



Forward Without Fear: Native Hawaiians and American Education in Territorial Hawai'i, 1900-1941 : Native Hawaiians and American Education in Territorial Hawai'i, 1900-1941

[Taira, Derek](#)

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During Hawai'i's territorial period (1900-1959), Native Hawaiians resisted assimilation by refusing to replace Native culture, identity, and history with those of the United States. By actively participating in U.S. public schools, Hawaiians resisted the suppression of their language and culture, subjection to a foreign curriculum, and denial of their cultural heritage and history, which was critical for Hawai'i's political evolution within the manifest destiny of the United States.

In *Forward without Fear* Derek Taira reveals that many Native Hawaiians in the first forty years of the territorial period neither subscribed nor succumbed to public schools' aggressive efforts to assimilate and Americanize them but instead engaged with American education to envision and support an alternate future, one in which they could exclude themselves from settler society to maintain their cultural distinctiveness and protect their Indigenous identity. Taira thus places great emphasis on how they would have understood their actions-as flexible and productive steps for securing their cultural sovereignty and safeguarding their future as Native Hawaiians-and reshapes historical understanding of this era as one solely focused on settler colonial domination, oppression, and elimination to a more balanced and optimistic narrative that identifies and highlights Indigenous endurance, resistance, and hopefulness.

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