Peters, eds., “Conference on the Education of Spanish-speaking Children and Youth,” Ontario, Calif., March 25-26, 1966 (hereafter “Ontario Conference”), 5-8.

state and local level.” Heffernan admitted that most Mexican American students still struggled in school because they came from poor families with inadequate housing and medical care. “The problems are not all educational,” she emphasized, “but education must be a social conscience, a self-renewing stimulus for the society it serves.” The supervisor showed her social conscience by concluding the keynote with an eight-point plan that came from a Mexican-American Parents Conference at Lincoln High in East L.A. in 1966. The demands included hiring more Mexican-American faculty and adding an office in East L.A., but the first two points addressed language. Mexican parents wanted school counselors who could “speak Spanish in order to communicate adequately with the families of the students they counsel.” They also wanted schools to “place new and powerful emphasis on teaching Spanish along with English to Mexican-American students, at all grade levels so that the natural asset of being bilingual can be exploited.” It is not surprising that bilingual classrooms were a priority at the Eastside school where Sal Castro taught social studies. But it is worth noting that Helen Heffernan chose to end her speech by endorsing the agenda that would help Castro trigger the East L.A. Blowouts two years later.¹²

After the keynote, Nance moderated a discussion, “How Can the Promise Be Realized?” Three of the four panelists worked in L.A. city schools. One taught at an Eastside junior high which fed students into Roosevelt and Lincoln High Schools. The other two came from Malabar Street Elementary School in Boyle Heights, a school with more than 1,000 Mexican-American children between the ages of three and eight, two-thirds of whom spoke Spanish at home (see Chapter 6). Nance divided the panel into two parts: “social and economic trends” and language instruction. Despite the socioeconomic challenges for Mexican Angelenos, Nance argued that California could improve instruction by “introducing classes in teaching English as a Second Language... to young children, and utilizing literacy and citizenship programs for adults.” The

¹² Heffernan, “The Promise of the Future,” 9-13.

teachers on her panel went further—they discussed language learning even when asked about poverty and community attitudes toward education. The Malabar principal said the school's primary concern was "diagnosing what the learning difficulties are in order to develop a creative, dynamic, and appropriate program for language competency." The school started several projects to help students achieve English "competency" by third grade. It purchased portable microphones "to record on tape the confusion of Spanish-English, the vocabulary, the flexibility and complexity of language development." While the principal preached technology, Malabar's preschool teacher stressed parent participation. In contrast to the Progressive Era Home Teachers, he found that "holding the teachers in such high esteem has helped to create a feeling of 'hands off' on the part of our Mexican-American community." Still, using his own Spanish fluency, he recruited fifteen parents to visit his class, and seven mothers attended regularly. The Malabar teacher insisted that parents who came to class showed children they valued education. He knew that, in a bilingual family, actions could speak louder than words.¹³

After Nance's panel, the conference broke into groups to observe and discuss demonstration lessons by ESL teachers from across Southern California. Many of the lessons applied the latest linguistics principles. To emphasize that young children "need sufficient time for listening to the language before they are asked to speak, read, or write it," one kindergarten teacher demonstrated how she used filmstrips, television, and motion pictures to improve hearing. A first grade teacher explained how she offered a variety of experiences to supplement textbooks, including "study trips, the language approach to reading, and activities planned to build pride in the heritage from Mexico and Spain." To include the whole family, she urged other teachers to invite parents to school activities, make home visits (with "a Spanish-speaking

¹³ Nance, "How Can the Promise Be Realized?" in Ontario Conference, 16-17. The Malabar Street school became the center of a controversy surrounding Richard Nixon's bilingual education program in 1969 (see Epilogue).

companion if necessary”), and offer adult evening classes to improve parents’ English skills.¹⁴

These strategies seemed to merge academic ideas that bilingual education advocates endorsed during the *Mendez v. Westminster* trial with the practical applications of Nora Sterry’s “neighborhood schools” approach of the 1920s.

Angeleno educators offered controversial ESL demonstrations. Virginia Dominguez, a “Non-English Speaking Consultant” in L.A.’s East Elementary District, led a vocabulary lesson that introduced pupils to a word they did not know. She urged students to use it in their own sentences. Dominguez stressed “pattern practice, substitution drills and other activities that help the child to understand and use a given language structure.” Afterward, observers debated whether ESL teachers should translate words for non-English speaking students. A more divisive discussion was led by Evelyn Bauer, a UCLA researcher preparing ESL materials for L.A. County. She asked whether Spanish speakers should learn to read in their first or second language—and how they could balance this academic skill with the informal acquisition of English on the playground. Bauer warned against stereotyping all ESL children, but she also told teachers that studying how “young children learn their first language” would help them develop English as a second language. She concluded that integrating Spanish-speaking children with the rest of the student body provided “rich experiences and encouraging language development in both languages.” Bauer not only backed the ruling Judge McCormick had made in *Mendez* two decades earlier—she also articulated the agenda that Sal Castro adopted in the 1968 Blowouts.¹⁵

Nance invited an English professor from the University of California, Davis, to give the closing speech, “Contributions of Linguistics to Teaching English as a Second Language.” Like Heffernan, she placed language instruction in the context of desegregation and Lyndon

¹⁴ “Reports of Study Sections,” Ontario Conference, 28-32.

¹⁵ “Reports of Study Sections,” Ontario Conference, 29-30, 35-37.

Johnson's "Great Society." But the professor turned from teaching strategies to public opinion. She was concerned that Americans assumed, incorrectly, that "the world is made up of mono-linguistic countries... and that bi-lingualism is undesirable." She challenged this perception:

"Second and third-generation Japanese, Filipino, and Chinese students at the University of California at Davis tell you rather proudly that they know no Japanese, no Tagalog, no Chinese. This is serious, for we need BILINGUALS in teaching, business, and government very badly. Now the danger of this is less with Spanish speakers since Mexico is so close... Still as our relations with Latin America improve and as Latin America prospers, we will need education for Spanish-speaking Americans... I wish these students could realize what economic and educational opportunities there are for bilinguals."¹⁶

Bilingual Education Ideology Emerges from ESL Pilot Programs in 1968

Nance's 1966 conference outside L.A. County was the perfect place for this endorsement of bilingualism. She probably planned the sessions to support the initial state of ESL pedagogy as she and Helen Heffernan had first designed it three years earlier, but their itch for language experiments was inherited by Patricia Heffernan Cabrera. That year, Helen Heffernan's daughter took over the ESL program at the University of Southern California. She quickly created a curriculum that extended her "classroom" from USC's L.A. campus to the Central Valley and the Mexico border. In 1968, she offered her first summer camp in High Intensity Language Training. While her fellow Angelenos were assessing the East L.A. Blowouts, Patricia Heffernan Cabrera was creating what she envisioned to be a domestic version of John Kennedy's Peace Corps, which she called the "Rural-Migrant Teacher Corps" program (RMTC).¹⁷

The scope of RMTC showed how Cabrera's approach to teacher training differed from her mother's generation. Like the Peace Corps, she envisioned it as a two-year program in which teachers would immerse themselves in the migrant communities they served. The summer training workshop only resembled Nance's earlier ESL conferences for the first week, when

¹⁶ Sarita Schotta, "Contributions of Linguistics to Teaching English as a Second Language," Ontario Conference, 42-48.

¹⁷ "High Intensity Language Training" Pamphlet, July 22-28, 1968, Ruiz Papers, Stanford (Box 16, Folder 12).

Cabrera invited guest speakers to help student teachers develop “cultural understanding.” Cabrera’s experts included Professor Julian Nava, who had just become the first Mexican American elected to the Los Angeles School Board in 1967 (See page 219). Unlike her mother’s ESL training, these sessions about Spanish speakers’ socioeconomic status preceded six weeks of High Intensity Language Training. This reflected Cabrera’s belief that language learning was a vehicle to reach poor communities. She set out “to provide creative yet pragmatic responses to the bilingual education needs of culturally alienated Mexican-Americans who suffer the compound problems of migrancy and poverty.” To that end, she defined “language” broadly, arguing that “teachers who speak to the migrant poor in middle class terms are, literally, speaking a foreign language and actually impose barriers to learning... They become catalysts of change who bridge the gap between school and community, and introduce members of disadvantaged minorities to concepts of parent participation in school and community life.” Linking language to poverty pointed Cabrera toward a new language instruction approach. Rather than teaching English to students, she wanted teachers to learn Spanish.¹⁸

Cabrera called High Intensity Language Training “an educational experiment to teach specified basic patterns of Spanish in the contextual vocabulary of home and school to non-Spanish speaking teachers who will be teaching Mexican-American children.” The heart of her program was five weeks of “Saturation-Immersion in the Spanish Language” at a Franciscan retreat in Three Rivers, California, at the foot of Sequoia National Park. This secluded spot fit Cabrera’s premise that, “if the child’s cultural and linguistic orientation is different from the teacher’s orientation, it is the irrevocable responsibility of the teacher to reach and teach the child

¹⁸ “High Intensity Language Training” Pamphlet. One session was titled “Attitudinal Development of Low-Income Mexican Americans and the Impact of Education.” This approach differed from Nance’s “Master Migrant Plan,” which called only for the “introduction of English culture,” omitting the “Indian, Spanish, and Mexican cultures of the Southwest.” See “La Raza: The Mexican Americans” in *The Center Forum* 4.1 (September 1969), 7, Bilingual Education Papers, Chicano Studies Research Center, UCLA (hereafter CSRC).

in his cultural setting as he functions in his language community.” Admitting visitors only once a week forced Teacher Corps students to speak Spanish around the clock for over a month. Then they returned to L.A. County for a final week of training, continuing Spanish classes in the mornings and spending afternoons in the county’s Mexican-American communities, allowing them “to apply language patterns in real situations.” Cabrera called this a “pioneer project” because, unlike her mother’s generation, she wanted Anglo teachers to learn Spanish. But there were limits to this approach. For example, as an alternative to intensive language training for Anglos, she could have recruited Mexican Americans—who were already bilingual—as teachers. Still, in addition to developing “bilingual teachers with a sensitivity to differences between cultures,” Cabrera called for 100,000 Spanish-speaking teachers by 1970. Having inherited her mother’s aspirations—and remembering the East L.A. walkouts—Cabrera created a new model for bilingual/bicultural education at USC’s Rural-Migrant Teacher Corps program in 1968.¹⁹

Part 2: Mexican American Educators Address Bilingual Education, 1962-68

While Patricia Heffernan Cabrera and Afton Nance launched ESL experiments across rural California, Mexican Angelenos articulated their own ideas about bilingual education in the 1960s. Spanish-speaking educators envisioned different ways to reform language learning. Hilario “Larry” Peña, who supervised foreign language instruction in L.A. high schools from 1959 to 1968, struggled to start classes in Spanish and Japanese with a limited budget. Other Mexican American teachers talked about bilingual education with Sal Castro at annual retreats in the Malibu Mountains. But the two teachers who ran for the Los Angeles school board said little about language on the campaign trail. Ralph Poblano, who was on the Belmont High faculty when Castro told students to speak in Spanish at an assembly, did not argue for more bilingual

¹⁹ “High Intensity Language Training” Pamphlet; Anonymous document about the Federal Bilingual Education Act of 1968, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC (Folder 3).

classes until after he lost the election of 1965. Julian Nava used the same silent strategy two years later, when he became the first Mexican Angeleno elected to a citywide office since the 1880s. Nava's decision not to emphasize language instruction likely helped him win support across ethnic groups in 1967. But it also reflected the lack of consensus about bilingual education in the Mexican American community. The difficulties that discouraged Peña, Poblano, and Nava from fighting for more language learning set the stage for the 1968 Blowouts—but they also suggest that student demands were not radical departures from earlier reform proposals.

Hilario Peña Attempts to Expand Spanish Instruction in L.A. Schools, 1959-1968

Peña had an ambitious agenda as the school district's first Latino foreign language supervisor. While he served on the Mexican American ad hoc education committee, Peña also approved the first classes in Japanese at three schools. Although neither program was permanent, the introduction of Japanese and ESL represented formal attempts to teach the language and culture of two large, nonwhite immigrant groups in California. But Peña's frustration with funding restrictions limited the extent of his language experiments. When he left the job in 1968, the broad idea of bilingual education had been narrowly defined as Spanish language learning.

As the city's Mexican-American population grew in the 1960s, Spanish classes became more prominent. At the same time, L.A.'s stable Japanese-American student body expressed less interest in language classes than other academic subjects. The school district's biannual magazine index illustrates these trends. From 1955 to 1967, the number of Spanish publications purchased nearly doubled from six classroom sets to eleven—more than any other language. During that decade, Japanese-American teachers contributed to the magazine selection committees for the science and art departments, but never foreign languages, which included three to four Spanish-speaking teachers in the 1960s. The magazine committee launched Hilario

Peña to his first supervisor position in 1959. After the 1968 Blowouts, the school district named him the principal at Hollenbeck Junior High School, across the street from Roosevelt High in Boyle Heights. Peña's agenda not only shows how bilingual education became central to the Blowouts—it also explains why Japanese Americans stayed away from those protests.²⁰

This divergence did not have to happen. The Japanese community was just as vocal about language instruction earlier in the decade. At the request of parents and students, Peña added Japanese language classes to the curriculum in 1963. Three hundred students volunteered to take Japanese at three high schools across L.A., from downtown to the Valley. One Westside school, Venice High, sent an Anglo teacher to a summer institute in New Jersey, where he lived in a dormitory and ate with his Japanese instructors, who forbid students from speaking English. This would become a model for the Highly Intensive Language Training program that Patricia Heffernan Cabrera created for rural migrant teachers in 1968. In fact, Cabrera's colleagues at USC helped supervise the Japanese language experiment from 1963 to 1965. While successful, this pioneer program did not drive up demand for more Japanese classes. In contrast to the 300 students taking Japanese, Peña tried to make Spanish available to thousands of new children.²¹

His biggest burden came in 1965, when the L.A. school district made foreign language instruction in junior high schools mandatory. This mandate, which the State Legislature had passed in 1961, presented Peña with two challenges. First, while California now required extra courses, it offered no funding for language textbooks, which he estimated would cost \$5 million to \$9 million per year. In addition, the language coordinator would have to double the number of

²⁰ *Magazines* (Los Angeles City School Districts Division of Instructional Services), 1955-67; "Notes and Quotes," *Short Waves: To All Employees of the Los Angeles City Schools*, October 8, 1959, Mary Springer Papers, San Fernando High School Library (hereafter SHFS). The Spanish publications included a translated edition of *Life*.

²¹ "Japanese Will Be Offered at Monroe High," *Los Angeles Times* (hereafter *LAT*), June 12, 1963, E9; "Teacher in Training for Class in Japanese: Venice High One of First Schools to Begin Language Course in Fall," *LAT*, August 8, 1963, K14. By 1950, John Aiso and Japanese educators across California were more focused on immigration reform than on language instruction. Tats Kushida, "Annual Report," May 1, 1951, JACL History Collection, JANL (Box 2).

teachers he supervised, from 125 to 250—with no extra money. Still, Peña took the opportunity to promote foreign language classes and faculty. He declared that all sixth graders would take Spanish, explaining that it was the city’s most prominent foreign tongue—and adding that he had greater access to teachers and materials in Spanish than in other languages. Peña defended the new requirement, calling the 1960s an age in which “international radio and television have brought foreign languages and cultures into the living-room. Suddenly, we have been catapulted into a world that requires communication between people of different cultures.” He even urged the state to move the foreign language requirement before sixth grade, which Peña labeled the psychological “plateau of learning.” In the last year of L.A.’s Japanese program, the foreign language supervisor sought to offer Spanish to all junior high school Angelenos.²²

Peña’s biggest problem was his employer. Aside from lack of funds, the L.A. school district delayed the universal Spanish program in other ways. Its credentialing requirements prevented Peña from hiring the extra 125 Spanish instructors for junior high schools. This was frustrating because his phone had not stopped ringing since the initial call for teachers, and “many of the calls have resulted in new teachers for the district, but some of them have only proved to be headaches.” He compromised by asking Spanish-speaking entertainers to make movies and songs that showed “the value of a bi-lingual society.” Instead of more teachers, Peña settled for these tapes, along with “traveling Spanish teachers” who made classroom visits “periodically.” He agreed to exempt some middle schoolers from the language requirement, including “those who have Spanish proficiency beyond the level being taught, mentally retarded students, and youngsters with physical handicaps.” Peña argued that the exemption affected less than four percent of the city’s junior high students. While he hoped that the use of television,

²² “In the Spotlight: Foreign Language: From Sacramento: A \$5-9 Million Price Tag,” *Spotlight: A Newsletter for Employees of the Los Angeles City Schools* 1.3 (May 20, 1964), 2, Springer Papers, SFHS Library.

traveling teachers, and specialized training would enable the new Spanish program to survive with half the number of teachers it needed, the Mexican community was more skeptical.²³

Peña pledged to hire more Spanish teachers in the future, but the school district sought more language exemptions instead. In 1966, the L.A. school board secured a one-year exemption from the foreign language mandate. “We have the books, records, and filmstrips we need for this program but we simply don’t have the money to hire the teachers,” Peña’s supervisor explained after the first year of universal Spanish instruction. This proposal, which kept the sixth-grade language classes but prevented Peña from expanding to seventh-grade students, saved the school district less than \$900,000. A year later, when it asked for another exemption, the district tried to dismantle the sixth-grade program as well. This time, the California Board of Education blocked the L.A. school superintendent from reinstating the tradition of offering language classes only as electives. Yet in April, 1968, a month after the Blowouts, the school district once again wanted the language exemption. Despite Peña’s best efforts, he could not meet the state mandate for Spanish language instruction outside of one grade in the L.A. city schools.²⁴

Mobilizing Mexican American Educators (and Youth) at Camp Hess Kramer

Peña’s struggles as foreign language supervisor became a popular topic among all Mexican Angelenos, from students to administrators, before the Blowouts. They often debated bilingual education at Camp Hess Kramer, a Jewish summer camp in the Malibu Mountains that has hosted the Chicano Youth Leadership Conference (CYLC) every year since 1963. Sal Castro celebrates the CYLC as the event that inspired students to organize the movement behind the Blowouts. But Camp Hess Kramer also hosted many meetings for Mexican educators in the

²³ “Needed: Foreign Language Teachers,” *Spotlight* 2.11 (March 24, 1965), 2; “Enrollment to Pass 790,000 This Year,” *Spotlight* 3.1 (September 10, 1965), 1-3, Springer Papers, SFHS Library; Hilario Peña, “...And Answer Given,” *LAT*, May 29, 1965, B4.

²⁴ “7th Grade Spanish Exemption Sought,” *Spotlight* 3.11 (May 11, 1966), 1-3; “State Grants Exemption from Language Program,” *Spotlight* 4.9 (April 7, 1967); “Exemption Sought from Foreign Language Requirement,” *Spotlight* (April 15, 1968), 2, Springer Papers, SFHS Library.

1960s that were just as important to bilingual education policy. At the retreat, politically-minded teachers like Ralph Poblano confronted another influential Angeleno, Max Rafferty, who championed reactionary conservatism as state Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1962 to 1970. Although Rafferty often disagreed with liberal educators like Poblano and Castro, he shared their enthusiasm for language learning. Rafferty's work with Mexican Americans and bilingual education began in 1963, the same year Sal Castro urged students to speak Spanish in an assembly.²⁵

Six months before that assembly, Castro had volunteered as a counselor for the Spanish-Speaking Youth Leadership Conference, later renamed the CYLC. The primary goal was to “develop leadership from students who were already working hard” and inspire them to go to college—indeed, camp alums like Judge Carlos Moreno, whom Castro taught at Lincoln High, said the CYLC motivated them to apply to Ivy League schools. The CYLC selected about 100 to 150 Chicano students who were succeeding in segregated Eastside schools. But even the brightest students “faced discrimination in the schools and lack of encouragement from their teachers,” Castro recalled. “I found that they only saw the surface of the problems and didn't know what to do about them.” The CYLC met every Palm Sunday weekend, and Castro used several strategies to develop leadership over the three-day session.²⁶

Since the CYLC had no ties to the school district, Castro encouraged campers to talk about the injustices they observed at Eastside high schools like Lincoln and Roosevelt. Even more than applying to college, he wanted these Mexican American students to confront “a certain lack of self-esteem and even an inferiority complex.” Castro turned these “self-haters”

²⁵ The CYLC met at Camp Hess Kramer, overlooking the Pacific Coast Highway, because it was sponsored by a Jewish member of the L.A. County Commission on Human Relations who owned the Angeles Trouser Factory and hired many Mexican American garment workers. García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 105-106. For more on Rafferty, see Zevi Gutfreund, “Standing Up to Sugar Cubes: The Contest over Ethnic Identity in California's Fourth-Grade Mission Curriculum,” *Southern California Quarterly* 92.2 (2010), 167-177.

²⁶ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 104-109; Justice Carlos Moreno, “Sal Castro and the Chicano Youth Leadership Conference: The Development of Chicana/o Leadership Since 1963,” UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, May 26, 2006, 9. The CYLC only met for three days because Palm Sunday weekend was the only time the camp was available.

into “change agents” by discussing their experiences in L.A. city schools from a critical perspective. He got students to challenge standard curriculum by asking questions like, “Would the teaching of Spanish in the elementary grades be of particular significance?” and “Do you feel that speaking two languages is a hindrance or an asset?” This suggested to students that their ethnic identity, “instead of the problem,... became the solution.” Indeed, some students who organized the Blowouts believed the ethnic pride they exuded in 1968 came from Castro’s first questions about language learning at Camp Hess Kramer in 1963. “This is where I got my voice,” recalled one Roosevelt High student who attended the inaugural CYLC camp. “This is where my passion for justice was born in me. It changed my whole life.”²⁷

Mexican Angelenos vs. Max Rafferty: Language Learning Debates of the 1960s

While Castro called Camp Hess Kramer “the cradle of the Chicano Movement,” the Jewish facility also introduced older Mexican Angelenos to Max Rafferty. In 1963, a few months after the inaugural CYLC, 150 Mexican American educators, politicians, and housewives met in Malibu to greet the state’s new Superintendent of Public Instruction. Rafferty spoke bluntly, advising Mexican Americans “to rid themselves of the ‘bugaboo’ of inferiority complex and assert their rights in the community.” This did not amuse audience members like Ralph Poblano, Castro’s colleague at Belmont High. In contrast to the infamous student assembly in Spanish he would witness a few weeks later, Poblano dismissed Rafferty for giving a “politician’s canned speech” that contained “too many promises and not enough results comprise our past experiences.” Poblano’s critique was echoed by Hilario Peña and a Spanish teacher he supervised at Van Nuys High School. Rafferty responded by pointing out that, in his first year of office, he had hired two Mexican Americans at the Department of Education. This exchange

²⁷ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 104-109. Ruben Salazar, “Youths Study Problems of Mexican-Americans, April 10, 1963,” *Border Correspondent: Selected Writings, 1955-1970*, ed. Mario García (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 112-113.

showed that Mexican Angelenos engaged in debates in the Malibu Mountains which were just as heated as the discussions Castro conducted about bilingual education with CYLC students. Camp Hess Kramer was a site for bottom-up organizing before the Blowouts—but it also hosted elite educators who looked at language instruction from a variety of other perspectives.²⁸

Over his two terms as Superintendent, bilingual education became the key question in Rafferty's relationship with Mexican Angelenos. The Beverly Hills High School graduate had not met many Spanish speakers as superintendent of the affluent La Cañada school district in the San Gabriel Valley. As Natalia Mehlman Petrzela has shown, Rafferty did make good-faith efforts to educate Mexican Americans and "Limited English Speakers." In 1965, he visited Mexicali schools with a member of the Mexican Ministry of Education, began a textbook exchange program, and suggested transferring teachers between California and Mexico. Although this was merely an "experiment in goodwill" between the two countries, the presence of Spanish-language textbooks in science and social studies in Beverly Hills schools seemed as ambitious as the ESL classes that Afton Nance had introduced two years earlier. But such programs did not persuade Mexican Angelenos to support Rafferty. They were more wary of Eugene Gonzales, his associate superintendent who headed the Department of Education's Los Angeles office. In 1968, weeks after the Blowouts, Gonzales expressed his boss's dismissal of the Eastside protestors, arguing that teachers needed to stop students from taking a stand. In "highly urbanized areas, such as Los Angeles," he lamented, teachers have displayed "adherence to vocal if not militant groups not at all worried about whether Juanito or Jane receive instruction commensurate with ability or potential." These examples reflect the range of positions Rafferty took on language instruction issues. Although he advocated transnational experiments in Mexico

²⁸ Salazar, "Latins Urged to Shed Inferiority Complexes: Leaders Told to Assert Rights by Speaker at Conference on Problems of Area Group," *LAT*, October 28, 1963, 30.

in his first term in Sacramento, by 1968 he had alienated most Mexican American educators who saw the insincerity of his bilingual education ideas.²⁹

Mexican Angelenos had hoped that language learning could turn Rafferty's attention from students in Beverly Hills to schools in East L.A. In 1963, Hilario Peña and Ralph Poblano met Max Rafferty at Camp Hess Kramer as new members of L.A.'s Mexican American ad hoc education committee. But they only joined the committee after it had failed to include any Mexican-American testimony in its yearlong hearings about equal educational opportunity. As a result, when the committee representing the largest minority group in the Southland submitted 15 requests, the school board said it was too late for review. Such bureaucracy did not surprise Peña and Poblano, but it pushed them to recommend ambitious reforms on the ad hoc committee.³⁰

The committee could measure the extent of its impact in terms of language education. Dismissing assimilation as "historically inadequate," it stressed the central role of Spanish instruction in a curriculum that includes "both cultures (Mexican and Anglo) to the greatest advantage possible in creating a personality who will find dignity in both." Since the school board had already dismissed the committee's 15 demands, it proposed six simpler suggestions, four of which involved language learning. As always, it recommended recruiting and hiring more bilingual teachers, counselors and administrators. But Peña and Poblano also proposed Spanish classes for all students, including elementary grades, adding Mexican and Spanish literature to the curriculum, and an "intensive English oral language enrichment program" for students starting in pre-school. Poblano relied on language learning to make a persuasive case for acculturation. "A curriculum should take into consideration the needs of the Mexican-American

²⁹ Eugene Gonzales cited in Natalia Mehlman Petrzela, "Origins of the Culture Wars: Sex, Language, School, and State in California, 1968-78" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2009), 80.

³⁰ Salazar, "Problems of Latins Seen as Thing Apart: New Policy for U.S. Spanish-speaking Students Urged, September 16, 1963" *Border Correspondent*, 127-129. One committee member was Mary Ledesma, a working mother and PTA president in Huntington Park. Ledesma had just launched the first ESL class at her children's school. Mary Ledesma Resume, Summer 1980, Desegregation Collection, CSRC (Box 7B).

in accordance with his cultural heritage,” he said. “English and Spanish should complement one another as foreign languages throughout the elementary level utilizing the child’s vernacular as an asset and not labeling it as a handicap.” Although he sounded like George I. Sánchez (see Chapter 4), this marked the first time Mexican American educators had formally requested Spanish language instruction in L.A. city schools.³¹

After the 1963 requests, Mexican American political tactics hinged on the question of Spanish classes in city schools. Ruben Salazar examined the two different approaches in his 1964 article that opened with Sal Castro’s Spanish assembly at Belmont High School. The young teacher defended his actions even after the school district transferred him to Lincoln High in East L.A. “Wouldn’t you say that the speaking of Spanish is educational?” he asked Salazar. “Especially in a school where 35% of the students have the opportunity to learn it from 65% of the student body?” Castro was not simply defending the students who had spoken Spanish at the campaign assembly—he was arguing that heritage languages were central to the academic development of all students in an integrated school.³²

Ruben Salazar also interviewed Mexican educators more willing to accept moderate reforms. Ralph Poblano had “cautious optimism” for Rafferty’s new man in Los Angeles, Eugene Gonzales, who “made a plea for bilingual Mexican-Americans to participate in a special teacher training language program.” Hilario Peña pointed out that the school district now permitted the use of Spanish during all student assemblies. He also explained the new state and federal policy of “compensatory education,” which included ESL classes for English language learners alongside programs that provided “psychological” and “remedial” assistance to children with special needs. “In arguing for the need for ‘compensatory education’ for minors of Mexican

³¹ Salazar, “Problems of Latins Seen as Thing Apart,” 127-129.

³² Salazar, “New School Plan Sees Bilingualism as Asset,” *LAT*, February 25, 1964, E2-3.

descent who may need it, we do not want, in any way, to give the impression that we feel that their culture or language are inferior,” Peña said. This lukewarm endorsement showed the difficulties of developing a robust foreign language program. Peña wanted more Spanish instruction, but he did not want new classes to divide ESL pupils from their classmates, further segregating Mexican students. One Spanish teacher he supervised articulated this view more bluntly by analyzing the educational success of Japanese American students, who turned any language learning challenges into an asset by “finding personal dignity and worth in their ethnical and cultural backgrounds.” Drawing on the Nisei example, this teacher advised Mexican American students to “sacrifice immediate ethnical integration and assimilation by concentrating in excelling in education and the professions, thereby making as a group a more intelligent contribution to American democracy.” That approach appeared to be working for many Japanese Angelenos, but Peña’s plan was not acceptable to activists like Sal Castro.³³

Messy Elections Make Language Learning Central to School Board Candidates

In contrast to the previous generation, when wartime internment placed Japanese Americans in the public eye, Mexican Angelenos made fewer comparisons to their Nikkei counterparts in the 1960s. Instead, as the civil rights movement drew more national attention, the Eastside Mexican community began to measure their own living conditions against the black experience in South Los Angeles. This was especially true after 1963, when L.A. liberals launched an integration lawsuit, *Crawford vs. the Board of Education*, which isolated the racial disparity between South Gate High (all-white) and Jordan High (all-black). Unlike *Mendez*, in which the question of segregation hinged on language learning (see Chapter 4), there were no Spanish-speaking plaintiffs in *Crawford*. Mexican educators struggled to be heard in local elections as well. Examining the school board campaigns of Ralph Poblano and Julian Nava

³³ Salazar, “New School Plan Sees Bilingualism as Asset,” E2-3. Peña said Spanish was now “encouraged” at assemblies.

shows the political context out of which bilingual education emerged. Although both candidates wanted to discuss the city's Mexican schools as segregated and unequal, they found that the best way to attract attention, and votes, was to talk about language instruction.³⁴

Ralph Poblano's unsuccessful school board campaign in 1965 shows his tenuous relationship with the black community. Poblano had taught for seven years in L.A. city schools, including a stint with Sal Castro at Belmont High downtown, which was more diverse than Mexican schools on the Eastside or black schools in South Central. This "wide experience in minority group problems" drew the attention of an African American Assemblyman from South L.A., who asked him to draft a bill that would offer high school dropouts cultural opportunities, like tickets to museums or the movies. Aware that more than 30 percent of Mexican Angelenos were high school dropouts, Poblano believed this was an issue for which he and black politicians could fight together. The assemblyman agreed, and in 1965 he endorsed Poblano for school board, a seat that no Mexican Angeleno had ever held. This angered California's new Negro Political Action Association, which endorsed a black candidate. The city's black leaders bickered with each other during the campaign, and Poblano lost to the black challenger.³⁵

This defeat turned the teacher's attention away from school dropout rates and towards new ideas about language instruction. Poblano had tried to play the race card during the campaign. "The Mexican-American children are two years behind the Negro children here, and

³⁴ For the *Crawford* case see Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 286-307; Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 158-167; Gutierrez, "The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation," 106-120; Gutfreund, "From Busing to Bilingual Education: The Legacy of Liberalism in Los Angeles Schools," presented at "Politics, Activism, and the History of America's Public Schools," University of Pennsylvania, April 12, 2008.

³⁵ "Author of Drop-out Bill Cites Aid to Children," *LAT*, January 30, 1963, 4; Salazar, "Civic Leaders Troubled by School Dropouts, October 22, 1962," *Border Correspondent*, 69-72; Carl Greenberg, "Censure of Politicians Stirs Hot Controversy," *LAT*, March 16, 1965, A4; "Dymally Faces Blast by Negro Political Group," *LAT*, February 21, 1965, E11; Ralph Poblano, "Disclaimer," *LAT*, March 23, 1965, A4; "Endorsements for Jones Announced," *LAT*, May 23, 1965, WS3. Poblano's African-American ally was Mervyn Dymally, who feuded with black leaders like City Councilman Tom Bradley. In the run-off, Poblano endorsed the black candidate who beat him, Rev. James Jones.

the Negro children are two years behind the Caucasians,” he exclaimed in the final campaign debate. “Our system has failed miserably in meeting the needs of the individual children, especially in these groups.” Over time, however, he came to conflate school success with language learning. For example, he said “bilingualism and culture” were the main reasons Spanish-speaking youngsters only averaged 8.6 years of school while blacks completed 10.5 years and white Angelenos finished 12.1 years. When Poblano wrote to the *L.A. Times* to praise Ruben Salazar’s story about the Spanish assembly and Sal Castro’s transfer, his letter addressed the high Mexican dropout rate in the first paragraph. But he was most outraged about the ongoing exclusion of Spanish from school assemblies, despite Salazar’s reporting, and urged the school district to remove its unspoken ban “in a ‘muy pronto’ fashion. This kind of thing cannot be taken lightly and is nothing more than a slap in the face of the total Mexican American community and to Mrs. Lopez Mateos, wife of the President of Mexico, who recently spoke in Spanish to the entire student body at Lincoln High School.” By the end of 1965, Poblano no longer discussed the school dropout bill he had written for mixed-race audiences. Instead, he appealed to Mexican American civil rights groups by explaining that he was a “research specialist” who contributed to California’s compensatory education bill, the program that helped Hilario Peña launch ESL and bilingual education classes in Mexican majority schools.³⁶

Ironically, the most prominent advocate of Poblano’s compensatory education law was Max Rafferty. Although he had attacked the Superintendent of Public Instruction at Camp Hess Kramer two years earlier, Poblano hoped Rafferty’s public praise would help his campaign. A week before the election, he agreed to head the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee on Mexican-American Affairs. In his acceptance letter, Poblano blamed the academic struggles of

³⁶ “Board of Education Candidates Attack, Defend School Programs,” *LAT*, April 2, 1965, 3; “Valley Dignitaries to Salute Educator,” *LAT*, May 13, 1965, SG3; Ralph Poblano, “Ruben Salazar Series Held Highly Laudable,” *LAT*, February 29, 1964, B4; “No Education Labeled Bar to Progress,” *LAT*, February 11, 1965, A3.

Spanish-speaking students on “bilingual and cultural differences,” but Rafferty had a different perspective. That same day, he published an op-ed in the *L.A. Times*, “The Forgotten Minority Is Rising.” Rafferty wrote about Mexican Americans to take attention away from “the Negro [who] has been monopolizing the civil rights news of late.” After arguing that blacks had suffered no more discrimination than his own Irish American ancestors, he finally addressed Mexican issues such as compensatory education, which he framed within a “pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps” narrative. Rafferty praised Poblano (and his own assistant Superintendent, Eugene Gonzales) as “young, tough, and realistic, this new breed of Mexican-American. They don’t weep crocodile tears over their misfortunes, and they’re out to get a good, solid section of the American Dream for themselves.” Closing this declaration to “amigos” like Poblano, Rafferty revealed his colorful conservative views. This did not help him win the school board election, but it did persuade Poblano to make bilingual education a higher priority in the future.³⁷

After the election, Poblano stopped discussing his proposed school dropout bill. Instead, when Rafferty honored Poblano in the San Gabriel Valley a month after the election, his bio described him as “credited with helping to pioneer, research and write California’s first compensatory education bill.” Poblano proudly explained how the bill would become law the next month: “The money should be spent on reading programs, counseling, accurate testing programs that really test bilingual students, and a program of letting schools know what’s happening in the home and the parents what is going on in the schools.” The school board defeat freed Poblano from appealing to African Americans, allowing him to focus on the one issue that he thought mattered to Mexican Americans—bilingual education.³⁸

³⁷ “Poblano Given New Position by Rafferty,” *LAT*, March 29, 1965, B12; Max Rafferty, “The Forgotten Minority Is Rising,” *LAT*, March 29, 1965, A5.

³⁸ “Valley Dignitaries to Salute Educator,” SG3.

Julian Nava Neglects Language Learning, Builds Multiethnic Alliance in 1967

Poblano's political strategy failed again in 1967, even though he was the first non-incumbent to announce his candidacy. Instead, most Mexican American organizations endorsed Julian Nava, who won the election. The history professor at suburban Valley State College surprised the city's establishment when he upset a two-time incumbent with 53 percent of the vote in the run-off election. Nava was not just the second Mexican Angeleno elected to citywide office in the twentieth century. At age 39, with looks and charisma that carried over television broadcasts, some pundits predicted that he would become a political power in Los Angeles, which, as one columnist said, was "second only to Mexico City in numbers of people of Mexican descent." A year later, the first Mexican American ever elected to the L.A. school board became an important figure in the East L.A. Blowouts, as well as in the federal Bilingual Education Act hearings. But Nava placed political ambitions above ethnic loyalties, alienating himself from Sal Castro and Eastside activists. Closer examination of the 1967 campaign shows how this split came about. In contrast to Poblano, Nava's decision not to emphasize language instruction probably helped him win support across ethnic groups. But it also prevented him from becoming a leading spokesman for the plight of minorities who were struggling in L.A. schools.³⁹

Poblano and Nava were two of four Mexican Angelenos who entered the school board race in 1967. The others were an ACLU activist and a USC professor. All the candidates were challenging a sitting school board member in an off-year election, and low voter turnout would make it difficult for such a crowded field to force a run-off contest. In January, however, the *L.A. Times* reported with surprise that the city's "Mexican-American community leaders, in an unusual burst of togetherness, have decided that a community convention is the only practical

³⁹ "Metropolitan," *LAT*, December 23, 1966, 2; Richard Bergholz, "7 Council Seats; 4 City School Board Posts Up for Election," *LAT*, January 3, 1967, 3; Art Seidenbaum, "The Importance of Being Nava," *LAT*, July 23, 1967, A34; Paul Coates, "The Mexican-Americans—Why They Don't Vote," *LAT*, March 13, 1968, A6.

way” to find a consensus candidate to challenge the conservative incumbent. Every “civic group with at least 51% of its membership Mexican Americans” met at the Casa del Mexicano, a converted church in East L.A., where “the campaigning was fierce and sometimes abrasive.” On the fourth ballot, Nava secured the two-thirds majority required for an endorsement, but the other Spanish-speaking candidates refused to support the winner—either at the convention or in a public television debate before the primary. The USC professor did not endorse Nava until after his run-off victory, when the failed candidate reminded the new school board member to focus on “his task to help the neglected Mexican-American child.” This shows how, while Nava overcame internal tensions within the Mexican community by building a multiethnic coalition, this strategy would prove problematic during the Blowouts a year later.”⁴⁰

Nava needed his ethnic community’s endorsement to force a run-off, even though he trailed the incumbent by 64,000 votes in the primary. The Valley State professor erased the primary deficit by appealing to a broader electorate. It did not hurt that his opponent, Charles Smoot, ran on a conservative record. The grandson of the Republican Senator who co-authored the Hawley-Smoot Tariff during the Depression, Smoot sought advice from a reactionary who wanted to bring “Citizens Councils” from the South to California. These shades of segregation made Nava’s personal story more attractive to liberal Angelenos in the Civil Rights era. The telegenic academic spent much of the campaign speaking at wealthy women’s clubs in West L.A. and the San Fernando Valley. In contrast to Smoot, who had gone to private schools outside Washington D.C., Nava was from Boyle Heights, where he “came up through rough-and-tumble Roosevelt High” before enlisting in the Navy during World War II. The G.I. Bill paid his tuition at East Los Angeles Junior College, where he studied Latin American history with Dr. Helen

⁴⁰ Begholz, “2 Professors Seeking Minority Endorsement,” *LAT*, January 15, 1967, 19; Seidenbaum, “The Importance of Being Nava,” A34; “Democratic Clubs Biased, Guerra Says,” *LAT*, February 7, 1967, 20; Manuel Guerra, “And We All Join Dr. Nava in...” *LAT*, August 5, 1967, B4. Guerra was the USC professor who lost to Nava.

Bailey Miller, the woman who had founded Roosevelt High's World Friendship club in 1931 (see Chapter 2). "Julian was a strong B student in high school. He was small and shy and went unnoticed," said Dr. Miller, whose husband had taught Nava at Roosevelt. She watched Nava become a "fabulous student" in junior college, where he was elected student body president. His political skills expanded at Pomona College, where he "became an ironic sort of celebrity: the first Latin-American student in the Latin-American studies course." Nava continued to study his ethnic heritage as a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard, which led to visiting lecturer posts in Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Spain. Long before winning the endorsement of Mexican Angelenos in 1967, the professor won a Fulbright fellowship to study Latin American diplomacy.⁴¹

Nava's statements made it clear that he did not want to run as an ethnic candidate. "I have asked voters to support me as an individual with a professional background and desire to expand and improve education for everyone," he said after forcing the run-off. "To be supported because I am Mexican-American would only perpetuate what I am fighting to overcome—a race-against-race approach to school politics." Although Boyle Heights was majority Mexican by 1967, he remembered Roosevelt High during the war, when "we had a whole United Nations—Oriental, Mexican-American, Jewish—and I dated, fought, played, studied with everyone." In post-election stories, Nava stressed that all those voting blocs, along with African-Americans, were crucial to his 53 percent victory. Calling his ethnicity "of secondary importance," he insisted that "this was not a minority victory, we had support throughout the city." His junior college professor pointed out that emphasizing a multiethnic coalition also allowed Nava to paper over East L.A.'s feuding factions who had refused to endorse him after the January convention at

⁴¹ "Noneducators Hist as School Board Members," *LAT*, April 21, 1967, C20; Bergholz, "Foes for School Board Seat Provide Contrast: May 31 Election Drive Pits Conservative Businessman Against Liberal Professor," *LAT*, May 7, 1967, G3; "Democratic League to Hear Two Candidates," *LAT*, March 9, 1967, SF6; Seidenbaum, "The Importance of Being Nava," A34. Nava was also profiled in the Roosevelt High School *Rough Rider* on April 5, 1945.

Casa del Mexicano. Dr. Miller said some Mexican-Americans still resented him for leaving Boyle Heights to join the faculty at Valley State College. “But there was no vacancy at Cal State L.A.,” she explained. “He often comes here to the junior college to speak and has been a very great influence on the Mexican-American students. His constant theme is upgrade, upgrade. We’re very proud of him.” This tension explains why Nava neglected issues like bilingual education, even as challengers like Ralph Poblano kept them in the public eye.⁴²

Nava’s political instincts influenced his efforts, or lack thereof, on behalf of Mexican Americans on the school board—especially during the 1968 Blowouts. The juxtapositions of the candidate’s words and actions indicate that tension between Nava and Eastside Angelenos only grew more intense. After Nava’s victory, a five-page profile in the *L.A. Times* emphasized the multiethnic coalition that voted for him. His Jewish supporters on the Westside were happy, and “there was joy in Northridge, where Nava now lives. There was bedlam in Boyle Heights, where he came from.” It was telling that, although he won in precincts across the city, the Valley State professor decided to spend election night at his Eastside headquarters, where Mexican “women cheered and men cried, and the whole glorious American faith in political unpredictability was validated.” In the next paragraph, however, the *Times* addressed the significance of a Mexican American winning citywide election. “Julian Nava sits as symbol, symptom of change, promise of things to come. The largest minority group in California (some two million people), heretofore famous for going separate or divisive ways, has an official voice.” Nava knew he needed to turn out this voting bloc—his final campaign event was a Memorial Day parade in East L.A.⁴³

⁴² Bergholz, “Foes for School Board Seat Provide Contrast,” G3; Seidenbaum, “The Importance of Being Nava,” A34; Jack Smith, “Dr. Nava Calls Self Practical Idealist,” *LAT*, June 4, 1967, F4; Greenberg, “Latin Groups in State, N.Y. Forge Voting Link,” *LAT*, July 16, 1967, F26. While Nava did win 53 percent of the ballots, voter turnout was only 25 percent in 1967. Mark Wild argues that Roosevelt High only remained “integrated” after 1930 because most Mexican students had dropped out of elementary schools in Boyle Heights. Wild, “‘So Many Students at Once.’”

⁴³ Seidenbaum, “The Importance of Being Nava,” A34; “Holiday Forces Candidates to Struggle to Find Listeners,” 3. Nava spoke at Roosevelt High two weeks after winning the Mexican endorsement, *Rough Rider*, January 31, 1967, 1.

Once elected, however, Nava struggled to find his voice as the lone Mexican American member of the school board. After campaigning on the moderate messages of more school funding and racial unity, he hesitated to take progressive positions that would challenge the status quo. But this became unavoidable as the professor found himself on more panels about “minority group tensions.” During his first year in office, Nava’s appearances included a weekend at Camp Hess Kramer, where he met Mexican American leaders who were angry that Lyndon Johnson did not invite them to the White House, and a “reaction panel” that explored how L.A. was improving “Negro education” after the 1965 Watts Riot. At Valley State, he co-directed a seven-week summer program for high school teachers about “the contributions of minority groups to American history.” The language of racial politics was a big adjustment for a scholar of Latin American diplomacy who preferred to build broad alliances.⁴⁴

Nava did not shy away from bold statements, but he did not always follow through with action. For example, he criticized a Republican state senator’s proposal to split the L.A. school district into ten small districts. The bill’s supporters “see it as a way to frustrate integration,” Nava said. “It would create poor districts and rich districts, majority and minority group districts. We would have an American version of South African apartheid.” Such statements showed that the professor supported desegregation, but he did not demand school busing. Racial integration was one of many areas in which Nava tried to hedge his comments and delay his actions. During the 1967 campaign, he argued that “we are in the middle of a true revolution in education.” But when Sal Castro’s students started a revolution at five Eastside schools a year later, Nava was torn between the Mexican community’s demands and the Anglo establishment’s expectations of moderate reform. The week of the Blowouts, one *L.A. Times* columnist endorsed a Spanish-

⁴⁴ Jack Jones, “Mexican-American Units Draft List of Complaints,” *LAT*, October 6, 1967, A6; “Negro Education Gains But It Has Pitfalls, Professor Says,” *LAT*, October 2, 1967, C1; “VSC Gets Grant to Assist Teachers of Minority Pupils,” *LAT*, March 3, 1968, SF_C1.

language pamphlet published by the League of Women Voters that showed Mexican Americans how to register to vote. The newspaperman praised the electoral abilities of politicians like Julian Nava, but he told student protestors to end the walkouts: “And you chicos from Roosevelt High, instead of demonstrating, why don’t you distribute the pamphlets to your parents and neighbors? If they vote, it will make a whole different future for you.” While Nava’s political strategy had endeared him to the liberal establishment at the *L.A. Times*, it had also alienated his old neighbors in Boyle Heights—including the student protestors at his alma mater.⁴⁵

Part 3: East L.A. Students Address Language Reforms Before Protests Begin

Roosevelt High School: Adolescent Angst or Rumbblings of Revolution, 1966-67?

As the *L.A. Times* column indicated, Roosevelt High School made for a good case study of the Blowouts, even if Sal Castro was teaching at Lincoln and the first school to walkout on March 5, 1968, was Garfield. As the student protests dragged on, Roosevelt was the Eastside school that drew the most attention from the press, the police, and the school board. The Boyle Heights campus from which Julian Nava had graduated represented the range of student opinions about one of the largest school strikes in U.S. history. Several Blowout organizers came from Roosevelt, but only six percent of the student body admitted to walking out. When Nava came to address student concerns, the *Rough Rider* newspaper complained that protest leaders did not speak for all 2,870 Roosevelt students. Closer exploration of the decreasingly diverse school, which still included Japanese and African Americans in 1968, shows that not all Eastside students shared the revolutionary spirit that spring. But those who did expressed their opinions by pushing for reforms in language education for Non-English Speaking (NES) students.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Charles Donaldson, “Plan to Split Schools Is ‘Apartheid’—Nava: Harmer’s Bill to Create 10 L.A. Districts Would Appeal to Integration Foes, He Says,” *LAT*, February 15, 1968, SF1; “Noneducators Hit as School Board Members,” *LAT*, April 21, 1967, C20; Paul Coates, “The Mexican-Americans—Why They Don’t Vote,” *LAT*, March 13, 1968, A6.

⁴⁶ “State Releases Ethnic, Racial Survey Summarization, Commentary on Results,” *Rough Rider*, March 10, 1967, 3.

Roosevelt's slight resistance to the walkouts reflected the multiethnic makeup of Boyle Heights in the 1960s. The school was certainly segregated; only 19 percent of L.A. students had Spanish surnames in 1967, but Roosevelt was 80 percent "Spanish." The school's white population had dropped to three percent, but it was now seven percent "Negro" and the alma mater of the decade's most famous Angeleno athletes. There were less than 300 "Oriental" students left but, as they had before internment, Japanese Americans held the most prominent elected offices (see Chapter 2). Even the *Rough Rider* was surprised that the school was only ten percent Asian, because "superficially, it seems Roosevelt has a higher Oriental population." But Mexican Americans were winning more student body elections by then. One teacher remembers that the student body president of 1967, Castulo de la Rocha, decided to "run for office because all the Japanese were winning." Further examination of students like de la Rocha and his predecessor, Don Nakanishi, show that many Roosevelt students held mainstream views about race and language even though they joked about living in East L.A., the "undesirable" barrio.⁴⁷

The *Times* featured de la Rocha and Nakanishi in a 1967 article that tried to challenge the perception that youths of the civil rights era were radical reformers. "They call them the silent activists," the story began. "They want to change the world—as do their more vocal counterparts, the ones who sit-in, sing, picket, speak, campaign and march. But they want to change it just a little at a time." The reporter interviewed both Roosevelt student body presidents, along with many private school students from "comfortable, tree-lined suburbs" like Beverly Hills, at a United Way retreat in the Malibu mountains. They were close to Camp Hess Kramer, where Sal Castro was recruiting their classmates to organize a mass protest, but the "silent activists"

⁴⁷ "State Releases Ethnic, Racial Survey Summarization," 3; "The Locker Room," *Rough Rider*, May 24, 1968, 4 (Zanki Papers); Author Interview with Mr. Joseph Zanki, Sr., July 20, 2011. Roosevelt's black athletes in the 1960s included Heisman Trophy winner Mike Garrett, Los Angeles Dodger Willie Davis, and basketball star Lenzy Stuart. Stuart led Roosevelt to three consecutive city championships and was offered a scholarship to UCLA but, according to Zanki, John Wooden withdrew the offer after Stuart became the only prominent black leader in the 1968 Blowouts.

brainstormed other ways to improve their communities. This was easier for Japanese students than Mexican students. De la Rocha, for example, only offered a vague goal of running for office after college. He did not discuss details because he worried that “other Mexican kids” would say “that I’m a gringado. Gringoized. Americanized. Man, they’re right. I’m Americanized.” This “silent activist” was not afraid of distancing himself from Mexican classmates who wanted to walk out of school, but de la Rocha still won schoolwide election a year before the Blowouts.⁴⁸

Those social stigmas did not affect Nakanishi, who proudly volunteered at UCLA Medical Center, earned a scholarship to Yale, and planned to return to East L.A. as a doctor to practice at clinics “where poor people can get care.” At Roosevelt, he ran for office on a message of racial unity. “A school like any other organized group must be united, with each member having pride in being a part of the group,” he wrote in the *Rough Rider*. “The group may be divided into various interest or nationality groups but must feel a definite spirit for remaining together and maintaining a feeling that their group is the finest around.” Like Julian Nava, Nakanishi’s knack for multiethnic consensus came from his Boyle Heights background and its rich language diversity. Before elementary school, a neighbor often took him to the nearby Hebrew school, where he would use the playground while his Jewish friend studied inside. Most of his closest friends were Mexican Americans and, as he later said, “what makes me into an Asian American was getting an identity as a Chicano first.” During his victorious campaign for student body president, he went to Roosevelt’s ESL classes and spoke to his peers in English, Spanish, and Japanese. Perhaps this was only possible because Nakanishi was not Mexican himself. Unlike de la Rocha, he did not have to take a stand on the impending walkouts.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Dial Torgerson, “Young Activists Work to Bring Good to Their Communities: They, Too, Want to Change World,” *LAT*, June 18, 1967, G1-G7.

⁴⁹ Torgerson, “Young Activists Work to Bring Good,” G1-G7; “SB Pres. Nakanishi Expresses Opinion,” *Rough Rider*, October 21, 1966, 2; Hector Tobar, “Journey Back to East L.A.: Don Nakanishi Believes Cityhood Could Revive Diversity,” *LAT*, April 9, 2010, A2.

Still, *Rough Rider* stories suggested that students were more engaged in domestic politics than their predecessors had been in previous generations. Before World War II, civic-minded students joined the World Friendship club (see Chapter 2), where Japanese and Mexican students debated matters of international diplomacy in Asia or Latin America rather than their own ethnic experiences as U.S. citizens. In 1968, the *Rough Rider* sought opinions about local and national politics. Surveys showed that students overwhelmingly opposed the Vietnam War and supported Robert Kennedy in the presidential primaries, and the newspaper also followed the school busing case, *Crawford v. Board of Education*. Julian Nava knew his alma mater mattered in Eastside politics; he spoke at Roosevelt two weeks after securing the endorsement of Mexican-American community leaders in the 1967 school board race. While most of the faculty was fairly conservative, a few teachers supported Mexican-American causes. One flew to Sacramento to demonstrate against Governor Ronald Reagan with the American Federation of Teachers and César Chávez's organization, the United Farm Workers. This suggested that many students were open to ideas, like bilingual education, that fueled the Blowouts.⁵⁰

Many students were also eager to talk about race and citizenship, although the *Rough Rider* appeared to endorse traditional views of Americanization. For example, its profile of the graduation ceremonies of immigrants who had passed their citizenship tests in L.A. City Adult School showed that the Los Angeles "Diploma Plan" was still alive and well in 1967 (see Chapter 2). Rather than interviewing some of the 1,800 immigrants from 70 countries (from Japan to Iran to El Salvador), the story featured the graduation speaker, California's Republican Lieutenant Governor who had been an aide to Vice President Richard Nixon in the 1950s. In 1966, Jesus Perez also defended Americanization in a column urging Roosevelt students to resist

⁵⁰ "Student Views of the War," *Rough Rider*, March 15, 1968, 1; "To Bus or Not, That's a Question," March 15, 1968, 2; "Student Poll: Who's Best for the U.S.?" *Rough Rider*, March 29, 1968, 1; "Senior Excitement; Graduation Nears," *Rough Rider*, January 31, 1967, 1; "Reagan No Hit With Miss Fidel," *Rough Rider*, March 1, 1967, 2 (Zanki Papers).

“dual patriotism.” Perez equated patriotism with school spirit—students should transfer their loyalties from grammar school to junior high and then to senior high school. “We must remember, however, that this is not our Mexico, nor our Japan, nor any other country of the world where we came from,” he reasoned, concluding that America offered his classmates the opportunity that “enables us to realize our ideals.” While the *Rough Rider* still seemed to endorse older views about immigrant assimilation, these articles allowed other Roosevelt students to think about citizenship—and how they might want to change the process.⁵¹

Language education certainly influenced the civic-mindedness of Roosevelt students in the 1960s. Thanks to recent reforms from Afton Nance and Helen Heffernan, Roosevelt offered ESL classes for Non-English Speakers. Although the NES students were new to L.A. and the American school system, they approached their education enthusiastically. This energy reverberated around Roosevelt. In 1966, for example, NES class president Yoshio Okimura started to correspond with a sister school in Nara, Japan. Japanese immigrants were not the only NES students who expressed pride in their ethnicity. The next spring, the *Rough Rider* published two articles in Spanish. The first had a message of general inspiration. “Youth of Roosevelt,” the column concluded, “our destiny is clear today, to save those who study in our school,... for the benefit of all society.” In the second translated article, NES president Antonio Garcia discussed problems that Latin Americans faced during “the Great Society,” specifically a lack of good education and access to good jobs. Garcia called on Spanish speakers to follow the black civil rights model, drawing attention to their own discrimination “because the president of the United States doesn’t demonstrate too much interest in Latin Americans.” Written exactly a year before the Blowouts launched the Chicano civil rights movement, the NES president predicted in two

⁵¹ “Robert Finch Talks to ‘New Americans’: Lieutenant Governor Welcomes Citizens,” *Rough Rider*, May 12, 1967, 2; Jesus Perez, “Student Analyzes ‘Dual Patriotism,’” *Rough Rider*, March 18, 1966, 2. For more on Finch, see Chapter 6.

languages that school segregation would be central to those protests. “In this free nation where everybody is the same, but many times discrimination and the lack of education doesn’t allow us to enjoy these freedoms,” Garcia griped. “Discrimination is a very hard situation for the Mexican as well as for the Negro but through the year we’ll get rid of it. Education is a problem which we can solve.” While the NES president could not know the accuracy of his statement, he showed how English language learners contributed to Roosevelt’s rise in activism in the late 1960s.⁵²

The *Rough Rider* showed even more foresight in the two April Fool’s editions before the Blowouts. Many of the prank stories tested students’ freedom of speech in inappropriate ways, but a few of them anticipated the tactics of the upcoming protests. The 1967 issue included articles about assassination, lynching, LSD, and teachers who sold marijuana. But several stories addressed sensitive questions about Japanese American stereotypes. The feature story reported that math teacher Ronald Hirosawa had staged a coup, abducting the principal and sending him to Tokyo. Upon replacing the entire faculty “with loyal ‘Buddahead’ teachers, full power should be in the grasp of that Slant-eyed mastermind YELLOW-FINGER (Mr. Hirosawa).” Playing on the idea of Black Power, the story ended with a murder, when “Mr. Hirosawa was heard screaming YELLOW POWER and We Shall Overcome.” The 1966 April Fool’s issue lacked explicit ethnic tropes, but it referenced the politics of protest. It joked that Roosevelt radicals were forming two new groups, the W.E.B. DuBois Club and the John Birch Society, and that students were ready to stage sit-ins until the school stopped sending hall monitors on “controversial ‘sweeps’” after the tardy bell. Another front-page story reported that the school board had canceled Easter break. So the *Rough Rider* formed a new movement called REV (Restore Easter Vacation) and held a mass meeting to draw up a petition. From Roosevelt, REV

⁵² “Roosevelt ‘Adopts’ Sister High School,” *Rough Rider*, December 16, 1966, 4; “Aproveche Para Un Favorable Porvenir,” *Rough Rider*, January 13, 1967, 2; Antonio Garcia (translated by Manuel del Real), “Latin Americans’ Problems Discussed: NES President Expresses Philosophies,” *Rough Rider*, March 1, 1967, 3 (Zanki Papers).

spread to six high schools across East L.A. and downtown, where students were determined to take off Easter, “with or without the blessing of the school board.” The creative reporter who conjured up this fake story could not have known that students at many of those same schools would actually walk out of class just two years later. Both *April Fool*’s editions show that Roosevelt students of all ethnicities had imagined some scenario in which the civil rights protests of the 1960s (from the Deep South to UC Berkeley), found their way into the schools of East L.A. Before the *Rough Rider* could publish its next satirical issue on April 1, 1968, thousands of Eastside students staged one of the largest high school protests the country has ever seen.⁵³

⁵³ Kenny Watanabe, “Hirosawa to Lead Ted Yellow Guards,” *The Freak Press*, April 1, 1967, 1; “DuBois Club Fights Contreras Regime” and “John Birch Society Formed on Campus,” *Rough Rider*, April 1, 1966, 3; “Students Protest ‘Sweeps,’ Revolt Staged in ‘A’ Building,” *Rough Rider*, April 1, 1966, 2; “School Board Ousts Vacation; Student REV Movement Begun,” *Rough Rider*, April 1, 1966, 1 (Zanki Papers).

CHAPTER SIX

THE BLOWOUTS AND THE BILINGUAL EDUCATION ACT: LANGUAGE LEARNING POLICY AND THE WALKOUTS OF 1968

From March 5 to March 12, 1968, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, East L.A. witnessed “a week-and-a-half of walkouts, speeches, sporadic lawbreaking, arrests, demands, picketing, sympathy demonstrations, sit-ins, police tactical alerts and emergency sessions of the school board.” Just as officials and community leaders argued about how many students walked out of class, participants and scholars still debate the causes and effects of the Blowouts. Social scientists have studied the walkouts to understand the organizing principles behind the event that is often credited as the origin of the urban Chicano civil rights movement. More recent memorials, including an HBO film and the autobiography of Sal Castro, have romanticized the Blowouts and placed Castro on “the pantheon of major Chicano Movement leaders” like César Chávez and Dolores Huerta. All these retellings start by describing the terrible conditions of Eastside schools, the only campuses in L.A. that still practiced corporal punishment, and the city’s failure to educate Mexican Americans, whose dropout rate was double the city’s “Negro” population and triple the Anglo percentage. Physical discipline and high dropout rates were the most discouraging elements of Mexican American education in 1968, but close examination of the events as they unfolded shows the centrality of language learning in the Blowouts.¹

This chapter situates the protests of 1968 within the policy context of bilingual education debates at the local, state, and federal levels from 1966 to 1969. While students were standing up

¹ Dial Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution? ‘Brown Power’ Unity Seen Behind School Disorders,” *LAT*, March 17, 1968, B1; Jack McCurdy, “Language Is Key Factor: East Side Dropout Rate Stressed in School Unrest,” *LAT*, March 18, 1968, A6; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 18. In 1968, the *Times* reported the three-year dropout rate in Eastside schools was 44 percent while it was 27 percent in “predominantly Negro” South-Central schools, 22 percent in Westside schools, and 13 percent in the San Fernando Valley. For other accounts, see Chapter 5, Footnote 3.

to teachers and police in East L.A., lawmakers were implementing innovations in language learning at City Hall, in Sacramento, and in Washington. The cornerstone of this campaign came when Lyndon Johnson signed the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) on January 2, 1968. While the BEA was the first bill he signed into law that year, it came two months before the Blowouts. This showed that the battle for bilingual education did not simply begin or end in 1968—rather, it continued to address the dueling questions of assimilation and ethnic heritage that Angeleno educators had argued about for the past seven decades. By emphasizing contemporary interest in bilingual education during the Blowouts, this chapter places Sal Castro’s legendary walkouts into the historical continuum of language experiments in Los Angeles city schools.

Part I: The Blowouts Narrative from Three Competing Perspectives

Bilingual education barely appears in Castro’s memoir, the newest and most popular re-telling of the story. His book, *Blowout!*, is a *testimonio*, an oral history that he gave to the Chicano biographer Mario García. These interviews were conducted after California voters banned multi-year bilingual education programs in 1998, when the mainstream media dismissed them as a failed approach. While García includes bilingual/bicultural education in the students’ list of demands, Castro’s oral history does not. “We need to get our demands met,” he recalls telling his students the day after the first walkout. “I don’t have to tell you what the problems are—you know all this. We need more schools; we need to get you into college; we need more and better counselors; we need even better food in the cafeteria.” Those were all demands the students gave—including a request to hire Mexican mothers to cook cafeteria food. But Castro’s quotes in the *L.A. Times* the week of the Blowouts show that he, too, made bilingual education a top protest priority. It is worth noting that the teacher who had been transferred in 1964 for urging students to speak Spanish in an assembly would only devote three paragraphs of his

testimonio to a section titled “Bilingualism, Biculturalism, and the Chicano.” Supplementing Castro’s compelling story with contemporary accounts in the *L.A. Times* and the Roosevelt High *Rough Rider* shows the significance of language learning during the 1968 Blowouts.²

More than other episodes in this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge the range of biased accounts in the record. For example, while the Roosevelt High School principal testified that on March 6 about 400 to 500 students protested (10 to 15 percent), Castro argues that Roosevelt’s walkout rate was 60 percent (around 2,000 students). The *Rough Rider*, a student newspaper subject to administration approval, reported that only 200 students (six percent) participated in those protests. This narrative seeks to navigate such biases by including all relevant perspectives, from the police and school board to the teachers and students. Although the most dramatic moments occurred at Lincoln High, where Castro taught, and Garfield High, where the Blowouts began on March 5, Roosevelt High experienced a more moderate protest. Comparing the statements of Roosevelt’s principal, alumni, student government, and student newspaper shows that Mexican Angelenos were not as united as Castro has suggested.³

The *L.A. Times* also had a complex reaction to the Blowouts. Its editorial agreed with the student complaints about Eastside schools, but the newspaper argued that those problems could “never be solved by strikes, boycotts and demonstrations.” However, it praised student leaders for keeping the walkouts, “for the most part, non-violent.” Most importantly, the *Times* linked language ability to student activism as well as school solutions. “It can also be regarded as

² García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 19, 166, 243-244, Footnote 63, 345-346. Castro’s *testimonio* is colorful, but includes unproven accusations. One example is that school board member J.C. Chambers “literally pulled a gun out of his briefcase. Chambers was very reactionary; he was to the right of Attila the Hun. Nothing happened, and I guess Chambers put the gun away. But it showed me how much we had scared the shit out of the board.” Castro also chose not to discuss certain parts of his life. In explaining why his wife divorced him, he says “I wasn’t a good boy. I guess my spiritual advisers were Roman Polanski and Woody Allen. I was no *santo*.” It is possible that Castro has few quotes about bilingual education because, as with adultery, he decided not to discuss unpopular subjects. García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 90, 185.

³ Ken Reich, “Dyer’s Test by Fire: Principal Walks Narrow Path in School Walkout,” *LAT*, March 14, 1968, B6; “What Happened?” *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1968, 1 (Zanki Papers).

healthy,” the editorial observed, “that these young Mexican-Americans themselves are crying for the education tools that will keep them from becoming the victims of a kind of apartheid via language.” The Blowouts were not about racial segregation or dropout rates, the newspaper indicated—they opposed a system that labeled students by the language they spoke rather than race or socioeconomic status. Castro and his students may have disagreed with this assessment, but media biases forced them to focus on language learning—specifically bilingual education.⁴

March 5 to 12: The Blowouts Begin (and Many Rooseveltians Resist)

According to Castro, the Blowouts were both chaotic and carefully orchestrated. He began planting the idea in students’ minds a year earlier, at Camp Hess Kramer on Palm Sunday weekend, 1967. Although many of them graduated that spring, they still met at the Piranya Coffee House, where Castro first suggested “a mass action in the schools.” When students started to ask about protesting that fall, Castro advised, “Don’t walk out. Organize.” He wanted to wait until there was a list of demands they could present to the school board, but the students were impatient. When the Garfield High principal canceled a student play at the beginning of March, the Garfield students walked out the following Tuesday. Castro could not wait any longer, and on Wednesday nearly 5,000 students walked out of class at Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Wilson High. The Roosevelt principal was not surprised—he had seen walkout leaflets circulating on campus a week earlier. In fact, the principal was more shocked by the police, who called a tactical alert at 2 p.m. and “broke up groups of students gathered in front of the school, taking several into custody.” In the end, one Roosevelt student was arrested and that was the top story on the evening news, but it buried the lead: why did they walk out?⁵

⁴ “School Boycotts Not the Answer,” *LAT*, March 15, 1968, A4.

⁵ Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1; McCurdy, “Student Disorders Erupt at 4 High Schools; Policeman Hurt,” *LAT* March 7, 1968, 3; Reich, “Dyer’s Test by Fire,” B6; Gutierrez, “The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation,” 1-2; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 136-140, 160-161. While the *Times* reported that students pelted patrol cars with eggs and assaulted officers with bottles, Castro insists that the principal called the cops, who “entered the

Sal Castro did not want to state his reasons until he had attracted more attention. He led the Lincoln protestors on a two-mile march to the school district's East L.A. office, where he insisted on speaking to area superintendents on a loudspeaker. Castro said students would return to class once the school board agreed to a public meeting with walkout leaders—at Lincoln High. The protestors retreated across the street to Hazard Park, where Blowout leaders launched an ambitious media plan. They called another walkout for Friday, March 8, and invited local newspapers and TV crews to a rally at Hazard Park. Thousands of students did walk out of class that day, but the majority just went home. Although the cops and Castro had different estimates, some 400 to 700 kids congregated at the park on a rainy Friday morning. So did Julian Nava and a white school board member, along with Congressman Ed Roybal, who had flown back from Washington when the Blowouts began. The white school board member was willing to talk about Eastside school conditions, telling the students that, “to the extent that you have dramatized the problems, you have me.” On Castro’s advice, however, the students refused to address specific issues until the full School Board was in the Lincoln gymnasium.⁶

This did not stop news reporters from speculating about the Blowout demands—and bilingual education was their first guess. Even before walkout leaders could submit their demands, the *L.A. Times* had reported that students wanted “more bilingual instruction, more Mexican cultural heritage in curriculum and textbooks, smaller class sizes, firing of insensitive teachers, updated industrial arts program, replace old buildings, more students’ rights, more liberal dress code and Mexican-oriented cafeteria menus.” This list later proved to be accurate,

campus wearing their riot gear with batons drawn... It was a Rodney King beating.” The Roosevelt *Rough Rider* confirmed the *Times*’ account. “What Happened?” *Rough Rider*, 1 (Zanki Papers). These sources disputed whether “outside agitators” (college students) came on campus illegally.

⁶ McCurdy, “Student Disorders Erupt at 4 High Schools,” 3; McCurdy, “1,000 Walk Out in School Boycott: Jefferson Teachers Quit Classes; 19 Juveniles, 1 Adult Arrested,” *LAT*, March 9, 1968, B1; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 172-177. Police estimated that 400 to 600 students gathered at Hazard Park, while Castro concludes the number was between 500 and 700. García and Castro, *Blowout!*, Footnote 1, 348.

suggesting that Castro's recruits were not as disciplined and organized as he thought. It also shows that language learning was a central issue when the Blowouts began in 1968.⁷

The range of reactions at Roosevelt shows the extent to which Eastside students were engaged in the Blowouts. Just as the principal and Castro disagreed about how many Rooseveltians walked out, the students who stayed in class initiated a dialog with their peer protestors. Student leaders who disapproved of the demonstrations at first found their opinions changing with each passing day. The student newspaper accepted the *L.A. Times*' version of events, blaming college students for "getting everybody excited," and throwing eggs and bottles at police. The *Rough Rider* went further than the principal, guessing that less than 300 students walked out the first day, and resenting the negative publicity Roosevelt was receiving. But "the sensationalism of newspapers and broadcasts" created a buzz across campus and by Friday, the *Rough Rider* reported, "90% of the student body began to voice their opinions on all the action." As a result, student council leaders asked to join the walkout delegation. This meant that an African American and a Japanese American accompanied Castro's Chicano organizers from Camp Hess Kramer. They did not make the Blowouts a multiethnic movement, but they contributed outside voices into ensuing discussions about bilingual and bicultural education.⁸

Two months later, the black president and a *Nikkei* classmate attended a citywide meeting about race relations in school curriculum. They agreed with the majority view that "Afro-American, Mexican-American, Japanese-American, and other minorities of our society were overlooked in our textbooks... making it appear that they contributed little, if anything, to the development of this nation,." Roosevelt leaders would not have advocated "including minority

⁷ McCurdy, "Student Disorders Erupt at 4 High Schools," 3; McCurdy, "1,000 Walk Out in School Boycott," B1; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 172-177.

⁸ "What Happened?" *Rough Rider*, 1. The college students belonged to the Brown Berets. The black participant was Roosevelt's basketball star, Lenzy Stuart. After leading the school to two straight city titles, he had an athletic scholarship to UCLA, which was about to win its fourth national championship in five years. But coach John Wooden withdrew the offer after he learned of Stuart's leadership in the Blowouts. Author Interview with Mr. Joseph Zanki, Sr., July 20, 2011.

contributions in the textbooks” two years earlier, but by 1968 the student council president had embraced one of the Blowout students’ many demands. The *Rough Rider* captured this conversion by asking and answering a series of questions about the tumultuous events:

“Was and is all the bad publicity worth anything? Were the police too rough with the participants of the walk-out? Why aren’t parents using their influence to help us get the things we need? There are both positive and negative aspects to the demonstrations; they are both successful and unsuccessful in different ways. Whatever the outcome, one thing is clear: Roosevelt students are NOT apathetic.”⁹

Of course, the Roosevelt students who supported the Blowouts were not apathetic, either. When 45 faculty members requested a transfer after the Blowouts, students suspected that their teachers did not trust them. More than 2,200 Rooseveltians signed a petition protesting the school board’s handling of the walkouts, including the decision to leave dissatisfied teachers in Eastside schools. This forced the faculty to address angry students and pledge to improve classroom attitudes. “I guess I thought you didn’t really care one way or the other about what I did. But, as usual, I underestimated you,” wrote an anonymous teacher, adding that in the Blowouts, “for the whole world to hear, you told me you did care without fear or embarrassment.”¹⁰ Still, students were not satisfied with simple statements. One argued that it was not enough for Julian Nava to visit his alma mater and praise student protestors:

“Dr. Nava came to ‘LOOK’ over our school, took one look at our gym, turned around and reported the new gym is beautiful. But, did our Dr. Nava look at *all* our school? Did he notice our *crowded classrooms*, lousy food, closed restrooms?”¹¹

Despite student resentment, Nava continued to fight for more funding for Eastside schools. The school board member did not fix toilets when he visited his alma mater, but he

⁹ “What Happened?” *Rough Rider*, 1; Cleveland Gillis, “Views of a President,” *Rough Rider*, May 17, 1968, 2.

¹⁰ “What Happened?” *Rough Rider*, 1; “Teacher Transfer: A Clarification,” *Rough Rider*, April 5, 1968, 1 (Zanki Papers).

¹¹ Quoted in Juan J. Inda, “La Comunidad en Lucha: The Development of the East Los Angeles High School Blowouts.” Paper presented at the 29th Stanford Center for Chicano Research Working Papers Series, Stanford, Calif., March 1990, 15. The student also asked, “Does Dr. Nava still condone swats for silly reasons?” She may have been inspired by Roosevelt alums like Vicki Castro, then a college student and counselor at Camp Hess Kramer who was later elected to the L.A. school board. She recalls the 1967 camp as her first “memory of seeing on a big scope that what I was experiencing in school was happening all over, and to a higher degree of open racism.” Quoted in García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 139.

spoke from the heart. “You have proven your point by walking out,” he said at the March 8 assembly. “The way the walkouts have been conducted made me feel proud, for you have done this in a way not to hurt the school.” The *Times* story that day turned to the question of student violence, which Nava dismissed. “I still think this thing is fully controllable and is positive and constructive... As long as we keep up the dialog, things should remain all right.” The media left out the rest of his assembly speech, when the Valley State professor tried to lower student expectations. He told them their demands would cost a lot of money, and that he had already gone to Sacramento to ask for funds that did not exist. Nava regretted the broken budget, complaining that it was “like telling a man that’s drowning to swim harder.” He was happy for the students, but the first-term politician struggled to secure results with his white colleagues.¹²

Nava’s turn as the official voice of the protests was short-lived. In the *Times*’ biggest feature about the walkouts, Nava explained his own experiences as a Roosevelt student in the 1940s. “I was told to take auto shop,” recalled the professor with a Ph.D. from Harvard. “I did as I was told... I just wonder how many other Julians have ended up in an auto shop somewhere. And stayed there.” That memory motivated him when he convinced his colleagues to convene a school board meeting at Lincoln High as the students had requested, but the rest of the board stopped his proposal to pull police out of Eastside high schools. Sal Castro could have been grateful for the public support of Nava, a major Mexican American candidate for whom he had encouraged his students to campaign a year earlier. But the Lincoln High teacher was suspicious of the Valley State professor, who was “bright, articulate, and personable, spoke English very well... Despite his barrio background, he had been sheltered from a lot of the bullshit affecting Mexicans.” The *L.A. Times* had already exhaustively covered Nava during the 1967 campaign,

¹² “Roybal, Nava, Richardson Come to Assembly,” *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1968, 1; McCurdy, “1,000 Walk Out in School Boycott,” B1 (Zanki Papers).

and it wanted a younger voice to represent the students. So it turned to Castro, who was always full of colorful quotes. The high school teacher never hesitated to remind the school board member of this change in status. “Before his election, according to Nava, I was B.C.—before Castro—but after the walkouts, which would affect him, I was A.C.—after Castro,” the teacher explained. “If he got on his high horse about his Harvard Ph.D., I’d say to him, ‘Just remember, Julian, how at Roosevelt they wanted to put you into industrial arts.’”¹³

The *L.A. Times* recorded Nava’s comment differently. He said “This is BC and AD” not to Castro but to the superintendent of schools, according to a Sunday feature about the Blowouts. Rather than focusing on a radical teacher, Nava told the superintendent that “schools will not be the same hereafter.” Even the Roosevelt principal admitted that the Mexican-American student body “is more aware now than ever before of things it feels should be done to improve the school.” But the same reporter who had featured Roosevelt’s “silent activists” a year earlier now stressed that the “Brown Power” generation would not wait for incremental reforms from Nava and the school board. This may have been the first article to call the Blowouts “the beginning of a revolution—the Mexican-American revolution of 1968,” distinct from protests led by Chicano militants or by the nonviolent labor leader César Chávez. As the first mass Mexican activism in an urban area, the Blowouts represented the mobilization of Chicano youth. Older experts told the *Times* they were skeptical that “a few thousand school children can lead the typically divided, splintered Mexican-American millions into becoming a unified power.” But the Blowouts gave hope to many Spanish speakers who had given up on fighting for change. “We feel disturbed and ashamed that these kids are carrying out our fight,” said Ray Cenicerroz, a Garfield High teacher.

¹³ McCurdy, “School Board Yields to Some Student Points in Boycotts: But Won’t Remove Police,” *LAT*, March 12, 1968, 1; Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1; García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 184-185, 141-142. Castro’s memory about using “BC” and “AC” for code names is strange because, according to the *Times*’ Dial Torgerson, Nava called the Blowouts themselves—not Castro—“BC” and “AD.” Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1.

“We should have been fighting for these things as teachers and as a community. Apparently we have been using the wrong weapon. These kids found a new weapon—a new monster—the walkout. If this is the way things are done, I’m just sorry we [teachers] didn’t walk out.”¹⁴

“Language Is Key Factor”: Students Demand Bilingual Education in Blowouts

Language education was central to the younger generation’s school demands. During the Blowouts, the *Times* reporter noticed many signs in Spanish like “Viva La Raza”—“raza translates ‘race,’” she explained, “but it is used in a sense of ‘our people.’” In contrast to their parents’ preference of attending school board meetings, student organizers told the *Times* they wanted to “show the country a new type of Mexican-American: one proud of his language, his culture, his raza, ready to take his share of U.S. prosperity.” They were frustrated that, despite Nava’s school board election, attempts to add bilingual education had failed for nearly a decade. Even an article about the Eastside’s embarrassing high school dropout rate ran under the headline “Language Is Key Factor.” The school board had made little progress since studying minority problems in 1963, when it announced “an effort to put Spanish-speaking, culturally-trained teachers into Mexican-American schools.” Five years later, only 122 of the Eastside’s 1,675 elementary schoolteachers were “Mexican-American and represent[ed] nearly all the teachers with Spanish-speaking ability.” The district insisted it had “an intensive recruitment program throughout the southwestern United States,” and that it offered remedial reading and English classes to “almost everyone who needs it.” But 90 percent of remedial language classes were overcrowded, so it was reasonable to assume that student protestors wanted language education reforms.¹⁵

Although there were other shocking statistics about Eastside schools, including corporal punishment and dropout rates, the *Times* may have focused on language education because the

¹⁴ Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1; Reich, “Dyer’s Test by Fire,” B6; McCurdy, “School Board Yields to Some Student Points in Boycotts,” 1.

¹⁵ Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1; McCurdy, “School Board Yields to Some Student Points in Boycotts,” 1.

students and the administration argued about what those numbers meant. The *Times* even drew Sal Castro into this debate. “Many Mexican-American kids come to school with pretty good ability in English, but the teacher’s attitude compounds the language factor and actually turns it into a handicap,” he said. “The kid feels the school is not his friend, that he is in an alien situation... The teacher does not understand the students’ values, which really aren’t so different, but just enough apart to make him withdraw when they are made to seem wrong.” The school district could not convince Castro that its new Urban Affairs Office could recruit minority counselors, train teachers in human relations, implement compensatory programs in language instruction and hire Spanish-speaking parents as teacher aides. “A crash program was needed five years ago,” he concluded, “but there has been none.” Even if he was not satisfied, Castro was more cognizant of bilingual education issues in 1968 than his *testimonio* admits.¹⁶

While Castro focused on students’ feelings, the Blowout leaders demanded better language instruction. After submitting their formal demands to the school board in person on the Eastside, the students’ list became front-page news in the Sunday *Times*. Eight of the 38 demands addressed bicultural education. Although the first demand was that no student or teacher be disciplined for participating in the walkouts, the second demand called for “compulsory bilingual and bicultural education in all East Los Angeles schools, with teachers and administrators to receive training in speaking Spanish and Mexican cultural heritage.” While the *Times* called some demands “frivolous,” like replacing grades with “pass-fail” and renaming schools after Mexican heroes, most of the language requests were quite serious. The students wanted school counselors to speak Spanish, textbooks “to show Mexican contributions to

¹⁶ Torgerson, “Start of a Revolution?” B1; McCurdy, “School Board Yields to Some Student Points in Boycotts,” 1. Castro includes similar statements in his 2011 *testimonio*—without relating them to language. But he says that, unlike other Mexican American teachers, he often spoke to students in Spanish to make them feel comfortable. He insists he “didn’t give a damn about the rule that only English could be used in school.” García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 118.

society,” more library materials in Spanish, and the replacement of standardized tests “which often mistake a language problem with lack of intelligence.” The most extreme demands were to require new faculty to “live in the community where they teach,” to hire Spanish-speaking parents as teachers’ aides, and that cafeterias “should have more Mexican dishes and mothers should be allowed to help prepare the food.” Two teachers’ unions “threw their support behind the proposals for more bilingual and bicultural training of school personnel,... better cafeteria food, more Spanish-language library materials,... and more reading matter.” But the school district said it already had many of these programs in place, adding that there was no money to do more. Regardless of funding, the *Times* concluded, “the district says it could not find the number of personnel, particularly Spanish-speaking teachers, counselors, and administrators, demanded for the Mexican-American schools.” For example, it offered Spanish classes “on a voluntary basis for teachers who work in predominantly Mexican-American schools,” but it was too costly to make these classes mandatory. These were not the answers that students wanted, but the Blowouts had begun a conversation about bilingual education in Los Angeles.¹⁷

Not all Eastside students supported the Blowouts or their demands, but there was consensus about bilingual education. The Roosevelt *Rough Rider* disapproved of the protestors’ 38 demands, saying “it’s always easier to criticize and debase rather than to complain and present possible solutions at the same time.” So the student council recruited several protestors to join an official Solutions Committee, which sent twelve more specific requests to the school board. Bilingual education was first on this agenda, and a third of the demands addressed language learning. Admitting that many Roosevelt students had a “reading problem related to

¹⁷ McCurdy, “Frivolous to Fundamental: Demands Made by East Side High School Students Listed,” *LAT*, March 17, 1968, 1. While the *Times* included “frivolous” demands like student unions and lighted athletic fields, Henry Gutierrez detailed the ten “Academic” demands: “A set of items called for bilingual and bicultural education, including language and culture in-service training for teachers, revised textbooks to include Mexican American history and culture, pay differentials for bilingual teachers, and bilingual administrators, and the removal of teachers and administrators who demonstrate prejudice.” Gutierrez, “The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation,” 76.

their particular culture and or bi-cultural backgrounds,” the Solutions Committee called for replacing two reading teachers with bilingual teacher aides. It addressed the school’s high dropout rate by adding more school counselors and an attendance officer, “preferably one who is able to communicate in Spanish.” Remaining requests added to the Blowout demands, suggesting a new intelligence test “should be devised to test bi-lingual students” and that all Roosevelt High staff, from teachers to the principal, “be provided with on-campus opportunities to study Conversational Spanish.” Building off the Blowouts’ list of grievances, the Roosevelt Solutions Committee articulated a practical approach to bilingual education.¹⁸

The *Rough Rider* stuck with this story longer than the *L.A. Times*, and it eventually got elaborate, if paradoxical, responses from the school board. Some 2,000 school district employees were already taking Conversational Spanish classes, it reported, and “policy provides extra pay for bi-lingual personnel.” The district had addressed the dropout rate by hiring a Mexican-American professor to teach Spanish so all attendance officers could achieve “fluency in Spanish.” But the school board questioned the assumption that bilingual education should be compulsory:

“It is highly desirable to provide some degree of bi-lingual and cultural education to Spanish surname students. It is now possible to offer bi-lingual instruction when ‘educationally advantageous to the pupils,’... [But] not all Spanish surname students are Mexican-American, and vast differences of opinion are found in the Spanish surname community regarding the extent of bi-lingual and cultural instruction.”

It is certainly true that many Spanish-speaking Angelenos still favored Americanization over bilingual education. However, the school board’s statement seemed to contradict the policies it had just promoted, causing students to question the sincerity of its responses.¹⁹

Bilingual education played a prominent role when the school board came to Lincoln High on March 26, three weeks after the Blowouts had begun. Students, community members, and the

¹⁸ “Roosevelt Solutions Committee Complains and Finds Solutions,” *Rough Rider*, March 12, 1968, 1 (Zanki Papers). Roosevelt had the school district’s third-highest dropout rate.

¹⁹ “Board Responds to Walkout Proposals,” *Rough Rider*, May 17, 1968, 2 (Zanki Papers).

media filled all 1,100 seats in Lincoln's auditorium for more than two hours. Although the school board wanted to speak directly to the walkout organizers from each school, they all asked to be represented by Sal Castro and other adults. After arguing that the school district needed to hire more Mexican American administrators, Castro's colleagues turned to bilingual education. The Chicano activists moderated their initial call for compulsory bilingual-bicultural education, asking only to make it mandatory for the first three grades of elementary school. But they continued to insist on hiring more Mexican American teachers. When Julian Nava explained that the school district was going to spend \$1 million that summer to train teachers in Spanish and Mexican culture, the activists answered that they should spend the money on training new Chicano teachers instead. The two sides did not reach an agreement in the Lincoln auditorium that night or in the ensuing months, as Sal Castro continued to appear on the front pages of the *L.A. Times* and the *Roosevelt Rough Rider*. However, even as news coverage shifted from Eastside campuses to the halls of L.A. Superior Court and the conference rooms of the school board, bilingual education remained a central issue in the aftermath of the Blowouts.²⁰

Part 2: After the Blowouts: Curriculum Reforms and School Board Sit-Ins

The Blowouts became more than two weeks of student unrest in East Los Angeles. Jewish and Japanese American teachers tried to use the protests as the impetus to start classes in minority contributions to U.S. history. The Blowouts remained in the news for the next two years, linking local issues to national politics and the legacy of postwar public education debates. This story shifted to the courtroom, where the L.A. County Grand Jury indicted Castro along with the editor of *La Raza* newspaper and eleven local college students, most of whom belonged to the Brown Berets, for organizing the walkouts and disrupting school routine. The arrest of the

²⁰ Gutierrez, "The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation," 81-83. Castro cites Gutierrez in his *testimonio*. However, he inflates Gutierrez's numbers, saying there were 1,200 people (not 1,100) in attendance on March 26, and that the meeting last almost four hours (not 2.5 hours). García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 189-190.

“East L.A. 13,” under felony charges of conspiracy to disturb the peace, occurred days before California’s presidential primary in June, 1968. This caught the attention of the Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy campaigns, both of which offered to pay Castro’s bail. The felony charges forced school officials to remove Castro from the classroom, which led to a weeklong sit-in until the school board reinstated the instructor to his post at Lincoln High. In court, Castro and his co-defendants were represented by the same ACLU lawyers who had written amicus briefs for *Mendez v. Westminster* 22 years earlier. When the ACLU filed a suit arguing that the Grand Jury was prejudiced against Mexican Americans, Castro became more than a symbol of those who stood up for school reform. Yet, at the height of his public exposure, the teacher who organized the Blowouts gave an impassioned speech about bilingual education.²¹

Walkouts Awaken Westside Teachers, Inspire Curriculum Reform

Struck by the Eastside activism, several Westside teachers sought curriculum reform that resembled the Blowout leaders’ ambitious agenda. A few teachers worked at Venice High, which stood in stark contrast to Roosevelt High. It was two miles from the beach—and 18 miles away from East L.A. Each school had more than 3,200 students, but Roosevelt was 80 percent Mexican and Venice was 72 percent white. But they both had the same number of “Oriental” students (a little over 200), and 500 Mexican Americans attended Venice as well. The school attracted Westside liberals who shared the racial attitudes of progressive educators like Afton Nance and Helen Heffernan. Two months earlier, the Venice High PTA invited foreign exchange students to speak about the “home and school experiences in their native lands.” This resembled Roosevelt’s World Friendship clubs of the 1930s (see Chapter 2), which emphasized diplomatic

²¹ Inda, “La Comunidad en Lucha,” 17-18. While many of the “East L.A. 13” were Brown Beret leaders, others belonged to United Mexican American Students, a less militant organization. One UMAS leader was Moctesuma Esparza, an alum of Roosevelt High and Castro’s CYLC. Esparza argues that his role as “liaison to the press” during the Blowouts led to his career in media entertainment. In 2006, he was executive producer of the HBO film *Walkout*. Victor Payan, “Interview with Moctesuma Esparza: From the L.A. High School Walkouts to ‘Selena’ and ‘The Disappearance of Garcia Lorca,’” *In Motion Magazine* (May 21, 1998), <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/mesparza.html> (viewed May 14, 2013).

relations with Japan and Mexico rather than seeking to understand the Japanese- and Mexican-Americans who lived in L.A.. Still, Venice High was very progressive—nearly 1,000 students staged their own walkout a week after the Blowouts began on the Eastside.²²

Two teachers at Westside schools tried to integrate some of the 38 demands from the Blowouts into new curriculum near Venice High. One difference was that, rather than bilingual education, Jewish and Japanese American instructors proposed to teach the contributions of minorities to U.S. history and culture. In the fall of 1968, Venice High introduced two classes, that emphasized the role of Mexican Americans in nineteenth-century California. University High, near UCLA, offered “Cultural Spanish,” as “an effort to help our Mexican-American people find their identity.” As the Blowouts began, one of Venice High’s feeder schools, was preparing to teach a new summer school class, “America’s Intercultural Heritage.” The Jewish teacher designed a syllabus that began with John Kennedy’s speech, “A Nation of Immigrants,” and included black authors like Langston Hughes, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X. The teacher had taken workshops on Mexican American and African American history at Valley State College, where she met Julian Nava and discussed the book he was editing, an anthology of Mexican American readings that included a speech about bilingual education by L.A. Congressman Ed Roybal. Chicano and black activists were confident that the white teacher would present their views in a safe context after she said minority achievements were “as much a part of our history... as all the history that we teach. It should have been done a long time ago.”²³

While the teacher focused on Chicano and black students as she designed the course, she learned a lot about Japanese American history as well. This was because, in 1968, she observed a

²² McCurdy, “School Board Yields to Some Student Points in Boycotts,” 1; “Students to Speak,” *LAT*, January 11, 1968, WS9; McCurdy, “Venice High Youths, Police Clash,” 1; John Kendall, “Venice High Principal Suspends 40 Students: Administrator Warns Tight Discipline Will Be Kept; Violence and Walkouts Taper Off,” *LAT*, March 15, 1968, 3.

²³ “Teachers Pioneer Racial Minority Courses: Venture Into Unexplored Academic Territory,” *LAT*, April 28, 1968, WS1; Julian Nava, ed., *Viva La Raza! Readings on Mexican Americans* (New York: Van Nostrand Company, 1973). The teachers were Norma Newman of Mark Twain Junior High and George Kiriya of Pasteur Junior High..

similar “America’s Intercultural Heritage” class at Louis Pasteur Junior High in Mid-City, taught by George Kiriya. A resident of Venice who had spent four years at Manzanar during World War II, Kiriya organized the first minority history course for the L.A. school district’s new voluntary busing program. The Nisei teacher had an eclectic class which was about half “Negro,” a quarter Jewish, a quarter Mexican, with a few students “of Chinese or Japanese descent.” He invited speakers from each ethnic group and told them “to pull no punches” about life as a minority. He connected to current events by playing a tape of Martin Luther King’s speech the day he was killed in Memphis that spring. He did not shy away from other controversies, replacing traditional test evaluations with committee reports in which groups of students would present the history of individual ethnic groups. He even told students to ask their friends what they thought of Japanese-Americans—(“gardener” was the first word associated with Japanese of all ages by the 1960s). Kiriya’s insistence on studying racial minority groups” showed that some Nikkei teachers from Venice supported the principles that had guided Helen Heffernan and Sal Castro to propose bold programs like bilingual education in L.A. schools.²⁴

“The East L.A. 13”: How the Blowouts Became Politicized

While Westside liberals were reconsidering racial minorities in the curriculum, Castro found himself at the center of local and national elections in the California primary. The response to his arrest on Saturday, June 1, showed that the Blowouts became a polarizing symbol in 1968. A week earlier, Castro was at a reception for César Chávez at Julian Nava’s home in Northridge when he learned that the L.A. County Grand Jury was planning to charge him and twelve other Chicano adults on several counts of conspiracy to disturb the peace. The District Attorney was a Republican up for reelection on June 4. Arresting eleven of the “East L.A. 13,” including Castro, the weekend before the primary helped the D.A. show that he was a “Law and Order”

²⁴ “Teachers Pioneer Racial Minority Courses: Venture Into Unexplored Academic Territory,” WS1.

conservative like his party's presidential nominee, Richard Nixon. This reminded suburban voters of the Blowouts, a time when white teachers felt "threatened, school property was destroyed, and law enforcement officers... were assaulted with rocks and bottles." Charging conspiracy let the D.A. double down on the indictments because it raised the crime of disturbing the peace from a misdemeanor to a felony. To make the headlines even louder, the prosecutor set bail for each alleged conspirator at \$10,000. Thus, while Castro began his week with the farmworker organizer famous for fasting and marching to Sacramento in protest, it ended when he was arrested by the conservative prosecutor who would become the Attorney General of California two years later. That summer and fall, politics replaced language learning as the top priority of Castro, student organizers, and Chicano activists.²⁵

The District Attorney was reelected, but the big news from California's 1968 primary came on the Democratic side. Castro's case energized liberal groups like the ACLU, which called the conspiracy charges "a heavy-handed effort to suppress freedom of speech and association." The ACLU argued that a \$10,000 bail was more than double the standard amount for assault with a deadly weapon and "10 times more than for burglary." The day before the primary, a Superior Court judge reduced bail from \$10,000 to \$250, but he refused to dismiss the conspiracy charges. Castro came away from his weekend in jail an even bigger Eastside hero, but he made more news. On Tuesday morning, the Lincoln High principal told him to leave campus because teachers under felony indictment could not work in a classroom. That evening, Castro took calls from the staffs of Robert Kennedy and his Democratic opponent, Eugene McCarthy. Both campaigns offered to contribute money to the initially exorbitant bail, and each of them wanted to show Mexican Angelenos that they were allies with the symbolic leader of education

²⁵ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 198-199; "Calderon Reception to Be at Nava Home," *LAT*, May 26, 1968, SF_A3; Ron Einstoss, "13 Indicted in Disorders at 4 L.A. Schools; Arrests Underway," *LAT*, June 2, 1968, D12A; Gene Blake, "Don't Link Law, Order, Ex-Justice Clark Says," *LAT*, October 11, 1968, 31. The District Attorney was Evelle Younger.

reform. Although Castro admired McCarthy for being the first presidential candidate to criticize the Vietnam War, he voted for Kennedy, the man who had met his students during the Blowouts in March. The teacher was driving from McCarthy's headquarters at the Beverly Hilton to the Ambassador Hotel when Bobby Kennedy was shot. That night may have been as intense as the March walkouts, but the most dramatic event after the Blowouts came a few months later.²⁶

Activists confronted the fact that Castro could not teach as an indicted felon. Unlike the walkouts, which students supposedly started spontaneously, Chicano adults made a practical plan to reinstate Sal Castro. This was the first organized campaign of the Educational Issues Coordinating Committee, a coalition of Eastside students and parents. The EICC appealed to the school board to reverse Castro's transfer to the school district's central office and return him to Lincoln High. The board agreed to reconsider the case to avoid another showdown. However, after a closed meeting, it upheld Castro's transfer by the school district. The EICC was outraged that the school board's secret session only confirmed the punishment. Its leader argued that the board did not understand Castro's reputation. "He is the new kind of man we look up to," said the EICC head. "We believe in teachers who give our students a wholesome mirror of manhood and a new image of success through education. He is an example of devotion and courage to stand up like a man." Echoing Castro's courage, the EICC planned a picket at Lincoln High on the first day of school, which happened to be Mexican Independence Day, September 16. Although students did not participate, about 100 pickets marched for the first two weeks of school. When the EICC finally stopped the pickets to avoid violence, it sent 40 students, parents, and clergy to occupy the school board chambers after a public meeting. The sit-in succeeded after seven days.²⁷

²⁶ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 207-211; Einstoss, "13 Indicted in Disorders at 4 L.A. Schools; Arrests Underway," D12.

²⁷ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 212-216. Castro says there were between 100 and 300 pickets, while the *L.A. Times* reported around 100 pickets. McCurdy, "Latins Urge Reinstatement of Teacher Who Led Walkout," *LAT*, August 30, 1968, B; McCurdy, "Board Upholds Ban on Teacher Indicted in Student Strikes," *LAT*, September 13, 1968, 3; McCurdy, "East Side Still Plagued With Hangover From School Boycott," *LAT*, September 15, 1968, EB; McCurdy,

In the sit-ins, the EICC shaped the public image of the budding Chicano civil rights movement. After refusing to settle for a compromise—the school board president had offered to form a committee to study the teacher transfer policy—the activists settled in for the weekend. The first thing they did was to write on the blackboard, renaming the room “The Free and Liberated Board of Chicano Education.” The size of the sit-in ranged from 25 to 70 people, and several parents brought the protesters tamales, tacos, and chorizo burritos, Castro recalled, giving “the board room... the beautiful aroma of a Mexican restaurant.” A mariachi band serenaded the group on Saturday, and on Sunday an Episcopalian priest said Mass for the Catholic Chicanos, using bits of tortillas to give Communion. When the school board resumed its meetings on Monday, the chamber filled to its capacity of 200 seats, frequently interrupting the proceedings with slogans like “Sal is for you—are you for him?” Despite calls to end the sit-in on Tuesday, the EICC rank-and-file voted to remain in the chambers until the school board made a decision. On Wednesday the board did not reinstate Castro, but it changed chambers policy and authorized the arrest of 35 Chicano protesters. By Thursday, the uproar became so heated that the school board reversed course, reinstating Castro just three weeks after approving his transfer. There is no question that the seven-day sit-in influenced the board’s decision.²⁸

The reversal angered reactionary Angelenos. Eight housewives from suburban Westchester and Playa del Rey showed up at the board meeting a week after Castro’s reinstatement. When the board voted against a proposal to close the chambers thirty minutes after each meeting—to prevent future sit-ins—the Westside women staged a 17-hour “sleep-in”

“Lincoln High Pickets Protest Absence of Indicted Teacher: No Students or Teachers Participate,” *LAT*, September 17, 1968, 3; “Group Conducts Sit-In at School Board Chambers,” *LAT*, September 27, 1968, A3. The EICC leader was Rev. Vahac Mardirosian. Ironically, the sit-in began after a hearing in which principals criticized the school board for its lack of “vigorous action” against protesters. McCurdy, “Principals Assail School Disruptions,” *LAT*, September 27, 1968, A3.

²⁸ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 216-220; McCurdy, “Student-Parent Sit-In Continuing on Weekend,” *LAT*, September 28, 1968, B1; “School Board Sit-Ins Pass Time Musically,” *LAT*, September 29, 1968, A3; McCurdy, “School Board Sit-In Extended,” *LAT*, October 1, 1968, 1; McCurdy, “School Board Sit-In to Wind Up Today,” *LAT*, October 2, 1968, 3; McCurdy, “Castro Restored to Teaching Job,” *LAT*, October 4, 1968, 1. The two front-page stories appeared above the fold.

to protest against minority activism. At the four Chicano schools, about a quarter of the faculty requested transfers away from the Eastside. While these Anglo teachers admitted that Mexican schools were substandard, they blamed the students rather than themselves. One of Castro's colleagues at Lincoln articulated this view in the faculty newsletter. "When it comes to going to school—free and the best in the world—he [the Mexican-American] is passive," the teacher wrote. "Absenteeism is his culture, his way of life—always *mañana*, maybe he will get an education— *mañana*, when it comes to repairing his home, controlling child birth, planning for tomorrow, he is passive." But the Blowouts had emboldened Chicano students to respond to intolerant teachers. The racist newsletter motivated more protesters to picket outside Lincoln High on September 16. A month later, the EICC sent new pickets urging the 40 teachers who asked for transfers to stay on the Eastside. At Roosevelt High, students grew angry when they learned that 45 of the school's 150 teachers had requested transfers. There was so much suspicion about the faculty's feelings towards Chicano students that the *Rough Rider* had to print an anonymous letter from a teacher, apologizing for underestimating the intelligence and work ethic of Mexican American students. Such conservative backlash to the Blowouts was to be expected in 1968. But there were liberal perspectives to match each reactionary outburst.²⁹

Although Castro remained controversial, the sit-in attracted support from across the city for the student demands. On the sit-in's sixth day, the school board met with a negotiating council that represented most teachers in the city school system, which proposed an alternative policy that would only remove teachers who had been indicted for felonies "involving narcotics or morals." The 35 arrests occurred after the board voted against this proposal, but the next day it

²⁹McCurdy, "Board Defeats Move to Void Castro Ruling," *LAT*, October 15, 1968, 3; McCurdy, "Women End School Board Sit-in Protesting Lack of Sit-in Ban," *LAT*, October 16, 1968, 3; McCurdy, "East Side Still Plagued with Hangover from School Boycott," *EB*; "Pickets Urge Teachers to Remain at Lincoln," *LAT*, October 23, 1968, B4; "104 RHS Teachers Sign Petition Protesting School Board's Handling of Walkouts," *Rough Rider*, April 5, 1968, 1-2 (Zanki Papers).

created another compromise, allowing Castro to continue teaching at Lincoln while he appealed his transfer. Julian Nava defended Castro during the sit-in, calling the indictment “unnecessary, unjust and lamentable.” When he linked the charges to the D.A. election, the professor placed the “East L.A. 13” in the broader context of unrest in the summer of 1968, explaining that “the use of a conspiracy charge to punish [the defendants] for misdemeanors is nothing more than disastrous in view of this year, this community and this civil rights controversy.” Nava worried that the protest would lead to another student walkout. During the pickets outside Lincoln, he “urged the East Side community to remain calm and support the board even though it disagrees” with Castro’s transfer. In the sit-in’s final days, he negotiated with his colleagues to make Castro a priority and resolve the conflict as quickly as possible. His position was moderate, but Nava was also the only school board member to support reinstating Sal Castro on every vote they made.³⁰

The indictment also forced the *L.A. Times* to reexamine its reporting of the Blowouts. This included the columnist who had favored voter registration over school walkouts in March, when he asked “you chicos from Roosevelt High, instead of demonstrating, why don’t you distribute pamphlets?” Three months later, Castro’s secret indictment changed his mind. He found it ironic that, days after “the long arm of the law threw a roundhouse punch” at Castro and his colleagues, the controversial teacher was one of two speakers invited to speak to the Mexican American Student Association at East Los Angeles Junior College. The second speaker was the other famous Mexican graduate of ELAC, Julian Nava. The journalist dismissed any claims that ELAC’s Mexican students were communists and criticized Castro’s excessive indictment. Like Nava, the columnist had come to view Castro with more respect after his harsh treatment.³¹

³⁰ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 218; McCurdy, “School Board Sit-In Extended,” 1; McCurdy, “School Board Sit-In to Wind Up Today,” 3; McCurdy, “Latins Urge Reinstatement of Teacher Who Led Walkout,” B; McCurdy, “East Side Still Plagued With Hangover From School Boycott,” EB.

³¹ Coates, “Mexican-Americans Who Could Use Help,” *LAT*, October 7, 1968, B6; “Education: Victories for the Dissenters,” *LAT*, October 6, 1968, F5;

The *Times* gave top billing to Castro when he was finally reinstated, plastering his photo on the front page, above the fold. Its staff editorial featured a flowery finish that described the school board's vote to reinstate after six hours of deliberation, which was "greeted with cheers from an overflow audience of some 300 persons who then emotionally embraced Castro and carried him on their shoulders from the chambers." Three days later, however, the *Times* wrote a more measured editorial that considered Castro from two points of view. He was "rated a good teacher," it acknowledged, with "support from both moderates and militants in the Mexican-American community. Most significantly he is a symbol for many of the fight by Mexican-Americans for better education and higher achievement." But there were also many Eastside parents and teachers who argued that "his actions have contributed to an undercutting of their professionalism and authority in the classroom." Castro clearly captivated the newspaper, providing actions and colorful commentary to reporters and editors from multiple perspectives.³²

Sal Castro also milked his indictment for maximum attention. The "East L.A. 13" case went through so many suits and countersuits that it involved almost forty Los Angeles Superior Court judges over two years. John Aiso did not preside over the case in his final months on the Superior Court, but the "East L.A. 13" followed the judge to his new seat on the Second Appellate Court, which finally cleared Castro of all charges in 1970. This vindication of a contrarian who stood up for Mexican American students resembled *Mendez v. Westminster* in several ways. Although Castro hired a Chicano attorney, he was also represented by the ACLU, which assigned the same lawyer who had filed amicus briefs in *Mendez*. In August, as the EICC prepared to send pickets to Lincoln High School, the ACLU's chief counselor, Abraham Lincoln (A.L.) Wirin, filed two legal actions that had never been taken in a California criminal case. Claiming his clients were denied equal protection under the law, he asked L.A. Superior Court to

³² "Victories for the Dissenters," *LAT*, October 6, 1968, F5; "A New Protest at Lincoln High," *LAT*, October 9, 1968, A4.

stop the D.A. from prosecuting the “East L.A. 13.” Wirin also wanted the court to set aside any indictment of organizing a peaceful protest on the grounds that this violated Castro’s right to free speech. Wirin went further, blaming Castro’s outrageous indictment on racial bias, which he proved by pointing out that, in the last decade, only one percent of the potential Grand Jurors selected by Superior Court judges had Spanish surnames. These claims were not as serious as the segregation charges against Westminster school district in 1946. But as in *Mendez*, the trial proceedings in *Salvador Castro, et. al., v. Los Angeles Superior Court* show how Mexican American activists forced judges to confront their biases about race and education. Although Aiso’s Second Appellate Court did not find any violations in the Superior Court’s process of picking Grand Jurors, the D.A. dropped all charges against Castro and the “East L.A. 13.”³³

Sal Castro Circles Back to Bilingual Education After Sit-Ins and Reinstatement

With his leadership in the Blowouts, and the “East L.A. 13” controversy, Castro created a public platform for Chicano education. The more he spoke, the more he stressed language learning. This was not the case when he was first reinstated at Lincoln High. Before returning to school in October, 1968, he spent a week in Washington as an educational consultant to the U.S. Justice Department and visited California State University, Long Beach, where he was a keynote speaker at “La Semana de La Raza” alongside César Chávez. At these appearances, Castro articulated a general vision about giving Chicano students dignity by treating them with respect. However, as school administrators and reporters demanded a specific agenda to implement those

³³ Einstoss, “ACLU Suit Seeks to Prevent Prosecution of 13 Militants,” *LAT*, August 24, 1968, B1; Oscar Acosta, “The East L.A. 13 vs. The L.A. Superior Court,” *El Grito* 3.2 (Winter, 1970), 12-18; “Judge Upholds Prosecution of 13 Accused in School Walkouts,” *LAT*, November 26, 1968, SG1; Einstoss, “DA’s Office Hits Back at Criticism in Sal Castro Case,” 3; “Jury Urges Suspension of Any Indicted Student,” *LAT*, December 21, 1968, A1; “State Appeal Court Bars Prosecution of Castro on 2 Counts,” *LAT*, July 18, 1970, A1. Acosta, the attorney Castro hired, reported that 1,501 potential Grand Jurors were selected by 178 judges in Los Angeles Superior Court between 1959 and 1969. Twenty of those potential jurors were Mexican American, but only three of those individuals made it to the Grand Jury itself. This meant that only one percent of the Grand Jury was Mexican American, even though Latinos made up 13 percent of L.A. by 1969—or, as Acosta said, Mexican Americans were “the largest minority in America’s numerically largest county.”

goals, bilingual education became a useful topic. Castro clearly avoids language learning issues in his 2011 *testimonio*, but he openly endorsed bilingual education soon after the Blowouts.

He developed his vision at Camp Hess Kramer in 1969. The first camp after the Blowouts featured two different perspectives on language learning. One was Marcos De Leon, the former Spanish teacher at Van Nuys High who had criticized Max Rafferty at Camp Hess Kramer in 1963. Now a community coordinator for the school district, De Leon urged students to embrace English as much as Spanish. “Remember that that which is Gringo is just as important as that which is Chicano,” he said. “Become aware, accept and respect the bicultural concept... You’ll never get away from the barrio, because it is an extension of you.” But the Western director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights worried that emphasizing language education would impact school integration. “I only hope that bilingual education does not become another way of segregating the Chicano kid... The way for the Spanish language to gain status is for everyone to take bilingual education, and not only Chicanos.” Castro took these concerns to other audiences after Camp Hess Kramer. He received “bursts of applause” for bringing up bilingualism at a Presidential commission on welfare in East L.A. Castro’s charisma helped him turn a hearing on poverty into a referendum on the school district’s “lack of an effective bilingual teaching approach.” This raised dropout rates in Eastside schools, he argued. “Charging that many teachers are unaware and badly trained to cope with the needs of the bilingual child, Castro said heatedly,... ‘From 9 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon, our kids are dying by the thousands in our classrooms.’” Such statements made Castro a spokesman for bilingual education.³⁴

³⁴ McCurdy, “40 Teachers Ask for Transfers After Reinstatement of Castro,” *LAT*, October 8, 1968, A1; “Mexican-Americans’ Cultural Week Opens Today at College,” *LAT*, October 12, 1968, C1; Salazar, “Latin Youths Take a Hard Look at Life,” *LAT*, April 13, 1969, D17; Jack Jones, “Welfare System Hit at Hearings in East L.A.,” *LAT*, May 23, 1969, C1. For full accounts of the Camp Hess Kramer speeches, see Philip Montez, “The Psychology of Mexican-American Students,” and Marcos De León, “A Theory of Bicultural Education,” in Nava, ed., *Viva La Raza*, 122-124.

Castro's bilingual instruction campaign culminated in 1969, a year after the sit-ins. He started with an academic argument questioning why "we force pupils to quit speaking Spanish in the lower grades and then make them learn it in the eighth grade. If we had bilingual education by the eighth grade our kids would be bilingual and by the ninth grade they would be ready for a third language." Then Castro turned to his favorite topics, dignity and self-worth. He criticized classrooms that made youths "ashamed of speaking Spanish and the accomplishments of their Mexican forebears are hidden from them by textbook writers who use 'Spanish' as a euphemism for 'Mexican.'" This led to a new interpretation of bicultural education, which also revised California history to shed a more favorable light on Mexicans. Castro called out textbooks that said Spanish explorers were the first "civilized" people to settle California, insisting that Mexicans not only founded California, but that they had established the first university in North America "long before the people came from England in little boats." Romanticizing Mexican history challenged the standard narrative. "It is a racist concept to teach that Columbus discovered America," he argued. "They discovered each other." These were bold claims for a broad vision of bicultural curriculum just a year after the East L.A. Blowouts, but Castro knew that bilingual instruction was his best opportunity for reform. "The only way to go is bilingual education," he stated at the start of that speech to 100 people in Van Nuys. "It has to happen."³⁵

Castro's advocacy added radical rhetoric for bilingual education policy. In 1969, the Center for Urban Education interviewed him about the language problem. "Education in the barrio doesn't free the mind of the *chicano*," Castro said. "It imprisons his mind." He cited South Texas schools that forced students to "kneel and beg forgiveness" for speaking Spanish. Reporting that the L.A. school board still defended paddling students who spoke Spanish

³⁵ Charles Donaldson, "Bilingual Education Urged for All Latins," *LAT*, October 10, 1969, SF7. Castro has changed his position on bilingual education. See Epilogue, Footnote 14.

supported Castro's claim that bilingual education would give Mexican students more self-confidence. "We are teaching these kids with psychological guns pointed at their heads," Castro lamented. "If a kid speaks in Spanish, he is criticized. If a kid has a Mexican accent, he is ridiculed. If a kid talks back, in any language, he is arrested. If a kid wants to leave school, he is forced back. We have gun point education. The school is a prison." Bringing bilingual education into such conditions was a major challenge. But students, teachers, and politicians were deep into discussions about language learning legislation even before the Blowouts had begun.³⁶

Part 3: Early Versions of Bilingual Education in Los Angeles, 1966-1969

The students who led the Blowouts bemoaned the inadequacy of bilingual instruction in Los Angeles schools. But it is wrong to argue that bilingual education did not exist before the 1968 walkouts. This chapter will conclude by examining innovations in language learning at the local, state, and federal level that led Lyndon Johnson to sign the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) in 1968, authorizing federal funding of bilingual initiatives. While Sal Castro says little about language education in his *testimonio*, the evidence is clear that bilingual instruction played an important role in schooling debates after the Blowouts. This section shows that local activism like the walkouts turned bilingual education into a politicized topic that energized Mexican Angelenos as well as Anglo conservatives who clung to earlier concepts of Americanization.

The city's first attempt at bilingual education was a vocational program in the fall of 1967. The Standard Oral English program targeted Mexican and African American high schoolers, teaching "the prevailing dialect in the larger community" to help them succeed in job interviews after graduation. This counted as compensatory education under Lyndon Johnson's landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and the school district was proud to

³⁶ Stan Steiner, "The De-Education Schools," *The Center Forum* 4.1 (September, 1969), 6, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC.

offer this experimental program in South and East Los Angeles. Its vocational emphasis accompanied the arrival of Helen Heffernan's English as a Second Language program at five Eastside junior highs, along with the four "Mexican" high schools that would lead the Blowouts a few months later. More importantly, the Standard Oral English program provided workshops to train fifty English teachers by the fall of 1968. While this was a step in the right direction, Chicanos like Sal Castro still demanded language classes that empowered students' self-identity rather than remedial training for working-class jobs. In 1967 the school district also started in-service training "to give teachers specialized instruction in conversational Spanish" at eight adult schools. This was more reflective of the bilingual education agenda because it addressed the fact that faculty had to communicate with parents who spoke little or no English. Although activists wanted such training for all elementary and secondary school instructors, they supported the school district's decision to "provide teachers with the vocabulary and conversational ability needed to discuss the educational program with a Spanish-speaking adult."³⁷

Angeleno teachers began to support bilingual education before the Blowouts as well. In December, 1967, when Johnson's signature on the BEA appeared imminent, the Los Angeles Teachers Association (LATA) approached the school board to decide how it should apply for federal funds. Julian Nava asked for faculty opinions about which aspects of bilingual education mattered most: supplies and materials, evaluation methods, in-service training, or hiring Spanish-speaking teacher aides. In January, finding itself "deluged" with survey responses from teachers "anxious to take action immediately," LATA called a "mass meeting for all teachers interested in bilingual education." Unlike the 40 teachers at Lincoln High who criticized the Blowouts, LATA supported training teachers in the language of their students. Rather than requesting transfers

³⁷ "Language Skills Raise Job Prospects" and "Spanish Class Aids Teachers," *Spotlight: Los Angeles City Schools Employee Newsletter* 5.3 (October 16, 1967), 2, 4, Springer Papers, SFHS Library.

from Eastside schools, the union asked its members two questions: “Habla usted Español? Do your students speak Spanish?” On March 1, LATA sponsored a “School Community Talk-In” at Lincoln High. More than 500 parents, teachers, and students showed up to “tune in, turn on, think in.” The union newsletter advertised discussions with Mexican American community leaders and students from “underground newspapers,” along with Sal Castro and his supporters, whom LATA described as “teachers from East L.A. who are willing to ‘tell it like it is.’” Thus, the Friday before the Blowouts began, L.A.’s liberal teachers’ union showed up at Castro’s high school to discuss the “Problemas” he had complained about for five years.³⁸

Unlike the school board, which met with protestors but resisted their requests, LATA embraced the student demands. Anticipating the charges against Castro for disturbing the peace, the union asserted first amendment rights that “teachers have a special responsibility along with all other citizens to participate actively in the political process.” It endorsed “in-service training in the history, the language and the culture of minority groups for those teaching in East and South Los Angeles,” along with hiring counselors who shared the ethnic origins of the students they supervised. LATA also proposed statewide legislation that would “authorize school districts to purchase paperback bi-lingual texts... [and] to bring more foreign bi-lingual teachers into the district.” In the fall of 1968, the union hired a staff member to service Eastside schools. LATA called Art Cisneros “a forceful spokesman for the Mexican-American,” and it backed up this claim with a resume that emphasized language learning. Cisneros had worked with Afton Nance at the State Department of Education, administered Head Start programs, and taught “English for New Americans” to adults. By 1969, the school district also responded to Eastside demands for

³⁸ “Bilingual Education Program Under Analysis,” *LATA Hot Line* 4.13 (December 4, 1967), 2; “Bi-lingual Education Receives Help,” *LATA Hot Line* 4.14 (December 11, 1967), 1; “LATA Takes Swift Action On Bi-lingual Education,” *LATA Hot Line* 4.17 (January 15, 1968), 1; “Habla Usted Español? Do Your Students Speak Spanish?” *LATA Hot Line* 4.18 (January 22, 1968), 1; “Problemas: Education in East Los Angeles,” *LATA Hot Line* 4.22 (February 19, 1968), 1, Springer Papers, SFHS Library. The editor of one “underground newspaper,” *La Raza*, was one of the “East L.A. 13” arrested alongside Sal Castro in June, 1968.

bilingual education. After the Blowouts, it found a new assignment for the city's former foreign language supervisor, Hilario Peña (see Chapter 5). The school district named Peña the new principal at Hollenbeck Junior High in Boyle Heights. These promotions did not resolve the Eastside's student dropout problem, but they showed that the teachers' union and the school district wanted to hire Chicano leaders who had experience teaching bilingual education.³⁹

The best example of the school district working with Mexican Angelenos to improve education for Spanish speakers was the Adult Bilingual Experimental School. These classes lacked formal bilingual instruction (as defined on pages 262-263), and it appears that the school board called this a "bilingual" school to placate community Mexican community demands after the Blowouts. The assistant superintendent for adult education opened the school in Boyle Heights, a half-mile from Peña's new home, Hollenbeck Junior High, which was literally across the street from Roosevelt High. Echoing Nora Sterry's earlier "neighborhood schools," he called L.A. adult schools "'community center[s]' where adults can renew themselves... These programs help develop community pride, leadership, self realization, and social fabric." In addition to the adult school, L.A. offered vocational programs that trained students to work for television stations like KMEX, the Spanish-language channel whose news director was Ruben Salazar. The adult education director also oversaw in-service Spanish training for school district personnel, noting that "this effort was appreciated by the Spanish speaking community." Julian Nava applauded such efforts in his own article about adult education. He said minority groups wanted change, criticizing schools for "being '*in the community*' but not '*of the community*.'" A year after the Blowouts, Nava praised this participation but insisted that "'community involvement'

³⁹ "Teachers Guaranteed Right to Participate in Politics," *LATA Hot Line* 4.28 (April 1, 1968), 1; "LATA-ATOLA Supports Faculties at Schools in Crisis," *LATA Hot Line* 4.26 (March 18, 1968), 1; "State Education Conference Concentrates on Needs of Mexican-Americans," *LATA Hot Line* 4.31 (April 29, 1968), 1; Ellen Rodman, "Pollution of Mind a Problem," *LAT*, September 8, 1970, H1; "Five Adult Education Centers Opened," *Spotlight*, June 9, 1969, 2, Springer Papers, SFHS Library.

does not mean ‘community control.’” Like Nora Sterry and Julian Nava, the Adult Experimental School stressed community support. “A bilingual school to be successful must be people oriented,” the administrators concluded, declaring that they “must be willing to confer with the grass roots people and be willing to listen and to build a program under their guidance.”⁴⁰

The Adult Bilingual Experimental School was built from the bottom up in East L.A. In February, 1968, as Sal Castro’s students staged teach-ins before the Blowouts, a former public school teacher opened a Latin American Study Center for Spanish-speaking adults at a Catholic church 24 miles across town in the northern San Fernando Valley. Word spread in the Mexican American community, and six weeks after the walkouts the principal of Roosevelt High’s Adult School approved the Eastside Bilingual Study Center for Spanish-Speaking adults. These classes began meeting in a Catholic church that had opened a new parochial school in Boyle Heights. The role of grassroots organizing was significant but difficult to measure. One article misleadingly insisted that the adult bilingual programs in San Fernando and East L.A. were centralized. The article was written by the principals of two adult education centers in L.A. (one of whom had supervised the city’s English as a Second Language program) and a Spanish teacher who had left his post as foreign language department chair at Reseda High in the Valley to serve the State Department of Education as an adult instruction specialist. But even these administrators, who touted the school district’s role in establishing the Adult Experimental School, could not hide the fact that Mexican Angelenos, tired of waiting for formal ESL classes, acted on their own to turn Catholic churches into desirable, if temporary, language learning sites.⁴¹

⁴⁰ William Johnston, “Adult Education in Los Angeles,” *California Journal of Secondary Education* (hereafter *CJSE*) 44.5 (May, 1969), 199-202; Julian Nava, “Adult Education Is Community Involvement,” *CJSE* 44.5 (May, 1969), 196-198; Wesley Balbuena, Edward Morton, and Byrl Robinson, “The Adult Bilingual Experimental School,” *CJSE* 44.5 (May, 1969), 225-230. Balbuena, the language department chair at Reseda High, had also served on the approval committee for foreign language books, *Magazines: Los Angeles City Schools, 1957-59*, 30, Springer Papers, SFHS Library.

⁴¹ Balbuena, Morton, and Robinson, “The Adult Bilingual Experimental School,” 225-227. The Reseda High teacher, Wesley Balbuena, appeared to embrace conservatism. He invited his new boss, Eugene Gonzales, to speak at the Adult

The Adult Bilingual Experimental School resembled earlier L.A. experiments in other ways. Like the Progressive Home Teachers (see Chapter 1), the adult bilingual educators stated that their school was the “first of its kind in the nation.” More surprisingly, the three administrators opened the Adult Experimental School article with a slogan Nora Sterry could have said in the 1920s, that its purpose was “to maintain the American way of life.” But Los Angeles had more non-English speakers in 1968, making bilingual education for adults “a community investment.” The supervisors suggested that the Adult Experimental School would improve Mexican attitudes by reaching out to potential teachers as well as students. They proposed a rigorous method of staff selection, demanding that all bilingual educators obtain teaching credentials—but they also expected these teachers to be fluent in Spanish and English. Home Teachers had stressed similar credentials in the 1920s, but the Adult Experimental School went two steps further. While the Home Teachers were settlement house workers who brought Progressive values to Eastside barrios, the Adult Experimental School sought candidates who shared the “many nationalities that comprise the Latin-American spectrum” and, ideally, “should be living or working in the community.” These differences showed how the mantle of progressive education had changed hands from white women in the 1920s to bilingual ethnic minorities in 1968.⁴²

The Adult Experimental School offered a blueprint for implementing bilingual education. It proposed academic, vocational, and citizenship classes for non-English speakers. This three-part program would increase immigrants’ educational opportunities, accelerate acculturation, and raise their “intellectual, economic, and social aspiration levels.” Six weeks after the Blowouts began, the East Los Angeles Pastors’ and Priests’ Committee presented this plan to Julian Nava’s

Experimental School a month before this article was published. As Max Rafferty’s associate superintendent, Gonzales was also the most outspoken Spanish-speaking supervisor who opposed the 1968 Blowouts. “Eugene Gonzales Spoke at Bilingual Adult Education Last Saturday,” published in *Eastside Sun*, April 3, 1969, listed in Rodolfo Acuña, *A Community Under Siege: A Chronicle of Chicanos East of the Los Angeles River, 1945-1975* (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, Monograph No. 11, 1984), 339.

⁴² Balbuena, Morton, and Robinson, “The Adult Bilingual Experimental School,” 225-227.

adult education committee at the school board. Nava approved plans for clergy and community supporters to recruit bilingual teachers and write curriculum for classes like Spanish Literature and Spanish-American Cultural Heritage of the Southwest. More importantly, the Adult Experimental School advertised these courses by printing 25,000 flyers and asking Eastside priests to distribute them at Sunday services. The flyers explained that adult classes “were being taught in Spanish... for personal development, for improvement, for advancement of the economic status of the familiar, for inspiration, and to serve as an example to the younger generation.” Several church parishes provided bus services to the nightly classes, helping many students enroll in their first-ever adult education course. This was not easy. “In this first year,” the administrators explained, “teachers have struggled heroically to provide their own materials by translating existing texts or writing their own lessons in Spanish.” They admitted that the Adult Experimental School needed more bilingual materials for all classes. But the school resolved that “English as a Second Language classes motivate adults toward further self-improvement, which in turn feed students into other facets of the program.” In its second year, the Adult Experimental School organized its curriculum into different levels. First-level students studied ESL four nights a week; second-level adults took ESL two nights and another class two nights; and the highest-level students enrolled in English-only classes. This approach aimed to graduate students who were fully literate in two languages.⁴³

Part 4: Angelenos Influence the State and Federal Bilingual Education Acts

Mexican Eastsiders were proud that the Adult Experimental School’s curriculum covered “more than instruction in two languages—it employs the development of new roles, new perceptions, and new attitudes.” This definition expressed the aspirations of bilingual education advocates often lost on the broader public. Ruben Salazar described the general view that “truly

⁴³ Balbuena, Morton, and Robinson, “The Adult Bilingual Experimental School,” 225-230.

bilingual programs... should be the teaching of both languages on an equal basis.” Many Anglo parents pictured a classroom in which teachers simply spoke a sentence in Spanish, and then wrote the same line in English on the blackboard. Salazar cited examples of this teaching method in several *L.A. Times* articles about Texas. While Texas’ bilingual education program practiced repetition and translation, Angelenos applied for language instruction grants that followed a more progressive approach. By 1973, the U.S. Office of Education defined bilingual education as “the use of two languages, one of which is English, as mediums of instruction for the same pupil population in a well-organized program which encompasses part or all of the curriculum and includes the study of the history and culture associated with the mother tongue.” Teaching ethnic history and culture to build self-esteem meant new bilingual classes met the student demands drawn up during the 1968 walkouts. But even before the Blowouts, Mexican Angelenos proposed state and federal bills to implement bilingual education. This section will examine how L.A. educators shaped legislation signed by Governor Reagan in 1967 and by President Johnson in 1968. As politicians and Chicano activists argued about the details of the law, they created a set of expectations consistent with the student demands from the impending Blowouts.⁴⁴

Six months before the federal Bilingual Education Act (BEA) became law, Ronald Reagan signed a similar bill in Sacramento. This was part of a strategy to secure the Spanish-speaking vote in a new Republican majority. The historian Gareth Davies credits Reagan’s Senate Bill 53 for persuading the Mexican American Political Association against campaigning

⁴⁴ Balbuena, Morton, and Robinson, “The Adult Bilingual Experimental School,” 225; Salazar, “Mexican-American’s Dilemma: He’s Unfit in Either Language, February 27, 1970,” in *Border Correspondent*, 241-242; Salazar, “Bilingual Texas Public School Gains Support, October 13, 1969,” in *Border Correspondent*, 228-231; Lawrence Wright, “Bilingual Education: Where the U.S. Stands in Improving the Education of the Non-English Speaking Student,” *Race Relations Reporter* 4.17 (September, 1973), 14. In one integrated bilingual class in Texas, Salazar reported, a Spanish-speaking student translated “*You tengo un libro rojo*” to “I have a book red,” which his Anglo classmates corrected to “I have a red book.” “This time the English-speaking student helped the Spanish-speaking one correct his English,” said the teacher, Mrs. Garcia. “Sometimes it’s the other way around. The result is that both learn English and Spanish at the same time. Communication among kids is fantastic.” For Texas schools, see Blanton, *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education*.

for his Democratic opponent in 1970, when he was reelected Governor. Reagan was one of several conservatives from the Southwest, including Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona and Congressman George H.W. Bush of Texas, who supported bilingual education for their Chicano constituents. Davies also argues that leading Republicans responded with less enthusiasm to MAPA's more specific demands to appoint Latinos to public office and host a White House conference on the problems of Spanish speakers. Still, at the national level, California Republicans played a big role in implementing bilingual education. In 1969, President Nixon named Robert Finch of Pasadena as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. Finch assigned another Californian, undersecretary Leon Panetta, to write the memo clarifying the provisions of the BEA. Nixon's two HEW appointees were young politicians who recognized the importance of Mexican-American voters. Finch declared that 1968 would be "the last election that will be won by the un-black, the un-poor and the un-young." The actions he took in Washington were influenced by his work with Ronald Reagan in passing SB 53 in Sacramento two years earlier.⁴⁵

Governor Reagan Grants Bilingual Education in California, 1967

In some ways, Reagan's state initiative was a more symbolic first step for bilingual education than Johnson's federal law. For one thing, it ended a 95-year-old mandate in California's education code requiring schools to conduct all instruction exclusively in English. But Natalia Mehlman Petrzela argues that state legislators, sensing imminent passage of the BEA in Washington, proposed a bill "that exhibited greater specificity and boldness than the federal act." Unlike the BEA, SB 53 could not authorize federal funding, but its text did state the "inherent benefit of Spanish fluency and recognized an inextricable link between language and

⁴⁵ Gareth Davies, "The Great Society After Johnson: The Case of Bilingual Education," *Journal of American History* 88.4 (December, 2002), 1405-1429 (Notes 14-19; 28-29); Natalia Mehlman Petrzela, "Before the Federal Bilingual Education Act," *Peabody Journal of Education* 85 (2010), 414; "Hearings in L.A. Due on Bilingual Education Bills," *LAT*, June 18, 1967, G1. Panetta was a rare Democrat in Nixon's administration. In 1967, the *Rough Rider* reported that Finch spoke to immigrants who passed the citizenship test in L.A. Adult School in his role as Lieutenant Governor (see Chapter 5).

culture on which the 1968 version of the BEA remained silent.” It encouraged efforts to add a bilingual-bicultural component to the curriculum in every subject. It also advocated language instruction courses that integrated non-English and English speakers, declaring that “the native language of all students should be respected and utilized... and the bilingual ability should be viewed as a distinct asset.” Although SB 53 was a modest proposal, it enabled southern California conservatives to pass the first state law for bilingual education.⁴⁶

Yet Republicans struggled to convince Mexican American constituents to support these achievements. During his 1968 Senate primary, Max Rafferty referenced SB 53 in front of 800 teachers at the *Nuevas Vistas* (“New Horizons”) conference at the Biltmore Hotel in downtown L.A. As superintendent of public instruction, Rafferty endorsed Reagan’s bilingual education bill but said it did not address “the problem of finding enough Spanish-speaking teachers.” Claiming that he had urged teachers to study Spanish at in-service workshops during the summer, he “conceded that a federal bilingual education appropriation of \$5 million, spread through 50 states, is not nearly enough to ease the situation.” While Rafferty insisted that “the purpose of bilingual instruction is not to perpetuate the student’s Spanish, but to teach him English,” he also added that “everyone ought to be able to speak more than one language.” These mixed messages, endorsing bilingual education but envisioning a program that resembled prewar Americanization, made Mexican Angelenos suspicious. The purpose of *Nuevas Vistas* was to “send educators back to their school better prepared to reach the bilingual or Spanish-speaking student in an effort to stem the dropout rate.” But the Biltmore conference was chaired by Rafferty’s associate Eugene Gonzales, who dismissed the “senseless... pickets, demonstrations, and walkouts” and told teachers to focus on educating “the mythical tortilla eater, the sleepy giant now flexing his

⁴⁶ “Evolution of Important Events in California Bilingual Education Policy” Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC (Folder 1); Mehlman Petrzela, “Before the Federal Bilingual Education Act,” 413-415; Hearings in L.A. Due on Bilingual Education Bills,” G1; “Rafferty Sees Gains for Mexican-Americans,” *LAT*, May 11, 1968, B1-B10.

muscles” in the Blowouts. The next year, when Reagan addressed the third annual *Nuevas Vistas* conference at the Biltmore, Brown Berets set off fires and other “disturbances” to protest the governor responsible for SB 53. The resulting indictments, which seemed similar to the “East L.A. 13,” showed that GOP plans to begin bilingual education in California could not capture the state’s Mexican American vote, much of which came from L.A. County.⁴⁷

Angelenos Lobby for the Federal Bilingual Education Act, 1967

In Washington, meanwhile, L.A. liberals and moderates proved invaluable to efforts for federal legislation. Discussion of the BEA began in 1966, when Ed Roybal accompanied Lyndon Johnson and his fellow Texan, Senator Ralph Yarborough, on a trip to Mexico. The president presented the idea. Recalling his first year of teaching at a Mexican school in south Texas, Johnson told Roybal and Yarborough that “the students were bright but just did not know the language.” Although Yarborough authored the ultimate draft of the BEA, many Angeleno officeholders offered their own versions. Roybal, the Boyle Heights native who had belonged to Roosevelt High’s World Friendship club in 1932, was not even the first Angeleno to propose the BEA in Congress. In 1967, Democrat James Corman of the San Fernando Valley introduced the first House bill to provide federal funds for “activities including bilingual education programs, instruction of Spanish as the native language and English as a second language—and the development of programs designed to impart to Spanish-speaking students understanding and pride in their ancestral culture.” Months after Corman’s Bilingual American Educational Act, and similar bills by Democrats George Brown of Monterey Park and Gus Hawkins of South L.A., Roybal submitted his own resolution, the Bilingual Educational Opportunity Act,

⁴⁷ “Rafferty Sees Gains for Mexican-Americans,” *LAT*, May 11, 1968, B1-B10; Salazar, “Brown Berets Hail ‘La Raza’ and Scorn the Establishment, June 16, 1969,” *Border Correspondent*, 212-219; Ray Ripton, “Santa Monica Schools Helping Mexican-Americans,” *LAT*, November 2, 1969. Gonzales quoted in Mehlman Petrzela, “Origins of the Culture Wars,” 105. There is an interesting parallel between SB 53 and Paul McCormick’s initial opinion in *Mendez*. Both McCormick and SB 53 sought stronger reforms for Mexican American education than the mainstream establishment could tolerate, as evidenced by the more moderate actions of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the federal BEA.

promising “America’s millions of non-English-speaking elementary and secondary school children a better chance to realize their full educational aspirations.” Almost every Angeleno Democrat in Washington wanted to write his own bilingual education bill.⁴⁸

As a co-sponsor of the final text, Roybal asked Yarborough to hold one of the Senate’s three subcommittee hearings on bilingual education in Los Angeles. The L.A. hearing happened in June, a month after Reagan signed SB 53 in Sacramento, and politicians from both parties supported the BEA. Senator George Murphy, the first Hollywood star elected to statewide office as a Republican, called the “language problem” the main reason half the Spanish-speaking students in California dropped out of school by eighth grade. In L.A., Rep. Corman testified, “Mexican-Americans have been victims of one of the cruelest forms of discrimination... Spanish is forbidden to them and they are required to struggle along as best they can in English, a language understood dimly by most and not at all by many.” While some Valley schools were trying “new ways of handling the situation,” Corman said federal funding would “expand and improve the programs.” Roybal reported the “tragic record” in higher education, pointing out that only ten percent of the 20,000 Mexican Californians of college age were enrolled in the state’s public universities. Even Senator Thomas Kuchel, who was on Yarborough’s subcommittee but could not attend the hearings, sent a statement. “We must treat the ability to speak Spanish and other languages as an asset,” said the Orange County Republican. “The United States can no longer pretend that it can communicate with other people with but one tongue.” Kuchel’s moderate position helped Max Rafferty defeat him in the GOP primary the next year.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Acuña, *A Community Under Siege*, 150; “Law Proposed to Aid Bilingual Education: Legislation Would Authorize Federal Funds for Instruction in Spanish,” *LAT*, March 12, 1967, SF_C6; “Some Provisions of H.R. 8000: Extension of Remarks of Hon. Edward R. Roybal of California in the House of Representatives,” in Nava, ed., *Viva La Raza!* 125-126.

⁴⁹ Acuña, *A Community Under Siege*, 160; “Hearings in L.A. Due on Bilingual Education Bills,” *LAT*, June 18, 1967, G1; Bob Rawitch, “Murphy Hits Lack of Bilingual Education at Senate Hearing,” *LAT*, June 25, 1967, D8.

L.A.'s leading Mexican educators also spoke about the proposed legislation. Julian Nava testified at the Senate hearings two weeks after winning his first school board election. Since "local tax sources cannot or will not assume" the costs of new programs, Nava explained, federal funding was essential to implement bilingual education. This did not change the debate, but the Senate subcommittee was eager to include the history professor in its hearings before his first school board meeting. The situation had slightly changed by October, 1968, when the California Assembly convened an education hearing at Roosevelt High in Boyle Heights. Instead of Nava, the legislature invited Sal Castro to speak, days after the school board had reinstated him to teach in East L.A. Unhappy with the funding of language instruction from both state and federal laws, Castro called for a "gigantic sensitization of teachers," asking the school board to "show where bilingual education is really being conducted on an effective basis." It is noteworthy that bilingual education hearings came to L.A. weeks after Nava's school board election in 1967 and Castro's teaching reinstatement in 1968. They showed the discrepancy between the promise of legislative funding and the implementation of bilingual education. Contrasting Castro's critiques with the optimism of lawmakers shows the limitations of SB 53 in 1967 and the BEA in 1968.⁵⁰

It also showed how East L.A. teachers were influencing national debates about language learning. Before Senator Yarborough brought his hearings to the city of angels, he questioned Bruce Gaarder, former chief of modern language at the U.S. Office of Education. Testifying in Washington, Gaarder asked why the government spends "at least a billion dollars a year on foreign language instruction at all levels, yet virtually no part of it, no cent, ever goes to maintain and further develop the native language competence which already exists in American children." Hinting racism, he complained that "it is alright for headwaiters, professional performers, and the

⁵⁰ Rawitch, "Murphy Hits Lack of Bilingual Education at Senate Hearing," *LAT*, June 25, 1967, D8; "Crowther Again Skips Hearing on Education in East L.A.," *LAT*, October 5, 1968, B5.

rich to know foreign languages, but any child in school who already knows one is suspect... It is an absurdity.” Then Gardner turned to test scores, citing statistics that Puerto Rican children scored higher on standardized tests administered in Spanish than in English. “The extraordinary implication is that if the Spanish-speaking children of our nation were allowed to use Spanish as one of the mediums of instruction along with English, not only would their handicap of bilingualism disappear,” Gaarder concluded, “but there is a strong likelihood they would have a decided advantage over their English-speaking classmates simply because Spanish is an easier language to work with in elementary schools.” The federal language expert applied the tone of Castro’s comments to measurable arguments for the BEA. This was just one way the testimonies of Angeleno teachers and elected officials each influenced the legislation’s final language.⁵¹

The federal bill that emerged from these hearings reflected differing definitions of language learning. Bilingual education, according to the BEA appendix, was “instruction in two languages and the use of those *two languages* as mediums of instruction for any part or all of the school curriculum. Study of the history and culture associated with a student’s mother tongue is considered an integral part of *bilingual education*.” The BEA distinguished between the purpose and practice of language learning. Its goal was to help immigrants “develop greater competence in English, to become more proficient in the use of two languages, and to profit from increased educational opportunity.” In the process of mastering English, however, the law “also recognizes the child’s mother tongue which is other than English can have a beneficial impact upon his education. The mother tongue, used as the medium of instruction before the child’s command of English is sufficient to carry the whole load of his education,... The literacy thus achieved in the non-English tongue, if further developed, should result in a more liberally educated adult.” There

⁵¹ Steiner, “The De-Education Schools,” and “Senate Hearings,” *The Center Forum* 4.1 (September, 1969), 5-7, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC.

is no evidence that Yarborough's text drew from the testimony of Angeleno officials like Ed Roybal, George Murphy, and Julian Nava—he also heard from fellow Texans like George I. Sánchez (see Chapter 4). But the appendix echoed the range of issues addressed at the L.A. hearings. Defining bilingual education as a means to learning English, mastering multiple languages, and building self-esteem also reflected the goals articulated during the Blowouts.⁵²

The BEA that Lyndon Johnson signed on January 2, 1968, authorized \$7.5 million in grants for the 1969-70 school year. The grants would fund the planning, developing, and teacher training for “new and imaginative” language learning projects. In addition to broadly defining bilingual education, the BEA funded classes to teach “the history and culture associated with their languages,” efforts “to establish closer cooperation between the school and the home,” and programs “designed for dropouts or potential dropouts having need of bilingual programs.” More than 300 school districts submitted bilingual education proposals, but LBJ's administration only approved 65 grants totaling \$5 million, leaving \$2.5 million in federal coffers. More than a third of the grants went to schools in California, including the most expensive project, for \$570,000, to a school district in San Diego. L.A. County alone won grants for six bilingual education projects, nearly ten percent of the national total, supplying \$475,000 to reach more than 1,800 Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking students. Across the country, ninety percent of the grants went to Spanish-language programs. The only Japanese bilingual program to win federal funding was in Hawaii, which had reinstated Japanese language schools after Judge McCormick's ruling in 1948 (see Chapter 4). Twenty years later, there was still inadequate funding for bilingual education programs in Japanese, Spanish, and many other languages in L.A. County.⁵³

⁵² Appendix A, Bilingual Education Act, Title VII, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, As Amended in 1967, Public Law 90-247, January 2, 1968, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC (Folder 4).

⁵³ Appendix A, Bilingual Education Act; “Title VII: Proposals Approved for 1969-70,” *The Center Forum* 4.1 (September, 1969), 9-10, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC (Folder 4). BEA funding remained below the legal limit in following years. In 1973-74, when Title VII authorized \$135 million for bilingual education, the U.S. Office of Education

Bilingual Education Act Becomes Fodder for Partisan Politics, 1968-1970

It was not coincidental that LBJ signed the BEA in January, 1968, just as the president kicked off his reelection campaign.⁵⁴ Before the Blowouts that spring, politicians from both parties believed the growing Hispanic vote was crucial to electoral success. As campaign rhetoric heated up, Republicans embraced bilingual education while Democrats demurred. But liberals continued to take action that favored school desegregation and minority education while conservatives tried to hide their hesitation about bilingual instruction behind promises they did not keep.

L.A. Democrats were dubious about bilingual education even as their Washington allies wrote the BEA. In the summer of 1968, after the Blowouts, The FDR-Sunset Democratic Club asked, "Will Anglo-American Education Survive in East L.A.?" That winter, the Valley Interfaith Commission co-sponsored a four-part series, "Crisis in Education: Who Needs It?" The first session, "Who's Running the Schools," included panelists from the school district, the teachers' union, the Black Student's Union, and the Chicano group that had helped organize the Blowouts. The second panel, "Are We Teaching Students What They Need to Know?" included the supervisor of bilingual education in L.A. schools. The final panel asked, "What Should the Change Be? Who Are the Change-Makers?" The next spring, in Sacramento, a state assemblyman from Rialto created a "Joint Committee on Bilingual Education to study problems of education for persons speaking two languages." All these panels show that, though they worried about the wisdom of bilingual education, Los Angeles liberals were determined to reform public schooling for students who had suffered from racial and language discrimination.⁵⁵

approved 213 grant projects totaling \$35 million. Lawrence Wright, "Bilingual Education: Where the U.S. Stands in Improving the Education of the Non-English Speaking," *Race Relations Reporter* 4.17 (September, 1973), 15, Bilingual Education Papers, CSRC (Folder 4).

⁵⁴ Johnson dropped out of the Democratic primary in March, in response to antiwar cries from all corners, including broadcaster Walter Cronkite.

⁵⁵ "Bilingual Education," *LAT*, August 15, 1968, WS3; "4 Panels to Discuss Crisis in Education," *LAT*, February 7, 1969, SF10; "Day in Sacramento," *LAT*, March 14, 1969, C4. The group was the Educational Issues Coordinating Committee.

One local Democrat turned to federal funding to end educational discrimination. In addition to his new job at the school board, Julian Nava secured several grants for teacher training at Valley State College in 1968. Nava was one of several reformers who had long lamented the lack of qualified bilingual and minority teachers in Los Angeles. Valley State won nearly \$100,000 to train teachers of disadvantaged children and bilingual education. The U.S. Office of Education approved the college's proposal of a two-year graduate program to give student-teachers "field experience in 'less privileged' schools." As the Blowouts were shaking up those schools in East L.A., Nava's suburban school received another grant for \$67,500 to "assist teachers of minority pupils." As co-director, he offered teachers a seven-week course in Northridge called "Contributions of Minority Groups to U.S. History." Emphasizing the history of Mexican Americans and "American Negroes" to 45 teachers, the summer seminar included luminaries like Congressman Roybal, immigration historian John Higham, and an Occidental professor whose important essay, "Problems of Mexican-American Youth," first reported the alarming rate of discrimination in Eastside schools. The course emphasized history and culture over language, but it shared the same goals as bilingual education. Nava's co-director concluded that the new program would "strengthen teacher background in the history of minority groups so that teachers can help pupils better understand their heritage and problems." Neither grant could accommodate East L.A.'s language acquisition needs, but they showed that Julian Nava backed up his constant calls for increased federal funding with immediate action.⁵⁶

L.A. conservatives also catered to Chicano constituents through bilingual education advocacy in Washington. Just as Max Rafferty promised limited language instruction in his Senate campaign, Richard Nixon made a moderate endorsement for Mexican Americans. The

⁵⁶ "Federal Funds Awarded VSC for Teachers," *LAT*, April 7, 1968, SF_A4; "VSC Gets Grant to Assist Teachers of Minority Pupils," *LAT*, March 3, 1968, SF_C1. The Occidental professor was Paul Sheldon. See Salazar, "Civic Leaders Troubled by School Dropouts," 70-71.

GOP devoted four paragraphs to education at its 1968 national convention in Miami. Hours before nominating Nixon for president, the party promoted “modern instructional techniques such as educational television and voluntary bilingual education.” Calling for voluntary action did not go as far as Democratic efforts by Nava, Roybal, or Lyndon Johnson, but after Nixon’s election high-ranking Republicans found themselves struggling to secure federal funding for innovative language learning in L.A. city schools. Senator George Murphy, who had co-sponsored Yarborough’s BEA bill, had been concerned about the bill’s survival from its inception. In 1968, after the House voted to eliminate the \$5 million LBJ had earmarked for bilingual education, Murphy asked the Senate Appropriations Committee to restore the funds. He followed this funding fiasco through more controversies in 1969. Murphy called the BEA one of his proudest political moments, but he had to fight for the bill even after it became law.⁵⁷

Senator Murphy must have been happy when President Nixon appointed Robert Finch as Secretary of the Health, Education, and Welfare in 1969. A Pasadena lawyer who had managed Nixon’s 1960 presidential campaign, Finch received more votes than Ronald Reagan in 1966 when Californians elected him Lieutenant Governor. In Sacramento, he had seen how SB 53 influenced bilingual education. A month after moving to Washington, the new HEW Secretary promised “a substantial expansion of federal aid to bilingual education.” This announcement came the same day that Miguel Montes, the San Fernando professor whom Reagan appointed to the California Board of Education, reported that “existing education programs for Mexican Americans are woefully inadequate.” Finch assured the superintendent of L.A. schools he would hire “an outstanding educator in the Spanish-speaking community” as a special assistant. However, three months later, the Nixon administration broke its promise and rejected the L.A.

⁵⁷ “Complete Text of GOP Platform,” *LAT*, August 5, 1968, 17; “The Nation: Sen. George Murphy,” *LAT*, July 2, 1968, A2; Richard Bergholz, “Critics Abate: Once Derided, Murphy Wins Senate Spurs,” *LAT*, July 28, 1969, 3.

school district's \$500,000 grant proposal for bilingual education. Murphy acted immediately, writing a letter to Finch at HEW. Explaining that the grant application "was developed with full community participation," the Senator asked his fellow Angeleno to give the matter his personal attention so Spanish-speaking kids could "get the kind of first-class education they deserve, and urgently need." With Murphy's muddling, L.A.'s \$500,000 grant got more attention—first from the *L.A. Times*, then from Secretary Finch and President Nixon. But the compromise Republicans finally reached became one more roadblock for bilingual education after 1968.⁵⁸

The *Times* wrote three editorials endorsing bilingual education in early 1969. "Will Congress this year again fail to provide sufficient financial support for bilingual teaching programs in U.S. schools?" it asked in January. The paper praised the BEA for authorizing \$30 million but wondered why Congress had only allocated a quarter of that money. The *Times* cited Senator Murphy's statistic that only half of California's Mexican-American children complained that Chicanos' average grade level (7th) was two years lower than Negroes and six years lower than Anglos. It applauded Los Angeles schools for "making an increasing effort at bilingual teaching" by expanding Spanish instruction to more than 5,000 students. But that program, funded by local money, reached only a fraction of the city's Spanish-speaking students. One solution was to increase the number of eligible bilingual teachers, and the *Times* endorsed a Ford Foundation grant for \$325,000 to add language training programs, but this too was only a drop in the bucket. In May, the *Times* again asked why Congress had only distributed \$7.5 million when the U.S. Office of Education had received "more than 300 proposals, totaling \$47 million." After reminding readers that L.A.'s own Robert Finch had promised "prompt, massive upgrading" of bilingual education when President Nixon appointed him HEW Secretary, the paper reported that

⁵⁸ Vincent Burke, "President Will Seek Expanded Funding for Bilingual Education," *LAT*, February 13, 1969, A1; "Sen. Murphy Urges Aid for School Plan," *LAT*, May 31, 1969, A1. For further analysis of the Malabar School, see Epilogue.

the city school district was one of 77 finalists for a federal grant in bilingual education. For Nixon and Finch to live up to their words, the *Times* concluded, Congress needed “to provide the means for expanding educational opportunity by breaking the language barrier.” Despite earlier promises, journalists and Chicano activists could not count on conservative power brokers in Washington. Instead, they would keep campaigning for language education reforms for every school in Los Angeles, continuing a tradition of Angeleno educators that ranged from the first settlement house teachers in 1903 to Sal Castro’s leadership in 1968.⁵⁹

Ruben Salazar Reflects on the Blowouts and Bilingual Education, 1969-1970

The *Times*’ top Latino reporter wrote more about bilingual education after the Blowouts. Ruben Salazar had left Los Angeles to serve as foreign correspondent in Vietnam and Mexico in 1965, a year after reporting Sal Castro’s transfer due to speaking Spanish in a school assembly. When he returned in 1969, Salazar’s connection to Castro gained him access to militant youths and the Chicano civil rights movement. As he learned about the walkouts, the reporter compared bilingual education experiments across the southwest to the programs that Eastside protestors had demanded in 1968. Salazar achieved celebrity status in 1970, when he became news director at KMEX, L.A.’s Spanish-language television station, but he continued to comment on bilingual education in columns for the *Times*. He addressed President Nixon’s veto of the BEA in the last column he wrote before he was killed by L.A. County sheriffs after the Chicano Moratorium march against the Vietnam War in 1970. Salazar’s stories about language learning, and his writing about Sal Castro, show the new importance of bilingual education after the Blowouts.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ “Breaking the Language Barrier,” *LAT*, January 27, 1969, B8; “Overcoming the Language Barrier,” *LAT*, May 20, 1969, A8. While the *Times* praised Nixon’s cabinet for saving the Malabar project in 1969, Salazar reported that the President tried to veto bilingual education from the 1970-71 budget (however, Congress overrode his veto). See “The Mexican-Americans NEDA Much Better School System, August 28, 1970,” *Border Correspondent*, 266-268.

⁶⁰ García, “Introduction,” *Border Correspondent*, 25-36.

Salazar studied other Spanish programs in Texas, including what he called “the only truly bilingual public school educational program in the United States.” He loved that a Laredo elementary school led the Pledge of Allegiance in both English and Spanish. The reporter preferred this approach, which included concurrent language instruction for academic classes, and he criticized L.A. city schools where “limited bilingual programs are geared to helping Spanish-speaking students make the transition into English instruction as soon as possible.” Taking technical terms from education scholars like George I. Sánchez (see Chapter 4), he said that “Spanish is used as a tool only until the children are proficient enough in English to use it exclusively in classes. No attempt is made to improve the quality of the children’s Spanish, much less make Spanish an educational tool for the whole community.” Although he identified the limitations of Los Angeles’ language learning programs, he also held hope for the future. The school district could take two steps to achieve Salazar’s succinct summary of language learning, “the idea that both Anglos and Mexican-Americans could benefit from bilingual education.” First, it had to define bilingual education for itself, preferably by acknowledging that “Spanish is a blessing which should be developed by the Mexican-American child and shared with his Anglo fellow student.” Second, it needed to find more bilingual teachers who could carry out programs that looked like the Laredo school’s two-way approach. This was a far cry from the city’s current federal grant proposals, which Salazar said were “concerned entirely with English-as-a-second-language instruction, rather than a bilingual approach. Still, he stressed that Los Angeles schools had one of the nation’s top 11 programs for disadvantaged youth. This showed that bilingual education had become popular in other cities in the 1960s. But Salazar’s reporting proved that Angelenos would continue to play a leading role in reforming language instruction—as it had from Nora Sterry’s neighborhood schools to the Blowouts.⁶¹

⁶¹ Salazar, “Bilingual Texas School Gains Public Support, October 13, 1969,” *Border Correspondent*, 229-231.

Although he was in Mexico during the 1968 protests, Salazar wanted to write about student activism. A year after the Blowouts, he reported that Roosevelt High in Boyle Heights was reinstating its own chapter of United Mexican-American Students (UMAS). The principal, who had told the *Times* about his administrative dilemmas during the student strike, suspended Roosevelt's UMAS chapter for violating its own constitution. It had broken several promises by working with chapters at other schools, sponsoring a sit-in that was supposed to be a speak-in, and failing to keep "outsiders" off campus. He disapproved of the club's three faculty sponsors who defended UMAS by blaming the violations on individual students. The principal would only allow UMAS to reassemble if it accepted a new faculty sponsor, Carmen Terrazas. Mrs. Terrazas had written a recent letter to the *Los Angeles Times* implying that UMAS "perpetuates racism" and that "the majority of teachers at Roosevelt feel strongly that UMAS disrupts the educational process at the school." The president of UMAS at Roosevelt, Mario Esparza, was insulted by the principal's offer because "an enemy of UMAS is being named as faculty sponsor so she can control our organization and destroy it." A year after the Blowouts, student activists were still creating (and confronting) controversies on the Boyle Heights campus.⁶²

Indeed, the Blowouts helped bring UMAS to Roosevelt High. The summer after the strike, Mario Esparza met Chicano student leaders at an Upward Bound program. Just as Castro had coordinated the youth leadership behind the Blowouts at Camp Hess Kramer, this network formed new UMAS chapters at every high school that had joined in the walkouts. In 1969, Esparza announced plans to invite guest speakers, "make educational opportunities known to Mexican Americans, and organize strong school leadership." To underscore the Blowouts' influence on UMAS, Esparza wrote an op-ed piece when the *Rough Rider* debated the question, "What Good Were the Walkouts?" He refuted a fellow student's lament that television cameras

⁶² Salazar, "UMAS to Be Reinstated at Roosevelt High, April 23, 1969," *Border Correspondent*, 210-211.

caught the campus boycott on tape, which gave Roosevelt High the image of a school full of “rioting students without a cause.” Esparza responded that, because of the Blowouts, “attention was focused on the problems overlooked for years” by the school board. Listing problems like dropout rates and the lack of Mexican-American history in school curriculum, he explained that “the walkout was the only weapon the students and the community could use to express their desire to be heard and to make sure they would not be neglected as they had been in the past.” Further, the walkout had already accomplished several changes at Roosevelt by 1969. In addition to UMAS, Esparza celebrated that the school had hired more Mexican American teachers “who have an understanding of the majority of the student body” and taught classes about the “contributions of Mexican-Americans in the southwest.” Although the Blowouts did not achieve full bilingual education, the rise of UMAS chapters at Roosevelt and other Eastside schools showed that educational opportunities for Chicano students changed after the spring of 1968.⁶³

While he wrote about UMAS after the Blowouts, Salazar still paid attention to Sal Castro. Although the Spanish-language television newsman had been abroad during the Blowouts, he had first learned about language learning controversies in Los Angeles schools in 1964, when Salazar covered Castro’s transfer from Belmont High for encouraging student council candidates to speak in Spanish at an assembly. In 1969, Salazar attended a solidarity rally in which 800 Castro supporters marched from Olvera Street to the school board to protest an imminent decision to transfer the teacher away from East L.A. The march began with a mariachi band in front of the Old Plaza and ended with speakers from the Mexican American Education

⁶³ Mario Esparza and Ricardo Perea, “Contra Corner: What Good Were the Walkouts?,” and Karen Balderrama, “The UMAS Affair,” *Rough Rider*, October 22, 1968, 1-2 (Zanki Papers). That issue of the *Rough Rider* also featured a story by Eileen Ogimachi, who reported that the school board had created a new television series for Mexican-American parents. Taught by Mrs. Emma Holguin Jimenez, an elementary school teacher, the series would air nine episodes in English and nine in Spanish about “preparing children for school success.” A year later, the school board asked Sal Castro to create his own series about Mexican-American history. It is unknown whether Mario Esparza was related to Moctezuma Esparza, who graduated from Roosevelt before the Blowouts and was one of the “East L.A. 13” arrested with Sal Castro in 1968.

Commission, who were upset that the school district had already transferred Castro to its downtown offices while the board's decision was under review. After quoting Castro supporters, Salazar explained that the Lincoln High principal wanted to transfer the teacher because he had violated school rules in several ways, including excessive tardiness. But by 1970, two months before he was killed, Salazar started to celebrate Castro's leadership just as Superior Court judges were reaching the final verdict in the "East L.A. 13" case.⁶⁴

In June, he credited Castro for focusing on Chicano education in the list of demands to the school board. Salazar also quoted Julian Nava, who claimed that Castro had "been singled out for harassment and persecution" for his "telling criticism and disclosures of the ineffectiveness of Los Angeles schools." Salazar argued that Castro's case was endorsed by Congressmen Ed Roybal and George Brown, the liberal Angelenos who had proposed their own bilingual education bills a year before the Blowouts. In July, in one of the final columns written before his death, Salazar celebrated Castro's victory in the "East L.A. 13" verdict. Judges in the state appeals court ruled that the charges against these Chicanos 'rests entirely on circumstantial evidence' and that this type of conspiracy-circumstantial evidence' route is 'too blunt an instrument.' Interestingly, the "East L.A. 13" case had advanced on appeal only a few months after Judge John Aiso was promoted from the L.A. Superior Court to the appellate court. The decision, finding in favor of moderation along with free speech and equal access to education, mirrored Aiso's own path from a talented orator at Hollywood High School in 1926 to founding the Military Intelligence Service Language School during the war to a successful judicial career in Los Angeles. Ruben Salazar remarked on this success story in his column, titled "A Beautiful Sight: the System Working the Way It Should." While this catchphrase captured the careers of

⁶⁴ Salazar, "800 Supporters of Sal Castro March on School Board," *LAT*, October 7, 1969, 3; For more on Castro's transfer see García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 228.

Sal Castro and John Aiso, it did not explain the long, strange career of language learning experiments in Los Angeles from 1900 to 1968.⁶⁵

Salazar stumbled upon the true limits on language instruction in his final column, published the day before local sheriffs killed him after the antiwar protest. The article was about a financial debate between Democratic Senators and Vice President Spiro Agnew, but Salazar insisted that education was the key to economic success for Chicanos. Senator Walter Mondale confirmed this point. “We found that the best way to get television cameras out of this room and reporters to leave is to hold a hearing on Mexican-American education,” he said. “There doesn’t seem to be any interest. Yet this is the second largest minority in America.” Salazar stopped his business story to report that President Nixon had vetoed bilingual education from the 1970-71 education budget. Congress overrode the veto, but Nixon’s action confirmed Salazar’s suspicion that, while politicians loved to talk about language, they were reluctant to implement education policies that were “truly bilingual.” Such compromises could not prevent John Aiso from designing Japanese curriculum during World War II, nor would it stop Angeleno educators from future efforts to advance language learning at the local, state, and federal levels. It was, instead, another reminder that L.A. citizens of every stripe—from students to teachers to reporters—would work tirelessly to remind all Americans that, regardless of their politics or linguistic abilities, language instruction belonged at the center of the national debate about public education.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Salazar, “Mexican –American School Walkout Focused on Problem, June 26, 1970,” *Border Correspondent*, 263-264; Salazar, “A Beautiful Sight: the System Working the Way It Should,” *LAT*, July 20, 1970, C7.

⁶⁶ Salazar, “Mexican-American’s Dilemma: He’s Unfit in Either Language,” and “The Mexican-Americans NEDA Much Better School System,” *Border Correspondent*, 241-242 and 267-269.

EPILOGUE

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION AFTER THE BLOWOUTS:
ENGLISH-ONLY POLITICS AND THE
RISE OF LANGUAGE IMMERSION, 1971-2011**

As it has in the past, Los Angeles looks at language learning with more urgency than other cities. Three pieces on the *Los Angeles Times*' Sunday op-ed page from July 11, 2010, show L.A.'s leadership since the federal Bilingual Education Act of 1968. Despite their differences, the authors agreed that teaching foreign students in their native languages has not solved the problem of immigrant education—and that Angelenos offer innovative, and contradictory, instruction techniques. They argued about the backlash against bilingual education in 1998, when California voters approved Proposition 227, an English-only initiative. They also disputed the potential for popular language immersion schools, first introduced in Culver City in 1971, which now teach dozens of languages in school districts across the country. Ironically, Proposition 227 inspired Angelenos to try new forms of immersion, leading to two-way programs that provide a model for language education in the twenty-first century. These op-eds show that, as they did from 1900 to 1968, the politics of language still shape the city's racial and ethnic projects. Those past debates provide context for more recent standoffs between the immersion and English-only movements. Incorporating them into this narrative will help educators and parents understand what is at stake as they develop the next generation of language instruction.¹

This epilogue will briefly sketch the language debates that have continued to attract national attention to bilingual experiments launched in Los Angeles since 1968. Angelenos

¹ "Bilingual Education: What Works?" *Los Angeles Times* (July 11, 2010), A32-A33. The opinion pieces were written by Bruce Fuller, Alice Callaghan, and Laurie Olsen and Shelly Spiegel-Coleman.

initially proposed two approaches to language instruction. While Mexican educators supported community-led projects in East L.A., Anglo academics adopted immersion experiments in Westside schools. This internal debate between bilingual education advocates gave way to a broader battle in the 1980s, when U.S. Senator S.I. Hayakawa organized the first national organization to make English our official language. Over the next two decades, California witnessed dueling developments in English-only legislation and language immersion innovations. To complicate matters, both sides have embraced their own understandings of “immersion” instruction. English-only advocates endorse “structured English immersion” while bilingual educators now promote “dual-language immersion.” Many of the colorful characters who participated in these experiments came to Culver City in 2011 to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of language immersion in the United States. The narrative that follows introduces the larger story of language learning debates that continue to carry on in Los Angeles schools.²

Mexican Students & Anglo Academics Offer Competing Programs, 1969-1971

The passage of the BEA did not mean there was a uniform vision for bilingual education. In the three years after the federal government agreed to fund language programs, Angelenos applied for a variety of grants. In East L.A., the Malabar Street School sought \$500,000 for a “promising pilot project” that relied on bilingual college students and other community members to teach Mexican American elementary schoolers. Meanwhile, in Culver City on L.A.’s Westside, a UCLA linguistics professor proposed an immersion school that would teach all academic subjects in Spanish—to Anglo students. Both programs incorporated Spanish instruction, but the different groups they targeted drove their teaching styles in different directions.³

² This epilogue does not address the tensions that arose between L.A.’s black and Latino communities as they struggled for scarce resources to fund programs in school desegregation and bilingual education. While further research is needed, these narratives are addressed in Gutierrez, “The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation,” and Gutfreund, “From Busing to Bilingual Education: The Legacy of Liberalism in Los Angeles Schools.”

³ “Funding Found for Bilingual Project,” *LAT*, July 7, 1969, A8.

In 1969, the Malabar project enlisted Eastside residents who embraced Chicano culture as part of the American experience. It included “the use of bilingual college students as research assistants, an emphasis on teacher attitudes toward the cultural background of Mexican-American children, intensive parent participation in school activities, [and] an individualized approach to instruction.” This approach appeared to work. While only one percent of first graders could read proficiently before the Malabar project had begun, by 1968-69 that number had grown to 37 percent. There were different theories to explain this success. One *Times* reporter stressed the role of the Eastside college students, featuring photos of the bilingual teacher aides playing with students during recess. Her story started with a psychology major at Cal State Los Angeles sitting in a corner of a classroom, helping a third grader spell a word by having him trace the letters in the air as well as on paper. “If the youngsters have difficulty understanding English,” the hook concluded, “the teacher aides can communicate with them in Spanish.” In the summer of 1970, 63 bilingual college students received grants to work as classroom aides at Malabar, where they taught reading, writing, and arithmetic to individuals and small groups. These teacher aides were a major reason why the Malabar project was named “one of the top 11 education programs for disadvantaged youth in the nation.”⁴

Bilingual teacher aides were not the only factor in Malabar’s success, according to one of the project’s founders, Felix Castro. The basic problem for Mexican American students, he argued, “is not the bilingual bit... Education will continue to fail these children unless there is an environment at school that is truly receptive to these kids and a belief that they are normal, healthy human beings who have the whole spectrum of intelligence.” It helped to have bilingual teachers, but teacher attitudes about their students’ cultural backgrounds were just as important.

⁴ McCurdy, “Intervention by Nixon Aids L.A. School Project,” *LAT*, July 6, 1969, B; “Funding Found for Bilingual Project,” *LAT*, July 7, 1969, A8; Ellen Rodman, “Malabar Experiment Raises Reading Skills,” *LAT*, July 30, 1970, D1.

Castro was proud that Malabar offered after-school learning laboratories taught by bilingual community members. But he was also happy that, in addition to Spanish, learning lab topics included Mexican folk dances, guitar, art, and Mexican songs. During the day, Malabar devoted eighty percent of classroom time to reading, and students spent the remaining twenty percent on arithmetic. “We don’t wring our hands and say these kids can’t hack it, Castro said. “We sock it to them with a tight, rigorous program in a very humanistic environment that is much like a university seminar.” This approach helped students who stayed at Malabar from kindergarten to third grade improve their reading scores by 700 percent and raise their IQ scores by 28 points.⁵

Ironically, another reason for Malabar’s success may have been its racial segregation. More than 90 percent of the Eastside school’s students were Mexican American. Across town, liberals in the Santa Monica school district decided against the Malabar approach. Mexican Americans made up only twelve percent of Santa Monica students, and officials claimed to lack the community participation that led to Malabar’s bilingual teacher aide program. The Santa Monica superintendent said Chicano parents did not come to schools for breakfasts or dinners, even when teachers sent out notices in Spanish as well as English. “We’ve sent staff members to their homes and the parents say they will come, but they don’t show up,” he said. “These parents have a lot of problems and don’t know where to go or how to solve them.” Stating that six elementary schools in Santa Monica offered ESL classes—although one was a parochial school—the superintendent said, “We’re doing all that’s practical. Even if we had a lot more finances—which we don’t—I don’t know what else we could do.” Still, Santa Monica schools embraced several innovative approaches to bilingual education. High school students could take several classes in Spanish, such as driver education, typing, and even U.S. History. Santa Monica sent several teachers to the *Nuevas Vistas* conference at the Biltmore Hotel to hear Governor

⁵ Ray Ripton, “S.M. Schools Helping Mexican-Americans,” *LAT*, November 2, 1969, WS1.

Reagan discuss Mexican American education (while Brown Berets were damaging the facilities in protest, see Chapter 6). The superintendent also said he wanted to hire more Mexican American teachers, but he was reluctant to “bend requirements” to do so. Chicano critics, however, responded that the school board’s emphasis on bilingual instruction failed to address the “larger problem of low self-esteem among Mexican-American students.”⁶

Meanwhile, in nearby Culver City, a UCLA professor brought another approach to El Marino Elementary School. A scholar of applied linguistics, Russell Campbell could not convince either the Los Angeles or Santa Monica school boards to accept his language experiment. Finally, in 1971, Culver City agreed to adapt a program from French-speaking Canada. Six years earlier, when he was studying second language acquisition with Afton Nance and Helen Heffernan in California, Campbell’s colleagues in Montreal had introduced immersion education to North America, recruiting a classroom of English-speaking students to learn from francophone teachers. Placing monolingual children in a setting in which they had to speak in a foreign language, the Quebec scholars reasoned, would speed up their language acquisition. In Culver City, Campbell substituted Spanish for French, but otherwise he stayed true to the Montreal model. Anglophone students spent the day learning every academic subject in Spanish because, Campbell believed, it would encourage them to start thinking in Spanish. The white children enjoyed the program, even if they did not understand its intentions. One immersion researcher recalled interviewing a kindergartener about her teacher. “I like Señora Wright,” she told him, “but why doesn’t she speak English?” Linguistics specialists studied the Montreal and Culver City schools in the 1970s, hoping to gain new insights about language acquisition.⁷

⁶ Ripton, “S.M. Schools Helping Mexican-Americans,” WS1.

⁷ Wallace Lambert, “An Overview of Issues in Immersion Education,” in *Studies on Immersion Education: A Collection for United States Educators*, ed. Office of Bilingual Bicultural Education (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1984), 8; Author interviews with Andrew Cohen (January 4, 2008, phone) and Ann Snow (December 6, 2007, Los Angeles). Heffernan, Nance, and Campbell all spoke at the “Conference on Understanding and Teaching Mexican-

But, in practice, the strengths of immersion education showed more about the differences between Culver City and East L.A. than they did about language acquisition. While the Malabar School sought federal grants to pay bilingual college student aides, Westside parents put their own money into El Marino School by organizing Advocates for Language Learning (ALL). Parent donations funded an adjunct program, supplying every class with a “native language support provider” so students could hear two adults converse in fluent Spanish. ALL still raises money for an exchange program in which fifth graders spend four weeks living with a host family in Guadalajara, Mexico, giving them “the opportunity to be part of a Mexican family, experience school in a foreign country, try new foods, absorb a rich culture, and see some sights.” ALL was proud of the exchange program, but some bilingual education advocates asked why El Marino School did not just send its students across town to East L.A., where the Mexican culture was just as vibrant. In 1984, Eduardo Hernández-Chávez dismissed immersion schools like El Marino as “enrichment or additive bilingualism” in which wealthy white families gave their children the privilege of learning a second language as “a socially and economically valuable extension of the child’s educational repertoire, much like learning to play the piano.” In contrast, he described most immigrant education programs as “displacement... or subtractive bilingualism.” While Hernández-Chávez acknowledged that “the overriding objective is to render the student fully proficient in English,” he stressed that this emphasis displaced the immigrants’ native language, subtracting the cultural benefits of bilingualism that enrichment immersion schools supplied. In creating the newest innovation in language instruction, Angeleno educators had drawn a divide between Spanish speakers and English speakers.⁸

American Children and Youth,” Oxnard, Calif., October 16-17, 1964. Leslie Evans, “Russell N. Campbell, September 5, 1927 – March 30, 2003,” <http://www.international.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=3507> (viewed March 29, 2013).

⁸ Eduardo Hernández-Chávez, “The Inadequacy of English Immersion Education as an Educational Approach for Language Minority Students in the United States,” in *Studies on Immersion Education*, 151-153; Author interviews with

Aware of these issues, the Culver City school board made gradual adjustments. In the early 1990s, two decades after opening the nation's first language immersion program, it added Japanese immersion classes. This was an interesting choice because the school's founder, Russell Campbell, had experience with nearly every major language except Japanese. In the twenty years after 1971, the UCLA professor spent two years in Egypt, teaching English across the Middle East, before running four language schools in China. After retiring from UCLA in 1991, Campbell turned his attention to starting a two-way Korean immersion program in L.A. Koreatown in the wake of the Rodney King race riots. Although Culver City chose Japanese immersion instead of Korean, it slowly adopted the two-way model, which was a major change from the monolingual program Campbell had originally introduced. According to the Center for Applied Linguistics, two-way immersion programs "integrate language minority and language majority students in the same classroom with the goal of academic excellence and bilingual proficiency for both student groups." Indeed, California's five pilot schools that started two-way immersion in 1985 did so in order to receive state funding as a desegregation project. Integration was not the first priority in Culver City, but the inaugural school's shift to two-way immersion became important when California began to reject bilingual education in the 1990s.⁹

California Conservatives Conceive of English-Only Curriculum

Although English-only efforts are not new, the most successful movement since 1968 started in California. Its leader was U.S. Senator S.I. Hayakawa, an intellectual who had a lot in common with Judge John Aiso. Not only were Hayakawa (1906-92) and Aiso (1909-87) both

Madeline Erlich (December 10, 2007, Culver City) and Concepción Valadez (January 8, 2008, Los Angeles); Advocates for Language Learning El Marino website, <http://www.allelmarino.org/> (viewed March 29, 2013). Hernández-Chávez worked at the *Instituto de Lengua y Cultura* in Northern California.

⁹ Evans, "Russell N. Campbell;" Donna Christian, Christopher Montone, Kahryn Lindholm, and Isolda Carranza, *Profiles in Two-Way Immersion Education* (McHenry, Ill.: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems, 1997), 1, 46; Nancy Rhodes and Tara Fortune, "Language Immersion: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," lecture at *Celebrating 40 Years of Language Immersion Education*, Southern California Language Symposium (Culver City, Calif.), May 13, 2011.

prominent Japanese Californians who lived at exactly the same time, they were also both loyal members of the Republican Party. But they held very different views about language education. While Aiso saw the patriotic value of teaching Japanese at the Military Intelligence Service Language School, Hayakawa was a linguist whose liberal outlook led him to condemn “slogans of fear and race hatred” in his 1949 book, *Language in Thought and Action*. But this liberal outlook changed in 1968 during a student strike at San Francisco State College, where he was president. Now that he occupied a position of power himself, the academic became concerned with the potential for language to provoke popular challenges to authority. After opposing totalitarianism during the war, Hayakawa flashed fascist tendencies of his own, cracking down on student protestors representing the Black Panthers and the Third World Liberation Front, a Pan-Asian group that demanded ethnic studies courses. The S.F. State strike happened the same year as the East L.A. Blowouts, and the black and Asian student protestors made demands that resembled those of Sal Castro’s Mexican American activists. While Hayakawa hesitantly approved of the nation’s first College of Ethnic Studies, he also planned for a political career that would help him undo many of the changes that minority students had made happen.¹⁰

Hayakawa also became popular with California Republicans, who praised him for disconnecting the loudspeakers of student protestors during the 1968 strike. He rode that publicity to a comfortable job as a conservative columnist in the 1970s, and California elected him its U.S. Senator in 1977. The linguist served just one term in Washington, but he made a name for himself in 1982, when he proposed a Constitutional amendment to make English the nation’s official language. All Constitutional amendments are ambitious and, like most other

¹⁰ S.I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949); Sue Kunitomi Embrey, interview by Arthur Hansen and David Hacker, August 24, 1973, #1366, California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program, 149; William Wei, *The Asian American Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993). The author plans to conduct further research in the Asian American Movement Collection at UCLA Special Collections. By the 1980s, Aiso actually joined Hayakawa in opposing bilingual education. John F. Aiso, interview by James C. McNaughton, October 30, 1987, in author’s possession.

proposals, Hayakawa's failed. However, upon stepping down from the Senate in 1983, he continued his quest by founding U.S. English. Hayakawa denied any ties to the term "English-only." From the floor of the Senate, he insisted that "nothing I say in this amendment encouraging the use of an official language in the United States is intended to discourage the study of all languages around the world." But he did not believe in bilingual education, either. "Bilingualism for the individual is fine, but not for a country," he explained. Many Americans agreed with him. Thirty states have made English their official language, including California, which passed Proposition 63 with 73 percent of the vote in 1986. Several celebrities joined Hayakawa on the advisory board of U.S. English, including Arnold Schwarzenegger, Walter Cronkite, and Togo Tanaka, the Nisei journalist who had spent the war in Manzanar (see Chapter 2 and 3). Cronkite resigned from the board in 1988 after Hayakawa's co-founder criticized Latino immigrants for their "low educability, high dropout rates, and high fertility." This anti-immigrant ophthalmologist from Michigan showed that, even though it denied English-only ambitions, U.S. English intended to limit immigration by breaking up bilingual education.¹¹

Twelve years after making English its official language, Californians continued to restrict bilingual education in 1998 when they passed Proposition 227 with 61 percent of the popular vote. The historian Eric Avila has argued that this "English-only" initiative, along with the Rodney King riots of 1992 and the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 of 1994, represented the racialized state of California at the turn of the twenty-first century. It required schools to send English language learners into "structured English immersion" programs until they were ready for standard classes. Like Hayakawa's measure a decade earlier, Proposition 227 was not purely "English-only" because it allowed parents to request that their children remain in Spanish-

¹¹ Stephen May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Language* (New York: Longman, 2001), 205-222; U.S. English website, <http://www.usenglish.org> (viewed March 30, 2013). The author plans to conduct further research in the S.I. Hayakawa Papers in the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

dominant classrooms. But this made bilingual instruction more difficult—by 2010, only eight percent of eligible parents opted out of structured English immersion. The measure’s sponsor, a Jewish businessman from Silicon Valley who had challenged incumbent Governor Pete Wilson in the 1994 Republican primary, credited Proposition 227 for “effectively dismantling over a third of America’s bilingual programs.” Although he lived in Palo Alto, Ron Unz had grown up in North Hollywood and his initiative was inspired by Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest who worked with Latino garment workers in downtown Los Angeles. In fact, the grassroots organizing for both sides of Proposition 227 grew out of L.A.’s Spanish-speaking community. Callaghan’s main counterpart was Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, a veteran bilingual education teacher in L.A. County who continues to criticize the 1998 measure today. The fifteen-year dialogue featuring these two organizers is similar to the 1921 debate between Ruby Baughman and Carol Aronovici. The main difference is that, instead of Americanization, the new generation of Angeleno reformers has argued about bilingual education and English immersion.¹²

Alice Callaghan founded Las Familias del Pueblo, a storefront community center for migrant sweatshop workers and their families. During the Proposition 227 campaign, the *L.A. Times* labeled Las Familias’ single-room facility “ground zero of the latest hot-button initiative to confront Californians: a roomful of chattering children ruled by a no-nonsense Episcopal priest on the urine-scented fringe of Los Angeles’ skid row.” In 1996, Callaghan had recruited seventy immigrant families to stage a boycott, pulling their children out of Ninth Street Elementary School until they were released from the city’s bilingual program. Soon after, Ron

¹² Eric Avila, “The Historical Antecedents to California’s Superdiversity,” panel discussion at inaugural conference of the UCLA Institute of American Cultures, February 28, 2013; Bruce Fuller, “Skilled Teachers and a Sense of Community,” *LAT*, July 11, 2010, A32; Ron Unz, “English for the Children” website, <http://www.onenation.org/unz.html> (viewed March 30, 2013); Katie Bruck, “The Politics of Language Education: Bilingual Education in California and Proposition 227,” History 96W seminar paper (nominated for 2013 UCLA Library Prize for Undergraduate Research). Also see Patricia Gándara, “In the Aftermathe of the Storm: English Learners in the Post-227 Era,” *Bilingual Research Journal* 24.1-24.2 (Winter and Spring, 2000), 1-13.

Unz asked Callaghan to help him draft Proposition 227. Unz insists that Las Familias inspired him to name the anti-bilingual initiative “English for the Children.” Many opponents argued that the name “fraudulently [appealed] to the immigrant hunger for English by depicting existing education programs as anti-English,” but Unz received support from Latino educators, including a bilingual education teacher from Orange County. Jaime Escalante, the A.P. Calculus teacher at Garfield High in East L.A. and the inspiration for the 1987 film *Stand and Deliver*, served as honorary chairman of “English for the Children.” Unz’s Spanish-speaking supporters may have been the minority in the Latino community, but their support helped pass Proposition 227.¹³

Callaghan continues to defend the anti-bilingual initiative today. Las Familias has grown from the single storefront to a larger facility on Skid Row, where it runs a two-classroom charter school for kindergarteners and first graders. Following Proposition 227, it offers structured English immersion to forty students who are in school for 198 days a year, 25 more than most students in the school district. Callaghan says most of these students go to second grade at an award-winning elementary school on the Westside that offers free bus transportation to more than a thousand students who live across the city. She believes that structured English immersion is the key to such success. “Teaching English by teaching in English was the necessary first step in helping these students achieve academic literacy,” Callaghan declared in 2010. “The post-Proposition 227 concern we must now turn to is teaching English learners the complex academic English needed to succeed.” By focusing on academic English, the community organizer applied the vocabulary of language acquisition scholars to her anti-bilingual approach.¹⁴

¹³ Bettina Boxall, “Unequal Crusade: Que Pasa Aqui? Spanish-Speaking Garment Workers and Their Fervent Advocate Seem an Unlikely Group to Launch the Bid to Virtually End Bilingual Education,” *LAT*, April 5, 1998, 1; Alice Callaghan, “Desperate to Learn English,” *New York Times*, August 15, 1997, <http://www.onenation.org/1997/081597.html> (viewed March 30, 2013); Jaime Escalante to Ron Unz, October 10, 1997, <http://www.onenation.org/escalante.html> (viewed March 30, 2013).

¹⁴ Callaghan, “English Immersion,” *LAT*, July 11, 2010, A33. The Westside school is Brentwood Magnet Elementary.

Other Chicano activists had mixed feelings about the 1998 law, including Sal Castro. “I didn’t like Prop 227, because it originated from the same racists who had promoted Prop 187,” recalled the retired teacher who had organized the 1968 Blowouts. “On the other hand, I was not a supporter of the way bilingual ed had evolved in the schools... So I didn’t shed too many tears when Prop 227 passed.” In the 1970s, the L.A. school district paid Castro to write bilingual lessons about the history of Mexicans in California to give Spanish speakers “a balanced, positive, and secure identity that would work against any feelings of inferiority or identity crisis.” In his memoir, he complains that those materials were never used:

“The focus of bilingual ed programs became centered on language and marginalized the cultural component... The fact was that even what passed as bilingual ed was problematic, in my opinion.... Many teachers got into the program not because they were committed to it but because they received an extra salary stipend. Many of these teachers didn’t even know Spanish or didn’t even bother to learn it.”

Castro’s memoir reflects his disenchantment with bilingual education. The issue that received so much attention during the Blowouts from all parties—including Castro and his students—appears on only three pages of his *testimonio*. He was not optimistic about Proposition 227’s structured English immersion program, either. “The students might learn English faster this way,” he concluded,” but if in the process there is no support of his cultural heritage, the kid will be stripped not on only of his family language but of his family culture. The result will be an insecure child who feels inadequate.” Even if he did not endorse bilingual education, Castro was clearly critical of structured English immersion.¹⁵

But many bilingual education advocates argued that Proposition 227 would make it harder for non-native speakers to acquire academic English. Five hundred students walked out of

¹⁵ García and Castro, *Blowout!*, 273-275. Personal disappointments colored Castro’s opinion. “It also amazed me that I could not have taught bilingual ed, because, as the system was set up, I was not ‘qualified’ to teach it,” he complained. “Spanish-speaking teaching aides did most of the Spanish used in their classes. When you have the aide doing the actual teaching, it’s a half-ass program... Instead of eliminating these programs, I would have returned them to the original version of language acquisition and transition with cultural enrichment.”

classes at Roosevelt High and Belmont High, two of the schools that had witnessed the Blowouts thirty years earlier. A Honduran immigrant who took two years to learn English was skeptical about the structured immersion approach. “I don’t know where I would be if I didn’t have those classes,” he said in defense of bilingual education. “It’s ridiculous for them to think everyone is going to make it in just one year” of English immersion. Some 1,000 L.A. teachers signed pledges opposing Proposition 227, arguing that there was no single approach for all English language learners. One declared that she would “continue to use and/or support the use of bilingual education as *one program* to meet the needs of students.” The leader of those teachers was Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, who began her career at El Rancho school district in the San Gabriel Valley, where she worked in one of the first schools funded by the 1968 Bilingual Education Act. After running a bilingual school for the United Farm Workers union in Delano, she worked at the L.A. County Office of Education, coordinating the Bilingual Teacher Training Program and many other language learning projects. As president of the California Association for Bilingual Education, Spiegel-Coleman spent two decades testifying in Sacramento and Washington while writing language instruction legislation. In 1998, however, her energetic efforts failed to stop the passage of Proposition 227. After the election, she formed Californians Together, a coalition of parents, teachers, and civil rights groups focused on improving schooling for English learners. In that capacity, the bilingual education expert determined that dual language immersion was the best solution provided under the anti-bilingual initiative.¹⁶

In 2010, Spiegel-Coleman wrote an editorial that appeared opposite Alice Callaghan’s column in the *L.A. Times*. Just as earlier Angelenos had debated Americanization, the bilingual

¹⁶ James Rainey, “500 Students March Against Prop 227,” *LAT*, June 12, 1998, 3; Jocelyn Stewart, “An In-Depth Look at People and Policies Shaping Los Angeles County,” *LAT*, June 19, 1998, 2; Nick Anderson, “L.A. Teachers Group Pledges Defiance if Prop 227 Passes,” *LAT*, May 21, 1998, 3; “Ms. Shelly Spiegel-Coleman,” <http://latinocongreso.org/agenda07.php?bio=215> (viewed March 30, 2013).

education advocate attacked Proposition 227. “Instead of nurturing the promise of our English-learner children,” she argued, “California’s adherence to an ‘English-only’ teaching policy has left most of them in a linguistic no man’s land, with inadequate English skills and undeveloped skills in their home languages.” Spiegel-Coleman praised two school districts, Glendale in L.A. County and Chula Vista in San Diego County, for encouraging parents to opt out of English-only instruction. In Glendale, the school board and superintendent advocated that all students learn at least one language other than English, offering Japanese, Spanish, and four other languages starting in kindergarten. While acknowledging that there were many ways to educate English learners, Spiegel-Coleman promoted one approach above others:

“One type of bilingual program—dual language immersion—teaches in two languages to all students, both English learners and English-only speakers. When well implemented, these programs have consistently produced the highest academic outcomes, the best English proficiency and the lowest dropout rates. All that, with the added bonus that students come out with mastery of and literacy in two languages.”

This brings us back to the two-way immersion model that Culver City had only begun to consider in the 1990s. After Proposition 227, immersion schools like El Marino became increasingly popular in immigrant communities. Bilingual education advocates once wary of the Westside school suddenly saw that that two-way immersion was the best alternative to California’s new anti-bilingual order.¹⁷

Two-Way Immersion and the Future of Language Learning in Los Angeles

Shelly Spiegel-Coleman came to Culver City in 2011 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the nation’s first language immersion school. Earlier that week, the *L.A. Times* had published a front-page article about language learning thirteen years after Proposition 227. “Bilingual education has basically become a dirty word, but dual-language programs seem to have this cachet that people are glomming onto,” explained a spokesman from the Center for Applied

¹⁷ Laurie Olsen and Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, “A Genuinely Bilingual Approach,” *LAT*, July 11, 2010, A32.

Lingusitics (CAL). “They are successful for English-language learners. And white, middle-class parents want these programs to give their children an edge in the increasingly globalized world.” Even Ron Unz, author of the anti-bilingual initiative, admitted that two-way immersion was “probably beneficial for some students and not beneficial for others.” Although Unz still disagreed with most language acquisition research, he could not deny that the number of two-way immersion schools had nearly tripled since 1998, including 224 in California, giving the Golden State about a quarter of the nation’s immersion programs. Indeed, dual language immersion dominated the Culver City symposium. Following an introduction by CAL’s director of foreign language education, half of the breakout panels discussed dual immersion programs.¹⁸

But another panel, “Advocacy: Fostering Positive Attitudes towards Bilingualism,” addressed the challenges for language learning going forward. While Spiegel-Coleman recruited new members to join her Californians Together coalition, elected officials discussed the politics of bilingual education. For example, the president of the Hacienda-La Puente school board spoke about a recent interview he gave on Comedy Central’s *Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. His school district had come under attack for trying to expand its Mandarin language program with help from the Confucius Institute, paid for by *Hanban*, the Chinese government’s international language council. This drew opposition from the former superintendent of Hacienda-La Puente schools, a white 73-year-old who said that he supported “the teaching of foreign languages, but this is a propaganda machine from the People’s Republic of China that has no place anywhere in the United States.” The *L.A. Times*, and later the *Daily Show*, asked for a response from the school board president, a 32-year-old Chinese American who has since run unsuccessfully for

¹⁸ Teresa Watanabe, “New Approach to Bilingual Teaching: Dual-Language Immersion Targets Both Immigrant and Native-Born Students,” *LAT*, May 9, 2011, A1; “The ABCs of Dual Language Immersion, Basic Concepts for Parents and Other Parties,” and “The Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education,” panels at *Celebrating 40 Years of Language Immersion Education*, Southern California Language Symposium (Culver City, Calif.), May 13, 2011.

the House of Representatives. “A lot of people are saying it’s a way for the Chinese people to brainwash our students. They are really misinformed,” he said, comparing the program to Germany’s Goethe Institute and France’s Alliance Francaise. “From Oregon to Rhode Island, public schools have implemented the same program. As far as I can see, nothing sinister is going on.” This debate made for entertaining television, but the school board president was just one of many great characters in the long history of language learning in Los Angeles.¹⁹

The symposium’s keynote speaker showed that Angelenos continue to lead the national debate about bilingual education today. After a *Taiko* drumming performance by Culver City’s Japanese immersion students, the audience heard from Judy Chu, the first Chinese-American woman ever elected to the U.S. Congress, the former mayor of Monterey Park east of L.A. Chu explained that she first entered politics when the Monterey Park City Council passed English-only laws, banning Chinese street signs from the nation’s most concentrated Chinese-American municipality. She was elected to the local school board in 1985, a year before California voters passed S.I. Hayakawa’s measure making English the state’s official language. In 2009, she won a special election to replace Hilda Solis, who had left Congress to become Barack Obama’s Secretary of Labor. In Washington, Chu’s first official act was to introduce the Global Languages Early Education (GLEE) bill to fund foreign language instruction from pre-school to eighth grade. Like the nation’s first language immersion program in Culver City, Chu chose to fund elementary schools because starting young “is shown to have the best success at creating bilingual students and increasing academic achievement amongst English Language Learners.” The Congresswoman wanted GLEE to become part of a new Elementary and Secondary

¹⁹ Ni Ching-Ching, “Education Aid from China Stirs Debate: Some See a Language Program as a Tool for Propaganda, Backers Try to Calm Fears,” *LAT*, April 4, 2010, A25; “Socialism Studies: Aasif Mandvi Explores the Communist Threat as Hacienda Heights Introduces a Chinese Language Program to Middle School Kids,” *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, June 7, 2010, <http://www.thedailyshow.com/watch/mon-june-7-2010/socialism-studies> (viewed March 30, 2013); “Advocacy: Fostering Positive Attitudes towards Bilingualism,” panel at *Celebrating 40 Years of Language Immersion*.

Education Act (ESEA), the same law that had incorporated Lyndon Johnson's Bilingual Education Act in 1968. But the new ESEA stalled after the midterm elections in 2010, and as of this writing, George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind is still in place. Nevertheless, the GLEE Act shows that L.A. reformers remain central figures in language instruction policy. Although Americanization debates have been replaced by discussions about bilingual instruction, two-way immersion, and anti-bilingual initiatives, language experiments in Los Angeles still shape, and are shaped by, the meaning of immigration, citizenship, and education in America today.²⁰

²⁰ Judy Chu, Keynote Address at *Celebrating 40 Years of Language Immersion*; Chu, Education website, <http://chu.house.gov/issue/education> (viewed March 30, 2013). Chu's predecessor, had proposed a similar bill in 2007, the Providing Resources to Improve Dual Language Education (PRIDE) Act. Minutes, November 27, 2007, Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records, UCLA Special Collections (Box 772).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Immigration and Housing Records,
1912-1939

Florence Wyckoff Papers, 1940-1990 (bulk)

National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Records, 1937-1967

Chicano Studies Research Center, University of California, Los Angeles.

Bilingual Education Papers

Desegregation Collection, 1976-1983

Julian Nava Papers, 1964-1994

Hirasaki National Resource Center, Japanese American National Museum. Los Angeles.

Afton Dill Nance Papers, 1942-1981

Boyle Heights Oral History Project

Honnold/Mudd Library, Claremont College. Claremont.

Carey McWilliams War Relocation Authority Correspondence, 1919-1994

Japanese American Citizens League History Collection, 1923-1995, *Japanese American National Library. San Francisco.*

Joseph Zanki, Sr., Papers, 1923-1969, *Private Collection. Fountain Valley, California.*

Mary Springer Papers, 1900-1990, *San Fernando High School Library, Los Angeles Unified School District.*

Special Collections, Green Library, Stanford University. Stanford.

Eduardo Quevedo Papers, 1929-1968

Manuel Ruiz Papers, 1931-1986

Special Collections, Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Frank Chuman Papers, 1900-ca. 1993

Japanese American Research Project, 1893-1973

Karl Yoneda Papers, 1925-1989 (bulk)

Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records, 1875-2009

Manzanar War Relocation Center Records, 1942-1946

Survey of Race Relations, 1924-1927, *Hoover Institution, Stanford University. Stanford.*

PERIODICALS

California Journal of Elementary Education.

California Quarterly of Secondary Education.

Community Exchange Bulletin. California Department of Education: Division of Immigrant Education.

Center Forum

Common Ground.

Hot Line. Los Angeles Teachers Association.

Integratededucation.

La Opinión.

Los Angeles Educational Research Bulletin.

Los Angeles School Journal.

Los Angeles Times.

Magazines. Los Angeles City School Districts Division of Instructional Services.

New York Times.

Pomona College Quarterly Magazine.

Progressive Education.

Race Relations Reporter.

Roosevelt High School Rough Rider.

Saturday Evening Post.

Spotlight: A Newsletter for Employees of the Los Angeles City Schools.

The Survey.

PUBLISHED SOURCES

- Acosta, Oscar. "The East L.A. 13 vs. The L.A. Superior Court." *El Grito* 3.2 (Winter, 1970): 12-18.
- Adamic, Louis. *From Many Lands*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940.
- Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 93 (January, 1921): "Present Day Immigration with Special Reference to the Japanese."
- Bahr, Diana. *The Unquiet Nisei: An Oral History of the Life of Sue Kunitomi Embrey*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Bell, Reginald. *Public School Education of Second-Generation Japanese in California*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935.
- Bogardus, Emory S. *Essentials of Americanization*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1919.
- . *The Mexican Immigrant: An Annotated Bibliography*. Los Angeles: The Council on International Relations, 1929.
- Bourne, Randolph. "Trans-National America." *Atlantic Monthly* 118 (July, 1916): 86-97.
- Crawford, James. *Language Loyalties: A Sourcebook on the Official English Controversy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Embrey, Sue Kunitomi. Interview by Arthur Hansen and David Hacker. California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program. August 24, 1973, #1366.
- Gamio, Manuel. *The Life Story of the Mexican Immigrant*. New York: Dover Publications, Reprinted 1971 (Original 1931).
- García, Mario T. *Memories of Chicano History: The Life and Narrative of Bert Corona*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- , and Sal Castro. *Blowout! Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
- Griffith, Beatrice. *American Me*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948.
- Hayakawa, S.I. *Language in Thought and Action*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949.
- Hill, Merton. *The Development of an Americanization Program*. Ontario, Calif.: Board of Trustees of the Chaffey Union High School, 1928.

- Hirohata, Joyce, and Paul Hirohata, eds. *Nisei Voices: Japanese American Students of the 1930s—Then & Now*. Oakland: Hirohata Design, Reprinted 2004 (Originally *Orations and Essays by the Japanese Second Generation of America*, 1932 and 1935).
- Houston, Jeanne Wakatsuki. *Farewell to Manzanar: And Related Readings*, eds. Jeanne and James Houston. Evanston, Ill.: McDougal Littell, Reprinted 1998 (Original 1973).
- Hughes, Marie, ed. "The School's Responsibility for the Improvement of Intergroup Relations: Report of Conference." Los Angeles, December 20-22, 1945. Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, with Office of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, 1945.
- Ichinokuchi, Tad, ed. *John Aiso and the MIS: Japanese-American Soldiers in the Military Intelligence Service, World War II*. Los Angeles: Military Intelligence Service Club of Southern California, 1988.
- Kanzaki, Iichi. *California and the Japanese*. San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, Reprinted 1971 (Original 1921).
- Kikuchi, Charles. *The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp*. ed. John Modell. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973.
- Lambert, Wallace E., and Tucker, G. Richard. *Bilingual Education of Children: The St. Lambert Experiment*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1972.
- Mathews, Amanda. *The Hieroglyphics of Love: Stories of Sonora Town & Old Mexico*. Los Angeles: Artemisia Bindery, 1906.
- Mathews Chase, Amanda. *The Home Teacher: The Act, with a Working Plan and Forty Lessons in English*. Sacramento: Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, State Printing Office, 1916.
- . *Primer for Foreign-Speaking Women, Part I*. Sacramento: Commission of Immigration and Housing of California, State State Printing Office, 1918).
- Meriam, J.L. *Learning English Incidentally: A Study of Bilingual Children*. Washington, D.C. United States Government Printing Office, 1938.
- Myers, N.D., ed. *Education for Cultural Unity: Seventeenth Yearbook*. Oakland: California Elementary School Principals' Association, 1945.
- Nance, Afton D., and Mary Peters, eds. "Conference on the Education of Spanish-speaking Children and Youth," Ontario, Calif., March 25-26, 1966. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1966.
- Nava, Julian, ed., *Viva La Raza! Readings on Mexican Americans*. New York: Van Nostrand Company, 1973.

- Office of Bilingual Bicultural Education, ed. *Studies on Immersion Education: A Collection for United States Educators*. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1984.
- Salazar, Ruben. *Border Correspondent: Selected Writings, 1955-1970*, ed. Mario T. García. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Sánchez, George I. *Occasional Papers of Inter-American Education* 1. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1946.
- . *Occasional Papers of Inter-American Education* 9. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1951.
- Simon, Paul. *The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis*. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1980.
- Smith, William C. *The Second Generation Oriental in America*. San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, Reprinted 1971 (Original 1927).
- Sterry, Nora. *The International Cook Book of The Elementary Principals' Club of Los Angeles, Cal.: A Collection of Choice Recipes From Foreign Lands*. Los Angeles: Citizen Print Shop, Inc., 1930.
- Strong, Edward K. *The Second-Generation Japanese Problem*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1934.
- Tanaka, Togo. Interview by Betty Mitson and David Hacker. California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program. May 19, 1973, #1271.
- Tuck, Ruth. *Not With the Fist: Mexican-Americans in a Southwest City*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1946.
- Thomas, Dorothy Swaine, and Richard Nishimoto. *The Spoilage: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946.
- . *The Salvage: Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952.
- Warren, Earl. *The Memoirs of Earl Warren* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977)
- Woods, Robert, and Albert Kennedy, eds. *Handbook of Settlements*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications, 1911.

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

“A Community Organization I Have Known.” Bluebook exams by student teachers in John Collier’s Americanization courses, July 9, 1920. Records of the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Immigration and Housing, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter CCIH Records).

Aiso, John Fujio. Interview by James C. McNaughton. October 30, 1987. In author’s possession.

Campus Pepper. Manzanar High School student newspaper, 1944-45. Manzanar War Relocation Center Records, UCLA Special Collections.

Cardinal and Gold. Manzanar High School yearbook, 1942-43. Manzanar War Relocation Center Records, UCLA Special Collections.

Heffernan, Helen, and Afton Nance, eds. ““Report on Conference on Teaching English as a Second Language,” June 24-July 14, 1963, San Jose State College. Florence Wyckoff Papers, Bancroft Library.

Heffernan Cabrera, Patricia, ed. “High Intensity Language Training,” July 22-28, 1968. Manuel Ruiz Papers, Stanford University Special Collections.

McCormick, Paul J. “Conclusions of the Court, *Mendez v. Westminster*.” United States District Court, Southern District of California, Central Division, February 18, 1946. Manuel Ruiz Papers, Stanford University Special Collections.

———, William Denman, and D.E. Metzger. “An Act Regulating the Teaching of Languages to Children,” n.d. Frank Chuman Papers, UCLA Special Collections.

Richardson, Ethel. “Program Reports of the Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction,” 1 April 1921. CCIH Records, Bancroft Library.

Tract 6883, *Protective Restrictions Palos Verdes Estates*. California Ephemera, UCLA Special Collections.

INTERVIEWS BY AUTHOR

Cohen, Andrew. Telephone interview by author. January 4, 2008.

Erlich, Madeline. Interview by author, December 10, 2007, Culver City, Calif.

Snow, Ann. Interview by author, December 6, 2007, California State University, Los Angeles.

Valadez, Concepción. Interview by author, January 8, 2008, University of California, Los Angeles.

Zanki Sr., Joseph. Interview by author. July 20, 2011, Fountain Valley, Calif.

ONLINE SOURCES

Advocates for Language Learning El Marino. <http://www.allelmarino.org>. Viewed March 29, 2013.

Culver, Lawrence. "Closing America's Playground: Los Angeles and the History of Our Parks and Recreation Crisis." *History News Network*. <http://www.hnn.us/articles/138310.html>. Viewed April 11, 2011.

Evans, Leslie. "Russell N. Campbell, September 5, 1927 – March 30, 2003," *UCLA International Institute*. <http://www.international.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=3507>. Viewed March 29, 2013.

"Fort Snelling: Breaking the Code." *National Park Service*. <http://www.nps.gov/miss/historyculture/langschool.htm>. Viewed April 1, 2013.

"History of Miss Oliver and the Oliver Clubs." *California Council for the Humanities*. http://www.calhum.org/programs/story_oliver_clubs_special.htm. Viewed June 30, 2010.

Kusuda, Paul. "Personal Recollections of Chicago: 1943-1949." <http://www.asianwisconsinzine.com/0609PaulKusuda.html>. Viewed April 1, 2013.

Orange Coast Gakuen Japanese Language School. <http://www.orangecoastgakuen.org/>. Viewed April 26, 2013.

Payan, Victor. "Interview with Moctesuma Esparza: From the L.A. High School Walkouts to 'Selena' and 'The Disappearance of Garcia Lorca.'" *In Motion Magazine*. May 21, 1998. <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/mesparza.html>. Viewed May 14, 2013.

Pearson, Drew. "Washington Merry-Go-Round: California Discrimination, May 11, 1947." *American University Archives and Special Collections*. <http://www.aladin0.wrlc.org/gsd/collect/pearson/pearson.shtml>. Viewed October 4, 2011.

"Socialism Studies: Aasif Mandvi Explores the Communist Threat as Hacienda Heights Introduces a Chinese Language Program to Middle School Kids." *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. June 7, 2010, <http://www.thedailyshow.com/watch/mon-june-7-2010/socialism-studies> (accessed on March 30, 2013).

White, G. Edward. "The Unacknowledged Lesson: Earl Warren and the Japanese Relocation Controversy." *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Autumn 1979), 613-629, <http://www.vqronline.org/articles/1979/autumn/white-unacknowledged-lesson/>. Viewed May 21, 2013.

Unz, Ron. *English for the Children*. <http://www.onenation.org/unz.html>. Viewed March 30, 2013.

U.S. English. <http://www.usenglish.org>. Viewed March 30, 2013.

"Yasukuni Jinja Yushukan." *Kamikaze Images*. <http://wgordon.web.wesleyan.edu/kamikaze/museums/yushukan/index.htm>. Viewed October 5, 2011.

"Zoot Suit Riots: Los Angeles Erupts in Violence," *Public Broadcasting Service: American Experience*. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/zoot/>. Viewed April 1, 2013.

SECONDARY SOURCES

PUBLISHED SOURCES

Acuña, Rodolfo. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 2nd Edition. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

———. *A Community Under Siege: A Chronicle of Chicanos East of the Los Angeles River, 1945-1975*. Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, Monograph No. 11, 1984.

Alvarez, Luis. *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Arias, Beatriz, ed. "Hispanic Education: Challenges, Research, and Policies." *American Journal of Education* special issue (November 1986).

Armor, John, and Peter Wright. *Manzanar: Commentary by John Hersey, Photographs by Ansel Adams*. New York: Times Books, 1988.

Aron, Stephen. "What's West, What's Next." *OAH Magazine of History* 19 (November 2005): 22-25.

———. "Returning the West to the World." *OAH Magazine of History* 20 (March 2006): 53-60.

- Avila, Eric. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004.
- Azuma, Eiichiro. "The Politics of Transnational History Making: Japanese Immigrants on the Western 'Frontier,' 1927-1941." *Journal of American History* 89.4 (March, 2003): 1401-1430.
- . *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Baron, Dennis. *The English-Only Question: An Official Language for Americans?* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Barrett, James. "Americanization from the Bottom Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the American Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930." *Journal of American History* 79 (December 1992): 996-1020.
- Bernstein, Shana. *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Blanton, Carlos Kevin. *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981, 1st Edition*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.
- Bosniak, Linda. *The Citizen and the Alien: Dilemmas of Contemporary Membership*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Brilliant, Mark. *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Brinkley, Alan. *Liberalism and Its Discontents*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Camarillo, Albert. *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Campbell, Russell. "Bilingual Education and the English-Speaking Majority" in *Bilingual Program, Policy, and Assessment Issues*. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1980, 89.
- Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit: The Tragedy of School Segregation in Los Angeles*. Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1973.
- Christian, Donna, Christopher Montone, Kahryn Lindholm, and Isolda Carranza. *Profiles in Two-Way Immersion Education*. McHenry, Ill.: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems, 1997.

- Cohen, Elizabeth. *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Conzen, Kathleen Neils, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli. "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12.1 (Fall 1992): 4-41.
- Crawford, James. *Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory, and Practice*, 4th Edition. Los Angeles: Bilingual Educational Services, Inc., 1999.
- Culver, Lawrence. *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Davies, Gareth. "The Great Society After Johnson: The Case of Bilingual Education," *Journal of American History* 88.4 (2002): 1405-1429.
- Davis, Mike. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Deutsch, Sarah, Sánchez, George, and Gary Okiro. "Contemporary Peoples/Contested Places," in Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss, eds., *The Oxford History of the American West*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1994. 647-648.
- Deverell, William. *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- , ed. *A Companion to the American West*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- , and Greg Hise, eds. *A Companion to Los Angeles*. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- , and Tom Sitton, eds. *California Progressivism Revisited*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- , eds. *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Escobar, Edward. "Zoot-Suiters and the Cops: Chicano Youth and the Los Angeles Police Department during World War II," in *The War in American Culture: Society and Consciousness during World War II*, eds. Lewis Erenberg and Susan Hirsch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 285-297.
- Fass, Paula. *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

- Fishman, Joshua. *Language and Nationalism: Two Integrative Essays*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1972.
- Ford, Caroline. *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Formisano, Ronald. *Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.
- Fraser, Steve, and Gerstle, Gary, eds. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Gándara, Patricia. "In the Aftermath of the Storm: English Learners in the Post-227 Era." *Bilingual Research Journal* 24.1-24.2 (Winter and Spring, 2000): 1-13.
- , Rachel Moran, and Garcia, Eugene. "Legacy of Brown: Lau and Language Policy in the United States." *Review of Research in Education* 28 (2004), 27-46.
- García, Eugene. *Teaching and Learning in Two Languages: Bilingualism and Schooling in the United States*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2005.
- Gerstle, Gary. *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- . *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Gonzalez, Gilbert G. *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
- Griswold del Castillo, Richard, ed. *World War II and Mexican American Civil Rights*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.
- Guglielmo, Thomas. *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gutfreund, Zevi. "Standing Up to Sugar Cubes: The Contest over Ethnic Identity in California's Fourth-Grade Mission Curriculum," *Southern California Quarterly* 92.2 (2010): 161-197.
- Gutierrez, Henry. "Racial Politics in Los Angeles, Black and Chicano Challenges to Unequal Education in the 1960s." *Southern California Quarterly* 78.1 (Spring 1996): 51-86.
- Handlin, Oscar. *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1951.

- Hernández, Kelly Lytle. *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1955.
- Higonnet, Patrice. "The Politics of Linguistic Terrorism and Grammatical Hegemony during the French Revolution." *Social History* 5 (January 1980): 41-69.
- Hise, Greg. *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- Hobsbawm, Eric, and Ranger, Terence, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Hollinger, David. *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1995.
- HoSang, Daniel. *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- Ichioaka, Yuji. *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*, eds. Gordon Chang and Eiichiro Azuma. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- James, Thomas. *Exile Within: The Schooling of Japanese Americans, 1942-1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).
- Jeansonne, Glenn. "Gerald L.K. Smith," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 86.2 (Winter, 2002): 18-29.
- Katznelson, Ira. *Liberalism's Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- . *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.
- Kelley, Robin. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. New York: Free Press, 1994.
- Kloss, Heinz. *The American Bilingual Tradition* with a new introduction by Reynaldo Macias and Terrence Wiley. Washington, D.C. & McHenry, Ill.: Center for Applied Linguistics & Delta Systems, Reprinted 1998 (Original 1977).
- . "Language Rights of Immigrant Groups." *International Migration Review* 5.2 (Summer, 1971): 250-268.

- Kransdorf, Martha. *A Matter of Loyalty: The Los Angeles School Board vs. Frances Eisenberg*. San Francisco: Caddo Gap Press, 1994.
- Krashen, Stephen, and Biber, Douglas, eds. *On course: Bilingual Education's Success in California*. Sacramento: California Association for Bilingual Education, 1988.
- Kropp, Phoebe. *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Kruse, Kevin. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Kurashige, Lon. *Japanese American Celebration and Conflict: A History of Ethnic Identity and Festival, 1934-1990*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Kurashige, Scott. *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Lassiter, Matthew. "The New Suburban History: Political Culture and Metropolitan Space," *Journal of Planning History* (February, 2005): 75-88.
- . *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Lehman, Anthony. *Birthright of Barbed Wire: The Santa Anita Assembly Center for the Japanese*. Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1970.
- Levitt, Peggy. *The Transnational Villagers*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Lipsitz, George. *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
- Luce, Caroline. "Reexamining Los Angeles 'Lower East Side': Jewish Bakers Union Local 453 and Yiddish Food Culture in 1920s Boyle Heights" in *Jews in the Los Angeles Mosaic*, ed. Karen Wilson. Los Angeles: Autry National Center of the American West with University of California Press, 2013.
- Lukas, J. Anthony. *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families*. New York: Vintage Books, 1986.
- Macias, Reynaldo. "Language and Ideology in the United States," *Social Education* (February 1985): 97-100.

- . “Language Politics and the Sociolinguistic Historiography of Spanish in the United States,” in *Language in Action: New Studies of Language and Society*, eds. P. Griffin, Joy K. Peyton, et al. (Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton Press, 2000): 52-83.
- Marin, Marguerite. *Social Protest in an Urban Barrio: A Study of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1974*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1991.
- Matsumoto, Valerie. “Seeking ‘Deirdre’: Gender Roles, Multicultural Relations, and Nisei Women Writers of the 1930s.” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies* 12.1 (1991): 19-32.
- May, Stephen. *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Language*. Harlow, Essex, England: Longman, 2001.
- McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- McNaughton, James C. *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II*. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006.
- McWilliams, Carey. *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*. Santa Barbara, Calif. Peregrine Publishers, reprinted 1971 (Original 1939).
- . *Southern California: An Island on the Land*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Peregrine Smith, Reprinted 1973 (Original 1946).
- . *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*. New York: Greenwood Press, Reprinted 1990 (Original 1949).
- . *Brothers Under the Skin, Revised Edition*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1951.
- Mehlman Petrzela, Natalia. “Before the Federal Bilingual Education Act,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 85 (2010): 406-424.
- Molina, Natalia. *Fit To Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-193*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Monroy, Douglas. *Rebirth: Mexican Los Angeles from the Great Migration to the Great Depression*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Moreno, Jose, ed. *The Elusive Quest for Equality: 150 Years of Chicano/Chicana Education*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Educational Review, 1999.
- Nakamura, Kelli Y. “‘They Are Our Human Secret Weapons’: The Military Intelligence Service and the Role of the Japanese-Americans in the Pacific War and in the Occupation of Japan.” *The Historian* 70.1 (2008): 54-74.

- Ngai, Mae, and Jon Gjerde, eds. *Major Problems in American Immigration History*, 2nd Edition. Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2013.
- Nicolaides, Becky. *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Nugent, Walter. *Into the West: The Story of Its People*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1999.
- Omi, Michael, and Winant, Howard. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, Second Edition. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Philp, Kenneth. *John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977.
- Pulido, Laura. *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Raftery, Judith. *Land of Fair Promise: Politics and Reform in Los Angeles Schools, 1885-1941* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).
- Reese, William, and McClellan, B. Edward, eds.. *The Social History of American Education*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.
- Rieder, Jonathan. *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Rodda, Richard. "Earl Warren's Flawed Memories." *California Journal* (November 1977): 378-379.
- Rossinow, Douglas. *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Ruiz, Vicki, and Ellen DuBois, eds. *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Sánchez, George J. *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1943*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Sappiens, Alexander. "Spanish in California: A Historical Perspective." *Journal of Communication* 29.2 (Spring, 1979): 72-83.
- Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur M. *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998.
- Selig, Diana. *Americans All: The Cultural Gifts Movement*. Harvard University Press, 2008.

- Servín, Manuel, ed. *The Mexican-Americans: An Awakening Minority, 1st and 2nd Editions* (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1970 and 1974)
- Shimoda, Hiraku. "Tongues-Tied: The Making of a 'National Language' and the Discovery of Dialects in Meiji Japan." *American Historical Review* 115.3 (June 2010): 714-731.
- Sides, Josh. *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Sonenshein, Raphael. *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Stone, James, David Shoemaker, and Nicholas Dotti. *Interrogation: World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq*. Washington, D.C.: National Defense Intelligence College Press, 2008.
- Strum, Philippa. *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican-American Rights*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010.
- Sugrue, Thomas. "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction Against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964," *Journal of American History* 82 (September 1995): 551-578.
- . *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Tatlovich, Raymond. *Nativism Reborn? The Official English Movement and the American States*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995.
- Varzally, Allison. *Making a Non-White America: Californians Coloring Outside Ethnic Lines, 1925-1955*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.
- Vaughan, Mary Kay. *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940*. Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1997.
- Weber, Eugen. *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.
- Wei, William. *The Asian American Movement*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993
- White, Richard. "Race Relations in the American West." *American Quarterly* 38.3 (1986): 396-416.
- Wild, Mark. "'So Many Children at Once and So Many Kinds': Schools and Ethno-Racial Boundaries in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles." *Western Historical Quarterly* 33.4 (Winter 2002): 453-478.

Wollenberg, Charles. *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.

Yoo, David. *Growing Up Nisei: Race, Generation, and Culture Among Japanese Americans of California, 1924-49*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Yu, Henry. *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Zimmerman, Jonathan. *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002.

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Advocates for Language Learning El Marino. "Celebrating 40 Years of Language Immersion Education." Southern California Language Symposium. Culver City, May 13, 2011.

Aron, Stephen, Eric Avila, Brenda Stevenson, and Allison Varzally. "Superdiversity California Style: New Approaches to Race, Civil Rights, Governance, and Cultural Production." Institute of American Cultures. University of California, Los Angeles, February 28, 2013.

Gaffield, Chad, Zevi Gutfreund, Adam Laats, David Labaree, and Natalia Mehlman Petrzela. "Multiculturalism and its Discontents: Bilingualism, Busing, and the New Minority." Conference on Politics, Activism, and the History of America's Public Schools. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, April 12, 2008.

Inda, Juan J., "*La Comunidad en Lucha*: The Development of the East Los Angeles High School Blowouts." Paper presented at the 29th Stanford Center for Chicano Research Working Papers Series, Stanford, Calif., March 1990.

Kagan, Olga, and Joy K. Peyton. "Challenges and Achievements in Community Language Schools." Spring Conference of the National Heritage Language Resource Center. University of California, Los Angeles, April 13, 2013.

Kransdorf, Martha, and David Curland. "McCarthy Forum." United Teachers of Los Angeles Headquarters, Los Angeles, November 20, 2008.

Stavans, Ilan. "Who Stole the Statue of Liberty?" Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, October 15, 2008.

DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

- Bagwell, Asbury A. "The Los Angeles Diploma Plan of Naturalizing the Alien: A Comparison of the Los Angeles Diploma Plan with Certain Other American Naturalization Methods in the Light of the Social Process of Assimilation and Socialization." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1929.
- Bernal, Dolores Delgado. "Chicana School Resistance and Grassroots Leadership: Providing an Alternative History of the 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1997.
- Blanchard, Gladys. "The Administration and Supervision of the Americanization Department of the Evening Schools of Los Angeles." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1935.
- Buckner, Herman A. "A Study of Pupil Elimination and Failure Among Mexicans." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1935.
- Cameron, James. "The History of Mexican Public Education in Los Angeles, 1910-1930." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1976.
- Carpenter, Charles C. "A Study of Segregation vs. Non-Segregation of Mexican Children." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1935.
- Cooperider, Louise. "History of the Americanization Department in the Los Angeles City Schools." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1934.
- Fujita, Thomas. "Better Americans in a Greater America ?;: Japanese American Education, Occupation & Income, 1940-1960." Master's thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1987.
- Fukuoka, Fumiko. "Mutual Life and Aid Among the Japanese in Southern California with Special Reference to Los Angeles." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1937.
- Gatewood, James V. "Resettled People, Unsettled Lives: Community Rebuilding Among Japanese Americans of the West Los Angeles United Methodist Church, 1945-1965." Master's thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2001.
- Gonzalez, Gilbert G. "The System of Public Education and Its Function within the Chicano Communities, 1920-1930." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974.
- Gustafson, Cloyd F. "An Ecological Analysis of the Hollenbeck Area of Los Angeles." Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1940.

- Gutierrez, Henry J. "The Chicano Education Rights Movement and School Desegregation: Los Angeles, 1962-1970." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1990.
- Herriman, Grace W. "An Investigation Concerning the Effect of Language Handicap on Mental Development and Educational Progress." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1932.
- Jackson, George. "A History of the Adult Education Program in the Los Angeles Public Schools." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1957.
- Kawasaki, Kanichi. "The Japanese Community of East San Pedro, Terminal Island, California." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1931.
- Lanigan, Mary. "Second Generation Mexicans in Belvedere" Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1932.
- Lee, Ettie. "Americanizing the Immigrant Through Scientific English Teaching." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1923.
- Lee, Shelley. "Cosmopolitan Identities: Japanese Americans in Seattle and the Pacific Rim, 1900-1942." Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 2005.
- Lozano, Rosina. "*Lenguaje Sin Fronteras* (Language Without Borders): The Spanish Language in New Mexico and California Politics, Education, and Identity, 1848-1952." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 2011.
- Mehlman Petrzela, Natalia. "Origins of the Culture Wars: Sex, Language, School, and State in California, 1968-78" Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 2009.
- Morimoto, Toyotomi. "Language and Heritage Maintenance of Immigrants: Japanese Language Schools in California, 1903-1941." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1989).
- Mulvehill, William. "An Americanization Course for Children of Foreign Parentage." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1950.
- Serisawa, Koko. "A Comparison of the American and Japanese Pupils in the Same High School." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1935.
- Sterry, Nora. "The Sociological Basis for the Reorganization of the Macy Street School." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1924.
- Tanaka, Tamiko. "The Japanese Language School in Relation to Assimilation." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1933.

- Tuthill, Gretchen. "Study of the Japanese in the City of Los Angeles." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1924.
- Turner, Grace M. "A Study of the Neighborhood Schools of Los Angeles." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1923.
- Uono, Koyoshi. "The Factors Affecting the Geographical Aggregation and Dispersion of the Japanese Residences in the City of Los Angeles." Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1927.
- Wood, Diane. "Immigrant Mothers, Female Reformers, and Women Teachers: The California Home Teachers Act of 1915." Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1996.