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## Making “Womenly Women” or “Servants of Civilization”

*Ida Pope and Native Hawaiian Female Education, 1894–1914*

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**ABSTRACT** This article investigates how white educators used American education in an effort to socially engineer Hawaiian acceptance of U.S. control over the islands. Examining school reports, journal articles, and official correspondence from the Kamehameha School for Girls, I explore the various strategies principal Ida M. Pope used to promote white middle-class ways of homemaking and mothering, in an effort to undermine her Native Hawaiian students’ Indigenous identities and convert them into docile Hawaiian Americans. Despite Pope’s language of female empowerment, she harbored racist attitudes toward Native Hawaiians and produced an institutional climate hostile to Indigenous identity. This article builds on previous work on white women’s maternalism in Native American boarding schools to highlight how themes of white femininity, U.S. empire, and settler colonialism manifested at the Kamehameha School for Girls. More broadly, it reveals the role of white women in Hawai’i as agents of colonial control who actively labored toward normalizing U.S. occupation and empire. **KEYWORDS** Kamehameha School for Girls, Ida M. Pope, education, Hawai’i, U.S. imperialism, maternalism

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Just before summer break in 1910, Ida May Pope, principal of the Kamehameha School for Girls (KSG), reminded her Native Hawaiian students why she was there: “To make good women! . . . To make industrious women! . . . To make womenly women who can cook, wash, iron, sew, embroider, and garden, and yet have a care for physical welfare and beauty.” She warned when they went home, “[d]o not become discouraged because things about, and in your home are not as nice as you find in school . . . be satisfied with them.” Rather than get angry, be proactive; “help your mothers, . . . do not treat her unkindly because she is old fashioned or ignorant”; “try to remedy things” by “putting in practice the lessons in home-keeping which [you] have been taught.” And, above all else, she reminded them: “[d]o not lower your standards, but try to raise the standards of others.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Ida M. Pope, *Handicraft* 15, no. 8 (May 1910): 1.

Published on the front page of the school newspaper, *Handicraft*, Pope's advice appears warm and genuine. She was concerned that her students would forget much of what they had learned at school that year and fail to uphold the positive reputation of KSG. Pope, after all, had reason to worry. To outside observers, Hawai'i's Indigenous population at the turn of the twentieth century faced significant challenges. Native Hawaiians ranked first in Hawai'i for child mortality, low life-expectancy, incarceration, alcoholism, unemployment, and homelessness. Historians extend this list of woes by revealing how Native Hawaiians were treated like foreigners in their homeland: forced to accept U.S. citizenship and occupation following the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893, denied instruction in their language at school, pushed off their land due to extensive commercial development, and driven to a life of poverty. As a result, some Hawaiians felt embarrassed about their Indigenous culture and looked for ways to thrive under their new identity as Hawaiian Americans.<sup>2</sup> In this context, Pope's efforts to Americanize Native Hawaiian girls by transforming them into "womenly women" makes sense. As principal of a school whose student body was entirely Native Hawaiian, Pope felt that she and the white women on her faculty were saving Native girls from their cultural deficiencies by turning them into "good and industrious" mothers, homemakers, and wage earners acculturated to an Americanized Hawai'i.<sup>3</sup>

Early historical literature on Pope supports and perpetuates this benevolent narrative of white saviorhood by praising her as "more than a principal—she was [a] friend, counselor and companion," a "living ideal . . . a living alii [chief]" for young Hawaiian girls.<sup>4</sup> Decades later, the image of Pope as a selfless and noble savior of Hawaiian girls remains unchanged. As one contemporary author stated, Pope was the only "bright shining light" in the lives of Native girls who were "struggling under the weight" of modernization.<sup>5</sup> Pope

2. Davianna McGregor, "Engaging Hawaiians in the Expansion of the U.S. Empire," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 7, no. 3 (2004): 209–22; Davianna Pomaika'i McGregor, "Āina Ho'opulapula: Hawaiian Homesteading," *The Hawaiian Journal of History* 47 (1990): 1–38; Davianna McGregor-Alegado, "Hawaiians: Organizing in the 1970s," *Amerasia Journal* 7, no. 2 (October 1, 1980): 29–55; Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1974); Roger Bell, *Last among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1984).

3. Pope, *Handicraft* (1910): 1.

4. Loring Gardner Hudson, "The History of Kamehameha Schools" (M.A. thesis, University of Hawaii, 1935), 209–10, 482.

5. Sandra Bonura, *Light in the Queen's Garden: Ida May Pope, Pioneer for Hawai'i's Daughters, 1862–1914* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 2–4.

would have agreed with these glowing assessments, convinced that her well-intended efforts were neither disruptive nor invasive. In her mind, she was Mother Pope, a selfless crusader fulfilling her maternalistic duty to rescue Native girls from their “savage background” and nurture them in a “civilized environment.”<sup>6</sup>

But Pope exemplified another dimension of Hawaiian female education at KSG, one that exposed the limits of white maternalism in an all-Native female setting and is far less recognized by historians. Pope was a central player in a private educational institution founded by Hawaiian royalty for Hawaiian girls but staffed and managed by *haole* (white) educators who promoted Western techniques of motherhood, cleanliness, and domesticity as part of an acculturation process meant to incorporate Native Hawaiians into the racialized hierarchy of American society. While claiming to be committed to educating “Hawaiian girls for a self respecting independence,” Pope oversaw and promoted a curriculum similar to the vocational instruction at Native American boarding schools and African American manual training institutes that socialized non-white students to accept subordinate social roles and to be productive workers for white enterprises and households.<sup>7</sup> For Pope, who believed that her Hawaiian students needed “social and moral regeneration,” there was no conflict between her goals and practice; in her view, her students’ primitive past had prevented them from acquiring the cultural values and work ethic necessary for living a civil and industrious life.<sup>8</sup> To survive, Pope argued, her girls needed the right blend of moral and industrial education to make them an asset and not a burden to a new Americanized Hawai‘i.

This article examines Ida May Pope’s formative influence in female manual training at KSG as part of the broader Americanization movement in Hawai‘i at the turn of the twentieth century. In particular, it focuses on several elements that made up her educational philosophy and shaped the pedagogical objectives of the school during its first twenty years (1894–1914): racial uplift, eugenics, and maternalism. After an overview of

6. Dr. Scudder, “Ida M. Pope,” *The Friend* 72, no. 9 (September 1914). This parallels the dynamic seen in Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), xxx–xxxii.

7. Ida M. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” *Handicraft* 10, no. 7 (March 1898): 4.

8. *Ibid.*

Pope's professional background and the maternalist rhetoric of the time, I examine her role at the KSG and her continued intrusion into students' lives after graduation. At the foundation of Pope's educational philosophy were entrenched beliefs in white supremacy and the role of schools in socializing and preparing non-white races for subordinate status in American society. This thinking, combined with her maternalist rhetoric of female empowerment, produced a system of education for Native girls at KSG that was paradoxically both inspirational and constraining.

Pope directed KSG to invade and undermine students' Indigenous identities in order to convert them into what historian Margaret Jacobs defines as "useful servants of civilization."<sup>9</sup> An examination of Pope expands scholars' understanding of American education, U.S. imperialism, and the American West to include the role of maternalist white women in Hawai'i as agents of colonial control who actively labored to legitimize American occupation of the islands.<sup>10</sup> Charged with providing her students with a "good education in the common English branches," Pope believed that Native Hawaiian girls required foundational knowledge in proper livelihood (vocational training), motherhood (childrearing, diet, and domestic skills), and womanhood (aesthetics, sexuality, and morals).<sup>11</sup> Pope believed that KSG graduates would be proficient in these three fields and thus well prepared for their future roles as American wives, mothers, and homemakers. Indeed, they would be poised to improve the lifestyle choices, cultural sophistication, and overall morality of Native Hawaiians.

## Pope in Hawai'i

Pope arrived at Honolulu by steam ship on August 30, 1890, ready for the adventure.<sup>12</sup> Disillusioned with her professional path back in Ohio, she left

9. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 326.

10. The efforts of Pope and other white maternalists in Hawai'i were not unique but part of a larger Western movement aimed at "saving" Indigenous Pacific Islander women through the promotion of Western models of domesticity. See Margaret Jolly, "'To Save the Girls for Brighter and Better Lives': Presbyterian Missions and Women in the South of Vanuatu: 1848–1870," *The Journal of Pacific History* 26, no. 1 (1991): 27–48.

11. The meaning behind this phrase is highly contested and no one is sure of the author's intent. The author of the will, Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the benefactor of the Kamehameha Schools Bernice Pauahi Bishop, died before seeing the school opened in 1885. The will represents the foundational document governing the curriculum and student selection process for the Kamehameha Schools to this day. *Pauahi's Will*, 1883, [https://www.ksbe.edu/about\\_us/about\\_pauahi/will/](https://www.ksbe.edu/about_us/about_pauahi/will/), accessed November 17, 2022.

12. Bonura, *Light in the Queen's Garden*, 14.

her teaching position at the Ohio Asylum for Feeble-Minded Youth after a year to become the principal of the Kawaiha‘o Seminary in downtown Honolulu. Having never left her home state before, Pope’s sudden decision to travel thousands of miles as a single white woman to work in the tropics shocked her family. As scholar Ann Laura Stoler explains, it was generally understood among so-called civilized nations at the time that the “uncontrollable lust” and “heightened sexuality of colonized men” and the numerous physical and mental ailments specific to hot tropical climates posed unnecessary risks for white women.<sup>13</sup>

Pope’s decision to teach overseas was not unique. An 1886 graduate of Oberlin College, Pope came of age during an era marked by the professionalization of teaching, in which academic coursework, experiential teacher training, and extracurricular activities empowered female students to view themselves as members of a professional class who challenged societal gender norms of domesticity by pursuing an independent career outside the home.<sup>14</sup> Inspired and well-trained, many of these young women sought employment as educators in the U.S.-occupied Philippines to help the federal government, as they understood it, to pacify the Indigenous population through a benevolent American public education. As U.S. civil service employees, these teachers benefited from higher salaries, greater opportunities for professional advancement, and more autonomy than they could have enjoyed back home.<sup>15</sup>

For Pope, Hawai‘i and Kawaiha‘o Seminary offered many of the same opportunities. Although the institution was poorly funded, she entered as principal with significant influence over the curriculum and its staff. The seminary, founded in 1864, was the oldest female educational institution in the Hawaiian nation and also its largest. Financial troubles forced the seminary to close in 1894—just four years after Pope’s arrival—but she was quickly appointed principal of the newly formed Kamehameha School for Girls, which opened that same year. With a larger budget, greater resources, and new buildings, explains Pope’s biographer, Pope felt better prepared to

13. Ann L. Stoler, “Making Empire Respectable: The Politics of Race and Sexual Morality in 20th-Century Colonial Cultures,” *American Ethnologist* 16, no. 4 (November 1989): 641.

14. Christine A. Ogren, “‘A Large Measure of Self-Control and Personal Power’: Women Students at State Normal Schools During the Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 28, no. 3/4 (2000): 221.

15. For more on the role of white women teachers in the Philippines, see Sarah Steinbock-Pratt, *Educating the Empire: American Teachers and Contested Colonization in the Philippines*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

“save” Native girls and to manage the new school “based on her good instincts and love for children.”<sup>16</sup>

Pope’s love for children was complicated, however. In periodicals, school memos, and reports, Pope routinely used infantilizing language to describe her students, and Native Hawaiians more broadly, as a childlike race incapable of taking care of themselves, and she used matronizing terms to justify her interventions as “saving.”<sup>17</sup> These attitudes were not exclusive to Pope. Increasingly on the mainland at this time, white reformers, educators, and philanthropists of Native American education had moved toward a biologically deterministic view of the so-called Indian problem, defined as Indian reliance on the government for financial and material assistance to survive. This racializing of dependency stigmatized Indigenous peoples as culturally deficient, intellectually challenged, child-like races. Previous attempts by white educators and reformers to immerse Native Americans in white civilization reflected the widely held belief that changing the learning environment could shape human behavior. Later reformers, however, believed the social evolution of Indigenous people remained too slow, leading many to believe Indians lacked both the necessary mental capacity and practical need for an academic education stressing Western classics, art, and literature. Reformers eventually turned to genetics for a scientific explanation of the limits and capabilities of non-white races. This new understanding racialized the slow assimilation process of Indigenous peoples as indicative of their fixed and limited intellectual abilities. Thus, reformers turned to a practical education that placed trained Indigenous students for a subordinate role in white society.<sup>18</sup>

Pope believed Hawai‘i had a similar problem. An ardent supporter of settlement houses, Pope placed great faith in the power of a positive social environment to shape human behavior. She surrounded her students with “beautiful things and words” to inspire and empower them to rise up from poverty and improve the circumstances of their people.<sup>19</sup> But, she also believed in eugenics and biological determinism, which overpowered social agency and defined dark races as possessing limited intellectual abilities. Thus,

16. Bonura, *Light in the Queen’s Garden*, 147.

17. Margaret Jolly, “Colonizing Women: The Maternal Body and Empire,” in *Feminism and the Politics of Difference*, ed. Sneja Marina Gunew and Anna Yeatman (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 114.

18. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 74–75.

19. Bonura, *Light in the Queen’s Garden*, 166.

while she promoted the benefits of American education, tastefully furnished surroundings, and individual accountability, Pope ultimately believed nature trumped nurture.

According to Pope, Native Hawaiians were a pliable people. She believed the “average Hawaiian is not far enough removed from the feudal system to disregard authority and consequently is quite easily led.”<sup>20</sup> Just like “proverbial ‘dumb, driven cattle’ they follow[ed] their leaders with little outcry and rebellion.”<sup>21</sup> Such a legacy cultivated “[s]ulkiness, childish irritation and a certain uncouthness” among Hawaiians. These racialized traits, Pope explained, made it “difficult for the ordinary new teacher to understand, [and] for the instructor who knows little of a primitive people” to know how to effectively acculturate Hawaiian girls. Luckily, she noted, Native Hawaiians were inherently a “kindly and lovable people” and their “[l]ack of initiative makes the problem of control an easy one.”<sup>22</sup> In fact, “the Hawaiian with all his helps and hindrances is coming along as fast as is possible with all the gaps he must bridge in evolution.”<sup>23</sup> Convinced of her students’ primitive, childlike impressionability and passivity, Pope implemented an aggressive educational agenda that imposed maternalist control over virtually every intimate aspect of her students’ lives.

### Pope and White Maternalism

Like American missionaries before her, Pope was inspired by complex motives. She arrived in Hawai‘i bringing sincere ideals of improving the lives of Native Hawaiians, but her efforts were premised on American continental ideas of race, gender, and middle-class culture that denigrated those she claimed to help. She also relied on a trove of nineteenth-century colonial knowledge about Hawaiians that defined and represented them as lazy, indolent, and immoral and used the language of civilization to define women as embodying the moral virtue of a modern nation and enlightened people. Pope viewed the Native female body as

20. Pope, Kamehameha School for Girls Monthly Report to the Board of Trustees: November 1911, 1, Kamehameha Schools Archives, Honolulu, Hawai‘i. Hereafter, Kamehameha School Archives will be referred to as KSA and the Kamehameha School for Girls Monthly/Annual Reports will be KSG Monthly/Annual Reports.

21. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

22. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1908–1909, 10, 1909; Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1911, 1.

23. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

a “fundamental terrain of struggle” where the future of the Hawaiian race would be determined.<sup>24</sup>

But this understanding of Pope, as well as broader colonial efforts in the twentieth century to domesticize Native Hawaiian girls, remains unfamiliar in the historical literature. As a continental-born, white, university-educated female principal, she relied on her positions of privilege and power in her attempts to alter how her Indigenous female students experienced the world in order to cultivate their consent for accepting limited social roles and economic opportunities. This project involved invading the intimate aspects of their lives in order to eliminate social behaviors and cultural practices that constituted barriers to complete colonization and, hence, salvation.<sup>25</sup> To her, Native Hawaiians were a dark-skinned, primitive, child-like race unable to take care of themselves. She perceived their cultural beliefs and their conceptions of motherhood and womanhood as backward, ancient, and uncivilized. Such ideas and practices, she believed, represented obstacles to civilization that needed to be eliminated and replaced with middle-class American ideals if Native girls and their people were to survive modernity.

At first glance, Pope’s efforts and attitudes seem similar to those of white women maternalists in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. As proto-feminist reformers, they employed women’s traditional association with motherhood, or maternalism, to: 1) glorify motherhood as a respectable career, 2) justify mothering other women deemed in need of saving, and 3) elevate domesticity and homemaking as the proper, defining social role for all women. When it came to Indigenous women, as Margaret Jacobs explains, maternalism “took a different turn,” channeling ideas of whiteness, civilization, and modernity to homogenize Native mothers as backward and incompetent due to what they considered alien and abusive child-rearing practices and customs.<sup>26</sup> White reformers argued that the Indigenous milieu of Native communities that promoted a degenerate lifestyle of idleness and immorality, perpetuated Indigenous despondency, and inhibited their racial uplift. In their minds, Native American women needed to be re-educated to fulfill their natural roles as mothers in creating and maintaining clean, nurturing home environments. Under this rationale, most maternalists portrayed Indigenous mothers as unfit and advocated aggressive policies of child removal and

24. Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i: The Cultural Power of Law* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 231, 260–61.

25. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 22–23.

26. *Ibid.*, 89–91, 92.



institutionalization to rehabilitate Indigenous girls so they could meet the cultural criteria of American motherhood and domesticity. As Stoler explains, doing so would ultimately “save” Indians from themselves by eliminating and replacing the Indigenous “cultural contagions” that impeded their development.<sup>27</sup>

Schools and classrooms therefore became, as Jacobs writes in *White Mother to a Dark Race*, the “intimate spaces” where maternalists maintained constant surveillance of their students to ensure they adopted American civilization and did not revert back to their old “savage” ways. Pope embraced what Jacobs calls this “unique strain of maternalism.”<sup>28</sup> Like her fellow maternalists at Indian boarding schools, Pope also envisioned her work on a much grander scale, casting her mission as to “train [Native girls] along the march of civilization” in order to bring them “out of the darkness [and] into the light.”<sup>29</sup> She employed school policies and instructional practices that promoted domesticity, monitored and regulated students’ bodies and sexuality, and prepared them for service occupations in a strategic effort to invade and break the intimate bonds between her students and their families, communities, and culture. She also acted as a surrogate mother, wedging herself between her students and their parents in a calculated attempt to inculcate in her young female students new loyalties to her and KSG and make them think, act, and behave, as Jacobs describes, “more like whites.” The challenge for maternalists was to get to Native girls before they “learned the poor habits of their mothers,” so she could transform them into the vanguards of Hawaiian reform and uplift.<sup>30</sup>

But while Pope appears to share much with the white maternalists on the mainland, KSG was a different kind of educational setting. Rather than an urban settlement house or federal boarding school, it was a highly selective, private instructional institution established in 1894 by trustees of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop estate, the last direct descendant of Kamehameha I, and dedicated solely to the education of Native Hawaiian girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Students were required to live on campus and provide labor to maintain the school throughout the academic year; but in contrast with the Native American experience, there were no coercive practices of

27. Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 62.

28. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 22–23, 309–13, 93.

29. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 4.

30. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 248, 135.

child removal to enforce student attendance, and instances of runaways, excessive punishment, or student deaths were extremely rare. Instead, many Native Hawaiian families *willingly* sent their children to KSG if they were able to secure a spot.<sup>31</sup>

A strong interest in education was nothing new for Native Hawaiians. Scholar Julie Kaomea explains that Hawaiians believed that “knowledge of the ways of the foreigners” in Hawai‘i was critical to their survival as a people and country.<sup>32</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, they actively pursued Hawaiian-language literacy and produced a wide array of Indigenous-authored texts and newspapers. They established a centralized school system, mandatory attendance laws, and a majority Native Hawaiian teacher corps to advance their national goal of creating an educated Hawaiian citizenry.<sup>33</sup> However, by the 1890s, white settler politicians restricted financial support for common schools that taught in the Hawaiian language in order to promote attendance at those that used English as the medium of instruction. As a result of poor funding, most Hawaiian-language common schools were gone by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup> Thus, compared to the overcrowded and understaffed remaining public schools, KSG’s well-educated faculty, job-readiness curriculum, and modern facilities represented a clear choice for Hawaiian parents who wanted to secure a profitable future for their children.

This Indigenous demand for schooling dovetailed with a broader acknowledgement by Native Hawaiians as to the politics of recognition they faced as a colonized people. The politics of recognition, as historian Paul A. Kramer explains, was a hegemonic “logic of legitimation” used by imperial powers to validate their control over territories and peoples by establishing “standards or criteria for inclusion” and legal participation in colonial society and the broader empire.<sup>35</sup> This rationale provided colonizers legal and humanitarian

31. Pope, KSG Annual Report, 1905, 3, KSA; Pope, KSG Annual Report, 1906, 2, KSA; Pope, “Kamehameha School for Girls Monthly Report to the Board of Trustees,” May 1911, 8, KSA.

32. Julie Kaomea, “Education for Elimination in Nineteenth-Century Hawai‘i: Settler Colonialism and the Native Hawaiian Chiefs’ Children’s Boarding School,” *History of Education Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (May 2014): 124; David A. Chang, *The World and All the Things upon It: Native Hawaiian Geographies of Exploration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

33. Chang, *The World and All the Things upon It*, 99, 106.

34. William E.H. Tagupa, “Education, Change, and Assimilation in Nineteenth Century Hawai‘i,” *Pacific Studies* 5, no. 1 (1981): 57–70; Chang, *The World and All the Things upon It*, 105–6, 143–147, 153.

35. Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 18–22.

cover for their violations of the national sovereignty and natural resources of the people and spaces they occupied and exploited. The Native Hawaiian experience provides a perfect example. With their government overthrown in 1893, their lands annexed in 1898, and U.S. citizenship mandated without their consent in 1900, Native Hawaiians found themselves forced to acknowledge American legal and social standards by learning and demonstrating their assimilation in order to gain employment and political privileges necessary for survival in an Americanized Hawai'i.

Pope was a crucial gatekeeper in this recognition process. Possessing the power to recognize student compliance and fulfillment of her standards and criteria involving proper female gender behavior and racial subservience, Pope controlled the means through which her students could obtain gainful employment, pursue advanced educational opportunities, and secure a favorable public reputation. Failure to conform and satisfy her expectations would have resulted in poor job recommendations and dismissal from school. For Native girls who already faced challenges as a colonized people, any of these outcomes would have represented an additional setback toward building a stable future. In this context, voluntary participation in a colonial education setting took on a new cast. It was, one might say, not quite voluntary.

#### GENDER AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

From 1901 to 1914, KSG described itself as a “home school” furnishing a “practical education for Hawaiian girls,” preparing them for domestic service, sewing work, or further education in the Territorial Normal School. Beyond basic courses in arithmetic, reading and spelling, history, English, geography, physiology, drawing, music, and nature study, students also received training in “feminine domestic skills,” hygiene and nursing, sewing, dressmaking, and domestic science. Pope expressed with confidence that the “education received in this school [would] fit Hawaiian girls for a self respecting independence so that they may go forth among their own people, being able to stand and to stand firm for truth and purity.”<sup>36</sup>

36. Pope, “Founder’s Day,” 3. While Pauahi and her husband, Charles Reed Bishop, once met with Samuel Chapman Armstrong during his trip to Hawai’i in 1881, it remains unknown what Pauahi’s true intentions were for the Kamehameha Schools as she passed away in 1884 prior to the founding of the Schools. Instead, her husband played a significant role in making vocational training a core aspect of the Schools.

But Pope's practical education promoting independence also targeted specific markers of difference she deemed impediments to acculturation. Specifically, Indigenous beliefs and practices involving childcare, food, dwellings, adornment, and social customs and behavior represented the aspects of Native Hawaiian culture that Pope hoped to redefine along white Protestant domestic lines. In doing so, she hoped to remove practices she perceived as primitive and unintelligent, in order to promote and "develop right ideas of living and fix habits of industry" for employment in an Americanized Hawai'i.<sup>37</sup> Pope's primary concern was not to create enlightened Indigenous mothers or empowered female educators and community leaders, but rather to produce competent Native Hawaiian female domestic workers, servants, and laborers assimilated to white, middle-class femininity and trained in homemaking, nursing, and dressmaking.

But remunerative employment was not Pope's only concern. Improper childcare was one backward issue that particularly concerned Pope. In a KSG annual report from 1902, Pope commented that the "mortality among Hawaiian infants and children is alarming. . . and comes largely from unintelligent care in infancy."<sup>38</sup> In her mind, "[b]y teaching the present generation to care for physical well being [sic] the alarming death rate among Hawaiians would be stayed and mothers and young girls would be taught the proper care and nurture [sic] of children."<sup>39</sup> Courses in Nursing and Hygiene attempted to address what Pope described as the "unintelligent" infant care of Hawaiians, by providing instruction on personal hygiene, care of sick children, and the sterilization of infant food.<sup>40</sup> To Pope, however, these courses were not enough. She wanted immersive training that saved lives. Her solution: a hospital for training nurses "both as a means of livelihood to Hawaiian girls and to teach them the care of young children."<sup>41</sup>

Hawaiians also needed more than training in intelligent care, Pope believed. They required help in improving their appearance, mannerisms, diet, and femininity if they were to succeed and survive in an Americanized Hawai'i. To address these concerns, Pope pressed the all-white, all-male board of trustees to construct a Senior Hall—also referred to as a Senior Cottage—

37. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: June 1905, 2, KSA.

38. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 3–4, 1902, KSA.

39. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1906–1907, 5, 1907, KSA.

40. Catalogue of the Kamehameha Schools: 1901–1902, 43–44, 1902, KSA; 1902–1903, 49–50, KSA; Register of the Kamehameha Schools 1904–1905, 59–60, 1905, KSA.

41. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 3–4, 1902, KSA.

in order to immerse fifteen selected “students of the class to be graduated” in a “real home atmosphere.” According to school records, these students lived in the cottage and received additional instruction and supervision on proper etiquette—“cultivation of good manners at table and about the house and in all social intercourse” and maintenance of “personal appearance and belongings”—as well as “constant individual training” in housekeeping, designing menus, cooking, and “nicety of detail in general housework.”<sup>42</sup>

Pope required all fourth-year students to take a year-long course in domestic science in which they received training in “general housework and the care of rooms.”<sup>43</sup> This course was in addition to the daily domestic responsibilities each student was assigned in order to keep the school functioning and costs low. During any one quarter, half of the student body was employed in the kitchen, dining room, and laundromat while the other half was engaged in other housework, such as cleaning classrooms, sewing, and campus maintenance.<sup>44</sup> Such training and direction was “very good in teaching them how to use their hands and in gaining self-control and habits of neatness and accuracy,” Pope claimed in a KSG monthly report. “However,” she cautioned, “this is not enough for the majority” of students.<sup>45</sup> They needed further training to “know how to prepare small amounts of food economically, attractively and healthfully,” to “show evidence of taste in the arrangement of household effects,” and to apply “modern ideas of sanitation” to housekeeping.<sup>46</sup> Pope believed that this increase in instruction was necessary because “[m]ost of the girls will need to earn their own living after leaving school and many of them have no homes of their own or else they are undesirable homes so the best thing for them to do is to go into other peoples’ [sic] homes to do general housework or as second girl [live-in female house servant].”<sup>47</sup> KSG education, Pope believed, paved the way for such employment.

42. Register of the Kamehameha Schools, 1913–1914, 44, KSA; Register of the Kamehameha Schools, 1921–1922, 32, KSA.

43. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 1, KSA.

44. Register of the Kamehameha Schools, 1909–1910, 79–80, KSA; Register of the Kamehameha Schools, 1921–1922, 32, KSA.

45. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 2, KSA.

46. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 2; Annual Report: 1906–1907, 3; Monthly Report: November 1912, 1, KSA.

47. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 3, KSA.

Pope was convinced that Hawaiian girls needed the extra help due to the “[s]emi-primitive conditions [that] persist[ed] in many Hawaiian homes.”<sup>48</sup> Her zeal was fueled in large part from observations she made on personal visits to the homes of graduates living across the islands. On one such trip to Waimea, Hawai‘i, and then Hanalei, Kaua‘i, in the 1890s, she explained how the “most enchanting views” of Hanalei Bay and volcanoes Hualālai and Mauna Kea on Hawai‘i starkly contrasted with the simple homes of the Native Hawaiians. “Glimpses,” she recalled, of the “homes from whence come some of the best girls at Kamehameha has ott [at] times marred the pictures Nature gave of sea and hill and sky.”<sup>49</sup> On another trip, she described how the overcrowded conditions of large families in small cottages made for “common living” that led to “irregularity in meals, food illy [sic] cooked and served with little variety.” These lifestyle habits demonstrated to Pope how Indigenous “ignorance of sanitation and hygiene prevail” thereby contributing to the high rates of “mortality among infants of Hawaiian parentage.”<sup>50</sup>

Pope believed such physical conditions not only challenged the mind and body but also “starve[d] the soul.” Students’ home life was devoid of “[p]leasant associations and refining influences” offered at KSG and considered necessary for moral and cultural development.<sup>51</sup> She found the Bible and newspapers in all homes—thus revealing that Native parents could not be “classed as illiterates”—but, she noted, in general, “good books and pictures [were] not common.” The lack of refining influences was not surprising to Pope, as she believed it was due to the irresponsible propensity of Hawaiian parents to indulge in “[m]oving picture shows, automobile rides and liquor [which] eat up a considerable portion of the weekly wage.”<sup>52</sup> Not only did such behavior demonstrate how “few of the girls learn anything about saving at home,” but it also revealed how “little of the attractiveness of life comes in the way of these girls socially, mentally or morally.”<sup>53</sup> Clearly, she concluded, they needed a different kind of education.

Without a deeper foundation in what constituted a well-ordered home and a “womanly woman,” Pope feared her students lacked the “self support”

48. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

49. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

50. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

51. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

52. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

53. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 2, KSA; Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

necessary to sustain them “beyond the confines of school life.”<sup>54</sup> She lamented that even with “Thousands of Dollars . . . spent on the education of the girls, . . . at a most susceptible [sic] age they [were] turned from this sheltering roof into conditions the most deplorable, where pitfalls and snares abound.”<sup>55</sup> Therefore, Hawaiian girls needed the Senior Hall as a safe space to build the means of self-support and self-respect that were necessary for avoiding temptation and failure. By promoting “[c]lean bodies, clean minds, clean morals,” along with “wholesome living,” appreciation of the “finer things in life,” and an “opportunity for regular domestic science instruction,” she argued, “[t]his cottage would insure a real home life for the Seniors and instruction in essentials in which Hawaiians are sadly lacking.”<sup>56</sup>

### CIVILIZED FOOD FOR UNCIVILIZED PEOPLE

For Pope, so-called proper food was one of these essentials. According to her monthly KSG report, Hawaiians suffered from a range of ailments resulting from a bland Native diet. In particular, one of the most common complaints every year from students after summer break was constipation. While alarmed, Pope was convinced this condition would be easily corrected by providing students with American-style food at her school. Indeed, Pope was so confident in the “varied and proper diet” offered at KSG that she boasted in 1913, “[w]e shall send a larger majority of students home in a more wholesome physical condition than in any year heretofore.” Her reason: “constant and careful attention . . . and consideration paid to a simple and nutritious diet.”<sup>57</sup>

By simple, Pope meant easily prepared, healthy foods. She wanted the cooking methods and recipes students learned at KSG to be easy to replicate using commonly found ingredients. Daily meal preparation typically involved boiling, baking, and stewing meats, beans, and vegetables.<sup>58</sup> Breakfast usually consisted of bread, fruit, dairy (milk or butter), and coffee. The menus for luncheon and dinner were slightly more assorted. At both meals, various

54. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: May 1910, 2, KSA; Pope, KSG Monthly Report: June 1905, 2, KSA.

55. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 3, 1902, KSA.

56. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October, 1911, 5, KSA; Pope, KSG Monthly Report: February, 1912, 1, KSA.

57. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1913, 1, KSA.

58. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 1, KSA; Perley L. Horne, Kamehameha President’s Report to the Trustees: September 1912, 12–13, KSA.

starches (rice, bread, potatoes, and poi) complemented vegetables, beans, and an animal protein (often beef at dinner). Fish, an Indigenous protein staple, was rarely served. Milk, tea, and water rounded out the drinks with all meals. She also personally reviewed and updated menus, recommending the elimination of sausages and heavy starchy foods, a reduction in canned meat and fish consumption, and inclusion of more fruit, especially cooked fruit such as stewed prunes, apples, and apricots.<sup>59</sup>

But when it came to Indigenous food staples, namely fish and poi, simple meant something else. Pope believed that appropriate nourishment required a variety of foods. In her view, regular consumption of the same staples constituted a nutritiously deficient, primitive diet that impeded healthy physical and mental growth. She believed Native Hawaiians consumed too much poi, a dish made by baking and pounding taro root and adding water until it formed a pudding-like consistency.<sup>60</sup> She acknowledged “[t]aro and poi [were] very good foods” but only “if not eaten in too large quantities.” Both staples needed to be “combined with other foods [giving] variety to their diet” in order to provide adequate stamina and nutrition.<sup>61</sup> She was not alone in her conviction. The 1904–1914 president of Kamehameha Schools, Perley L. Horne, endorsed her belief and went one step further by promising to “break [students’] dependence on poi as too much poi tends to sluggishness.” Indeed, Horne was quite confident in his ability to implement “changes in the food supply of the pupils” by highlighting his success at making “dried salt fish,” a popular item previously served several times a week, a “food of yesterday.”<sup>62</sup>

Pope and Horne’s mutual indifference toward the Native Hawaiian diet was rooted in what Hi’ilei Hobart calls a “racist logic of edibility” that originated with white settlers in the early nineteenth century who used the “language of disgust, queerness, and civility” to depict Indigenous foods, namely poi, as unpalatable and uncouth.<sup>63</sup> Such descriptors led to the

59. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 1–2, KSA.

60. Poi is a Native Hawaiian staple food made from the baked or steamed root of the kalo (taro) plant. The Indigenous method of cooking kalo involves placing the root in an imu (underground oven). Once fully cooked, kalo is then hand-pounded with small amounts of water slowly added to the mashed corm to produce either pa’i a’i (diluted mashed kalo) or poi (mashed kalo mixed with water producing a pudding-like texture).

61. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 2, KSA.

62. Horne, Kamehameha President Report: Sept. 1912, 13, KSA.

63. Hi’ilei Julia Hobart, “A ‘Queer-Looking Compound’: Race, Abjection, and the Politics of Hawaiian Poi,” *Global Food History* 3, no. 2 (July 2017): 133.



construction of “settler taste hierarchies” that ranked poi at the bottom and contributed to racialized discourses associating poi’s standing as a deficient food with Native Hawaiians as an uncivilized race. But white disdain for poi did not end there. As Hobart explains, settler contempt for the flavor, appearance, and texture of poi symbolized larger white anxieties over the persistence of Native sovereignty and cultural identity in the public sphere that threatened settler claims to land and natural resources.<sup>64</sup>

Native Hawaiians maintain deep ancestral connections to their ‘āina (land) through a creation narrative that centers on the origins of kalo, the plant from which poi is made. Unlike the Judeo-Christian narrative that focuses on human development as the centerpiece of the universe’s formation, the Hawaiian account emphasizes the sibling relationship between kalo, ‘āina, and humans.<sup>65</sup> The depth of this human relationship with kalo can also be found in the word makua, used to identify both human parents and the parent kalo plant. Indeed, the word ‘ohana (family) stems from ‘oha, the corm of the kalo plant from which cuttings are taken and replanted to create new keiki (child) plants. This integration of kalo, ‘āina, ‘ohana, and mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) forms an important foundation for understanding how kalo and poi were much more than sustenance—they were key components linking the collective mind, body, and spirit of Native Hawaiians to the land and their ancestors.<sup>66</sup>

But for white educators like Pope and Horne, the Indigenous relationship with poi represented an obstacle to KSG’s civilizing project.<sup>67</sup> Student preference for poi at all meals challenged educators’ teachings on proper nutrition, as well as their authority to dictate and control what students put into their bodies. They feared that Native obsession with poi prevented student exposure to what white educators believed were more nutritious foods and the scientific “theory of cookery” which they deemed proper and necessary for employment as house servants and fulfillment of their domestic roles as Americanized mothers.<sup>68</sup> Thus, armed with their belief in the health and

64. *Ibid.*, 134, 136–37.

65. Cynthia D. Woolley Compton, “The Making of the Ahupua‘a of Lā‘ie into a Gathering Place and Plantation: The Creation of an Alternative Space to Capitalism” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 2005), 103.

66. Hobart, “A ‘Queer-Looking Compound,” 140–41.

67. *Ibid.*, 138.

68. Kamehameha Schools Register: 1913–1914: 51, KSA.

career benefits of a varied, foreign diet, Pope and Horne utilized KSG's menus to undermine students' relationships to Indigenous foods and, in the process, their culture.

### Neatness, Prettiness, Eugenics

Pope's ability to control what students ate gave her direct influence over their physical development, but manipulating food consumption was not enough. Effectively rescuing Native Hawaiian girls, she believed, required persistent management of both their bodies, meaning how and what they did and when, and their minds, meaning what they felt and thought. To achieve such hegemony, Pope imposed a daily schedule of chores, as well as a belief in the moralizing influence of Western aesthetics of domestic arts, to construct what she perceived as the right environment, one that was well-ordered and pretty. This environment, she insisted, was necessary for instilling structure and responsibility, regulating movements, shaping social behavior, and refining morality and taste.

Pope's convictions about the power of the environment to shape social development was well accepted in the early twentieth century. As biographer Sandra Bonura explains, Pope believed in the "social settlement model" that emphasized the importance of clean, orderly spaces filled with beautiful things and inspirational ideas of self-sufficiency to promote the social regeneration of destitute and impoverished women.<sup>69</sup> She drew inspiration for this philosophy during a visit in 1897 to Hull House in Chicago. She was impressed by both the beauty of the space and the dedication of the settlement workers to using art for moral, decorative, and recreational purposes. Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, pioneers in settlement work at Hull House, placed great effort in what Judith Fryer termed as the "public utility of beauty," believing that community residents—largely Southeastern European immigrant women—fundamentally needed art as an integral part of building a better quality of life.<sup>70</sup> But the ameliorative and regenerative effects of art did not stop with individuals and their families; art could also improve society. As Addams argued, democratic culture was rooted in the belief that "products of fine design" needed to be made available to the public. "We are

69. Bonura, *Light in the Queen's Garden*, 166–67.

70. Judith Fryer, "Women and Space: The Flowering of Desire," *Prospects* 9 (1984): 202; Caitlin Anne Patterson, "Redecorating the Nation: Creating Democratic Arts from the Settlement House to the New Deal" (University of Minnesota, 1997), 14.

going, in the end to have better music and painting, better literature and a higher type of social life," she wrote.<sup>71</sup>

Pope believed she could achieve the same results with her students. By exposing them to the beautifying influence of Western art, she sought to promote a sense of good taste that they could then apply to other aspects of their lives.<sup>72</sup> But KSG was not a settlement house and Pope was not a settlement worker promoting the social mobility of white immigrants. Instead, she believed that the average Hawaiian girl was a "child of nature": primitive, immature, and incapable of taking care of herself.<sup>73</sup> Like other white maternalists, Pope saw her Indigenous students as children who needed to be "simultaneously nurtured and disciplined" as well as "gently guided and closely monitored."<sup>74</sup> She blamed the "semi-primitive" home conditions of her students for their incivility and sought to remedy their plight with a clean, orderly, and "wholesome" learning space, beautiful surroundings, and an "industrious" schedule of chores. In short, she aimed to transform Native girls from the inside out by instilling "mental discipline and moral elevation."<sup>75</sup> For KSG's students, this meant an education in "habituation" to middle-class white domesticity altered to the racist belief in the "intrinsic link between uncivilized minds and undeveloped bodies" of Native students.<sup>76</sup>

Pope believed she had the perfect civilizing formula for Indigenous girls, making proper bodies to serve in proper homes.<sup>77</sup> In her reports, she took great pride in explaining how the "average Hawaiian girl" profited from a well-organized routine that began with bathing and housework to impress upon her the importance of personal hygiene and clean living conditions. Daily chores exposed her to the civilizing benefits of modernity through which she could "learn the names of the dishes and tools used in the dining room, kitchen, and laundry." Regular professional medical care of teeth, hair, eyes, and body emphasized the necessity of maintaining good physical health and appearance. As one KSG monthly report claimed, students also enjoyed

71. Patterson, "Redecorating the Nation," 49; National Conference on Social Welfare, *Official Proceedings of the Annual Meeting: 1897* (Boston, 1897), 342–43.

72. Patterson, "Redecorating the Nation," 57.

73. Horne, President's Report: August 1910, 45; KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

74. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 112.

75. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools: The Power of Authority over Mind and Body," *American Ethnologist* 20, no. 2 (1993): 229.

76. Lomawaima, "Domesticity in the Federal Indian Schools," 228, 230.

77. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 112.

a “pleasant dining room, well cooked food, of some variety” that nourished and gave them an “appetite for new dishes.”<sup>78</sup> The classrooms, student lounge, and sleeping area were “tastefully furnished,” thereby providing an “atmosphere softened and refined, by pleasant speech, flowers, well chosen books and pictures.”<sup>79</sup> At night, each student slept in a “sweet, clean bed” “aired, made and changed by certain rules.” Even the school’s fields, “barring a superabundance of rocks, poor soil and a limited supply of water,” presented a “grassy, tree covered stretch refreshing to the eye.” They also provided an “excellent object lesson” of “[p]erfectly kept, orderly premises” for students to apply to their own homes.<sup>80</sup> Thus, by both “precept and example the beauty and necessity of cleanliness [was] made plain” to all students.<sup>81</sup>

Cleanliness was more than good hygiene according to Pope; it also represented a “new way of thinking, acting, and appearing in the world.”<sup>82</sup> As Jacobs explains, maternalists believed the “ideal female body” signified more than being “free from dirt”; it included freedom from disease and being virginal, Christian, and industrious. Cleanliness, therefore, became a broad mandate for white women educators, like Pope, to wield in their efforts to “remake, sanitize, and discipline native space, homes, gender,” bodies, and cultural practices and beliefs.<sup>83</sup>

For Pope, the idea of “disciplined bodies” was part of a broader concern regarding racial purity and the dangers of miscegenation. Pope was a strong supporter of Hawai‘i’s eugenics movement at the turn of the twentieth century and she viewed the “commingling of races,” commonly accepted in the islands, as a major reason for the “Hawaiian problem.”<sup>84</sup> She believed interracial marriage produced biologically inferior children, weakening the ability of Native Hawaiians to adopt civilizing influences necessary for success in an industrialized society. As a result, she feared that her students did “not stand a fair chance” in “competition with older races trained along industrial

78. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

79. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3–4; Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 3, KSA.

80. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1907–1908, 1, 1908, KSA.

81. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 2, KSA.

82. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 308.

83. Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon: Of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 308.

84. The Medical Society of Hawaii, “Eugenics for Parents and Teachers” (Honolulu, 1915); Pope, “Gates of Kamehameha,” 4.

lines for generations.”<sup>85</sup> Pope lamented how her “primitive girls are the prey of the virile” and unable to receive “‘fair play’ in the game of life.” To help her students succeed (and survive), she advocated lessons on the “proper” attributes when selecting a mate, how to avoid “temptations to an evil life,” and the dangers of “marriage to the unfit.”<sup>86</sup> Armed with such information, she believed, Hawaiian girls would then be ready to guide and produce mentally and physically stronger generations of Indigenous children, “better fitted for competition.”<sup>87</sup>

Pope was not the only eugenicist at Kamehameha. Uldrick Thompson, vice-principal (1913–1914) of Kamehameha Schools (boys and girls), shared Pope’s concerns about racial mingling and the importance of properly educating Hawaiian students on making racially healthy choices in marriage and lifestyle. Although he appreciated the positive influences of education and “healthful surroundings,” Thompson, like Pope, ultimately believed nature trumped nurture. In lectures to Native students, he offered information on selective mating and birth control to prevent the propagation of the “worst stock” among them. But, in his public writings, he went further, supporting the reinstatement of a bill in the territorial legislature that supported reproductive intervention for those individuals “plainly unfit to reproduce humans,” suggesting that forced sterilization could be necessary in certain instances.<sup>88</sup>

Pope’s writings reveal she never shared Thompson’s view on sterilization. Instead, she subscribed to eliminating environmental and cultural contagions responsible for social malaise and instability through instruction of what she—a white settler, college educated, middle-class woman—considered acceptable and unacceptable social behavior and gender norms. While a vocal supporter of nurture over nature, in reality, Pope’s eugenic thinking framed Native Hawaiians as suffering from racial deterioration that stemmed from their commingling with other races. Her support of eugenics provided her not so much with a new vocabulary as with what Stoler has called a “new biological idiom” of “colonial morality” that she used to ground her racial and moral assumptions about KSG’s instruction in domesticity, subservience, and

85. “Older races” were commonly understood to be Chinese and Japanese immigrants. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

86. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1912, 1, KSA.

87. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

88. C. K. Szego, “The Sound of Rocks Aquiver?: Composing Racial Ambivalence in Territorial Hawaii,” *Journal of American Folklore* 123, no. 487 (2010): 45–47.

vocational training. Being able to define what was acceptable or unacceptable allowed Pope the power to dictate to her students what constituted a valuable life and frame the instruction at KSG as the most effective means for achieving it.<sup>89</sup>

Fulfilling this strategy, however, would take more than chores and instruction in cleanliness and beauty. Pope felt that Native girls needed to be constantly surveilled and, when necessary, disciplined to ensure they acted, looked, and thought morally, especially beyond the school walls. In her mind, if students failed to behave properly in school, they would surely flunk in life. Therefore, Pope's challenge was finding ways to guarantee that her students practiced what she preached—clean living and clean minds.

### Peer Police, Rigid Routines, and Regulated R&R

Pope's belief in the power of the environment to mold what she perceived as civilized behavior represented the cornerstone of her educational philosophy. But, while she regularly expounded on womanly virtues, in practice, she struggled to transform her vision into policies and procedures that inspired her students to become servants of civilization.<sup>90</sup> She could control what food her students ate, what surroundings they saw, where they were on campus, and what curricular and extracurricular content they encountered. She also could observe and confirm student conformity to school rules through exams, hall monitoring, and room inspections. Despite it all, however, Pope remained displeased with her students' performance and behavior. She complained that most students were not civilizing fast *enough*, and she especially worried about what they did during their unsupervised moments—in their rooms late at night, in the back of classrooms and buildings, and during summer vacation and holidays.

Pope's concerns were part of her larger fear that KSG was unsuccessful. She suspected that many students continued to resist and reject her vision and, in spaces beyond her view, they continued to think, act, and behave improperly.<sup>91</sup> She wanted to believe they internalized her domestic training,

89. Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, 62–64.

90. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 326.

91. Pope does not provide examples of systemic student defiance. But she describes several instances of “carelessness” with dishes, general “disobedience,” fines for defacing of books, the need for greater supervision in the kitchen, and “lazy” weeding, suggesting the existence of a persistent, low-level form of student resistance.

embraced their pretty learning environment, and adored their benevolent teachers. But, ironically, her infantilization of Native Hawaiians convinced her they were a primitive people incapable of achieving her standards of cultural refinement, decency, and domesticity as well as telling the truth. While frustrated, she was explicit that she had not given up.

In her reports, Pope regularly mixed in her disappointment that students failed to elevate and civilize fast enough with glimmers of progress and hope demonstrating KSG was doing all it could. In 1898, she commented that “[w]e fall short of our ideal at Kamehameha but there are earnest efforts made to carry out the aims of the school, to train body, heart, and mind.”<sup>92</sup> Ten years later, in 1908, she observed, “[i]f progress is marked by slow forward movement then there needs [sic] be a feeling of encouragement at the Girls School.”<sup>93</sup> Student success continued to be just over the horizon three years later as she explained, the “desire ‘to do’ and ‘to be’ are apparent and attest to the fact that we are moving on toward higher standards of scholarship and living.”<sup>94</sup> Pope admitted that remaining positive in the face of constant “discouragements and failures” of students “struggling upward toward a higher plane of thought and living” was difficult. But she had reason to be optimistic. The “hearts and consciences of the faithful teachers” who were “constantly striving for the upbuilding of morals and manners” to “slowly but steadily” improve students’ character affirmed her hope that Native girls could still be saved.<sup>95</sup>

Faithful teachers and hope, however, would not be enough. Pope realized that, to foster moral awareness and self-regulation in students she would need a systematic monitoring of their bodies. As she put it, “[t]he careless, joyous, happy go lucky nature of the Hawaiian requires constant and consistent restraint to bring about any routine of order or correctness in deportment.”<sup>96</sup> But combatting bad habits would not be easy. When it came to lying and stealing, Pope lamented, “Hawaiians are prone to believe that the sin is in the finding out of the offence [sic], not in the misdemeanor itself.”<sup>97</sup> She was shocked to see this indifference toward honesty

92. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

93. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1907–1908, 1, 1908, KSA.

94. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: May 1911, 3, KSA.

95. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: January 11, 3, KSA.

96. *Ibid.*

97. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1906–1907, 2, 1906, KSA.

embedded within the “standpoint of many of the girls” who failed to appreciate the “malicious deception” behind “gossiping and tale bearing” and “pilfering.”<sup>98</sup> This assessment reinforced Pope’s belief that her students needed structure—strict routines, firm discipline, and constant accountability—to ensure they complied with school rules and maintained proper conduct at all times. Without such a comprehensive approach, she feared, her students would never civilize and, instead, remain governed by their innate childishness and temperamental nature thereby inhibiting their chances for employment.

But Pope shied away from aggressive, confrontational tactics to achieve results. She found that harsh punitive measures, such as the corporal punishment and incarceration used at Indian boarding schools, were ineffective as they did “not give the desired result and tend[ed] to accentuate the natural stubbornness of the Hawaiians.”<sup>99</sup> Instead, as “Hawaiians are pleasure loving,” she realized a more “effective punishment” was in “denying privileges and participation in entertainments.” In a monthly report, she explained the school’s “system of discredits,” in which students received “marks” for various offenses ranging from “untidiness, carelessness about work; . . . laxity in deportment, rudeness [and] disobedience” to “prevarication, [and] theft.” After six marks, an offender lost her regular monthly holiday and other privileges.<sup>100</sup>

To enforce this system, Pope created honor societies to monitor student behavior beyond her view and promote a culture of conformity and accountability toward school rules. While these societies were promoted as weekly peer-led forums—where students discussed and reflected on topics related to proper behavior—in reality, they resembled kangaroo courts where students spied on other students throughout the week and reported their actions and names to Pope, who attended each meeting. The League of Honor was one such student group. Pope supervised this voluntary body of thirty members, which met once a week to discuss “discipline, morals, manners, and the Social life of the school.” The goal of these weekly meetings was to “develop and to quicken a sense of honor and loyalty; to form an esprit de corps . . . and be the influence for right and a power for good in the school.” She noted that

98. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: January 1911, 2–3, KSA.

99. Pope, KSG Annual Report: May 1909, 2, KSA.

100. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1911, 2, KSA.



there had been a “fair degree of success, and many individuals have been influenced by this League.” Those students deemed influenced had their names added to the Roll of Honor that was posted each month as an “incentive to good behavior.”<sup>101</sup>

In addition to the League of Honor, the Kahui Kokua, or advisory council, met every Sunday to “confer with the principal on matters pertaining to the development of the school.”<sup>102</sup> This regularly organized body was made up of seniors, an elected student representative from each grade, and all nine dining room student lunas (overseers). Though similar in intention to the League of Honor, the council was a more formal, deliberative body with an elected president and secretary who “brought valuable and naive [sic] interrogations upon the everyday life of the school.”<sup>103</sup> Topics ranged widely, from the “Use and Abuse of Slang,” “Character Building,” the “Value of a Roll of Honor in the School,” and “Table Manners” to “Profitable subjects to talk about at the table,” “Dress,” “Truth,” and “Room Decorations.” These subjects, however, were not arbitrarily selected but culled from student reports “made on behavior in the dining-room, [and] about the house and grounds.” Pope noted that “[g]ood has resulted from these conferences” as student observations led to “suggestions . . . for improvement in manners and morals” and promoted a “better understanding . . . between faculty and pupils.”<sup>104</sup>

While these forms of surveillance and punishment helped with enforcement, the most effective and efficient means of controlling students’ behavior was to keep them busy, all day every day. As an “excellent preserver of good order and good spirits and safe guard [against] serious correction,” Pope believed a constant “[v]ariety of work [and] change of occupation” created “sufficient activity to keep the pupils engaged in wholesome ways.”<sup>105</sup> According to a KSG report from the 1901–02 academic year, a typical schedule ran “from six in the morning until nine [in] the evening,” reassuring her that she exhausted “pretty largely all thought of insubordination or mischief” in students.<sup>106</sup> A schedule from 1911 ran as follows:

101. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: May 1910, 1–2, KSA.

102. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: January 1911, 2, KSA.

103. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1911, 1, KSA.

104. Pope, KSG Annual Report: May 1909, 2, KSA.

105. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: January 1911, 1; May 1911, 1, KSA.

106. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 2, 1902, KSA.

a.m.

6:00	Rising bell. Cooks at work.
6:00–6:30	Beds aired. Room work in general.
6:30–7:00	General housework. Breakfast force at work.
7:00	Morning devotions. Breakfast.
7:30–8:45	Beds made. General housework. Breakfast force at work.
8:45	Inspection of rooms by teachers. Girls in rooms.
8:00–12:00	Dressmaking.
9:00–12:00	Academic work. Sewing. Typing (special).

p.m.

12:00–12:30	Cooks and Luncheon force at work.
12:30–1:00	Luncheon.
1:00–2:00	Luncheon force at work.
1:00–1:30	Salesmanship class.
2:00–2:30	Academic work.
2:00–3:00	Sewing.
2:00–4:00	Dressmaking. Typing (special)
2:30–4:00	Choral.
4:00–5:00	Athletics,—tennis, basketball, etc.
4:45–5:45	Cooking Class.
5:15–5:45	Dinner force at work.
6:15–7:10	“ “ “ “
7:00–7:30	Special class in Arithmetic, English, Spelling
7:10–8:30	Study hour.
8:30–8:45	Study of Sunday-school lessons. Evening devotions.
8:45–9:10	Recreation Period.
9:10–	Retiring bell.
9:15–	Lights out. <sup>107</sup>

107. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1911, I, KSA.

Despite the daily rigor, Pope did not believe in all work and no play. She understood the grueling nature of the day-to-day schedule and the important benefits of rest and relaxation for reinvigorating the mind, body, and spirit. She acknowledged the “[h]eavy burdens . . . placed upon young shoulders in the ‘day’s work,’” noting how the “routine of the house; meals, general housework and laundry work claim much time in addition to school work, and play is too much in the background.”<sup>108</sup> She argued that “[e]very child should play and play every day” and cited the “testimony of the teachers” that “pupils resumed class room work with more mental vigor” following physical exertion.<sup>109</sup> For example, “Tennis, basket-ball, croquet, archery and a field day devoted to a diversity of sports [brought] physical relaxation, and proper exercises for all grades.” Such activity on a regular basis “rob[bed] discipline of its terrors, by giving relief . . . to youthful spirits full of life and vigor.”<sup>110</sup>

But when it came to free time and leisure, fun needed to be productive, and Pope did not always trust her students to make good choices. Believing that “every Hawaiian, young and old, is a child, and loves diversion,” she considered her students incapable of choosing pursuits indicative of true womanhood. She pointed to the “large numbers of these native people with their brood of little ones nightly at the cheap amusement places, moving pictures, etc.” as evidence of their child-like minds and taste for simple, mindless entertainment.<sup>111</sup> If left on their own, she feared students would misuse their time on trivial activities or, worse, engage in immoral behavior. What her students needed was firm advice and clear examples of how best to use their free time in a safe, observable space to offset their so-called primitive inclinations.

Pope believed leisure time needed to be monitored to ensure effective practice of moral behavior. “In many schools,” she noted, “‘play’ is taken account of and is under a trained director.”<sup>112</sup> As KSG had no such director, Pope assumed the role and implemented activities and programs she believed were beneficial for cultivating proper social behavior and practices. As a result, activities such as picnics, Saturday evening recreation, Tuesday evening public talks, opera performances, Monday monthly holidays, and folk dancing dominated the social scene for KSG students.

108. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1912, 5, KSA.

109. *Ibid.*, Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1912, 4, KSA.

110. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1907–1908, 4, 1908, KSA.

111. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: October 1912, 5, KSA.

112. *Ibid.*

Pope was particularly excited about the positive impact of monthly concerts and opera excursions. The “high class music . . . created an atmosphere that carried these young people away from trivialities into a realm of art and beauty.” As a result, “[n]either lessons nor work have suffered” and, in fact, a “ticket to the Opera [has] meant better lessons and examination tests.” These trips reassured Pope that, despite the “discouragements that come, (and they are not a few)” from working with primitive girls, immersing them in art and beauty produced tangible “proofs [sic] of higher standards and appreciation of good things.”<sup>113</sup>

Despite these glimmers of progress, no activity caused Pope more concern than KSG’s monthly Monday holiday, when she turned “117 Hawaiian girls free on the streets of Honolulu” from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to journey around the city unchaperoned. Rather than express cautious optimism in her students, she voiced misgivings about her students’ ability to conduct themselves as proper and respectable young women. She worried about the impressions they received from the “moving picture shows, on the street, in some homes, in rendezvous with boy friends, etc., etc.” none of which made for “improvement and progress.” Unsurprisingly, she questioned the value of these free days and, before each holiday, writing that she offered “many talks and much advice” about appropriate places to go and things to do.<sup>114</sup> Her suggestions ranged from art exhibitions and the Honolulu Library, to the Bishop Museum, each of which students seemed to ignore.

While regularly frustrated and disappointed with her students’ progress, Pope knew the limits of her influence. She conceded that “constant protection and surveillance” were counterproductive for fostering “self-reliance and discrimination if they ever [were to] stand on their own merits” and, therefore, “some freedom must be given for this development.”<sup>115</sup> She also begrudgingly acknowledged that many students were drawn to car rides, moving picture shows, and other cheap forms of entertainment because few places of so much interest existed for students to visit. But, even knowing the importance of letting students build self-reliance on their own, Pope still could not relinquish control. She remained convinced that her girls still needed to be monitored, whether they were in school or not.

113. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: March 1913, 2, KSA.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid.

## ALUMNAE ROADSHOW

If alumnae believed they had seen the last of Pope once they left KSG, they were in for a surprise. Over the course of her career, she made several formal visits to the residences of alumnae and dropouts to investigate and document their life status. Officially, these calls were made for the “purpose of showing an interest in former pupils and of knowing the real condition of the home life and of the ones who are working for a livelihood.”<sup>116</sup> But her intentions for staying in touch were hardly altruistic. Her trips were fact-finding missions meant to accumulate information on individual girls so as to understand the success or failure of KSG’s training as applied in the real world. She gathered data on their homes, employment situations, families, marital status, material wealth, home décor, and physical appearance to compile a statistical record that she cross-referenced with student information to create a comprehensive and detailed survey of every girl.<sup>117</sup>

Overall, Pope believed the data “brought much food for reflection and courage for the future.”<sup>118</sup> She noted that:

Home conditions are certainly improving. A larger number are owning their own homes and improving them. Care and taste are shown in the houses and grounds. Children are more carefully nurtured. Many who live in Honolulu use gas stoves in their kitchens [as opposed to outdoor kerosene stoves].<sup>119</sup>

In Pope’s mind, these improvements confirmed she knew what she was doing. She wrote in a 1902 report that the “individual and intimate acquaintance of [students’] homes and conditions” she acquired from her trips provided “accurate knowledge to deal with and a renewed zeal” for rescuing Hawaiian girls.<sup>120</sup> But closer examination of Pope’s data and reports reveal a more complicated picture. She learned that a large majority of her former students faced daily struggles to actualize their training, for “positions that insure sufficient income, for decent living, [were] difficult to find.”<sup>121</sup> On one trip to Kaua‘i in 1911, she commented, “[a]s a whole, all were doing well” but soon admitted “some have not quite fulfilled their promise on leaving

116. Pope, KSG Annual Report: May 1909, 7, KSA.

117. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 3, 1902.

118. Pope, KSG Annual Report: May 1910, 8, KSA.

119. Pope, KSG Annual Report: May 1909, 8, KSA.

120. Ibid.

121. Pope, KSG Annual Report: 1901–1902, 3, 1902, KSA; Pope, Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

school.”<sup>122</sup> Her trip to the Big Island of Hawai‘i two years later produced similar findings. Homes, “for the most part,” she wrote, were “improving in a marked degree.” Most of her former students were “removed from sleeping on the floor and from cooking in the open in kerosene tins” and the “kitchens and bedrooms were neat and comfortable.” At homes where she dined, meals were “served in courses” and the food was “well cooked” and “appetizing.” However, concerns remained. “Pictures were rarely well chosen or hung well.” She also worried about “[o]verfurnishing,” and noted that “cheap velvet or plush couches, ornate frames for pictures and other like atrocities” filled the décor of many homes.<sup>123</sup> More shocking to her, some students appeared to have rejected her schooling and, instead, had chosen to return to traditional ways. On Kaua‘i, she found “one still living in a grass hut” while two on the Big Island had “reverted to [a] primitive type” of living.<sup>124</sup>

Despite mixed results, Pope remained unshaken. To her, the data were clear: KSG policies and practices worked and failure resulted from students’ innate flaws and upbringing. Observations from her inspection tour of a Hawaiian village in Waiohinu in the southern part of the Big Island reinforced this belief. She witnessed how “little incentive for effort” there was “for the lazy Hawaiian” as many simply “loafed and lived in a happy go lucky fashion” with no interest in “breaking away from the old and adjusting to the new.” As a result, she feared for her “sweet and lovable girls [who] with a strong desire to make the most of their training” would return to degenerate surroundings and dysfunctional families.<sup>125</sup> Unfortunately, while some would “stand like martyrs,” she noted, “many drift with the tide” whose “currents are maelstroms” challenging their training and threatening their morals.<sup>126</sup> Still, Pope continued to believe that KSG was the answer—her school was a “hive, a workshop, for a definite business; the making of Hawaiian girls ‘fit’ for life.”<sup>127</sup>

## CONCLUSION

On July 14 1914, Pope suddenly passed away in Chicago at the age of fifty-two. Her health had been failing in recent years, and she had taken a summer trip to

122. She met with twenty-seven former pupils who were neither employed nor married. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1911, 2–3, KSA.

123. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

124. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: November 1911, 4; Pope, KSG Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

125. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: April 1913, 3, KSA.

126. Pope, “Within and Without the Gates of Kamehameha,” 3.

127. Pope, KSG Monthly Report: September 1913, 2, KSA.

the continent to visit family and relax in an effort to avoid complications related to hypertension. Her death was shocking to all who knew her and grief was widespread. Pope's death "caused a wail from island to island" that "spanned class and culture." Though devastated, her friends, family, and colleagues implored the "tear-stained faces of the grief-stricken young women" to remember her as their "mother who desired all good things for her children" and carry her spirit onward.<sup>128</sup> Several apparently heeded the call. In 1919, members of the KSG Alumnae Association created the "Ida Pope Memorial Building Fund" in an effort to raise \$50,000 for the construction of a "home for Hawaiian girls" pursuing higher educational opportunities in Honolulu.<sup>129</sup> Four years later, the association converted the fund to a foundation supporting higher education scholarships for girls of Hawaiian blood.<sup>130</sup> In the century since her passing, the Ida M. Pope Memorial Scholarship continues to support Hawaiian female students pursuing degrees in the fields of health, science, mathematics, social work, and education.<sup>131</sup> As the *Maui News* reported soon after her death, the Alumnae Association dedicated the fund in Pope's name to honor her legacy as a woman who gave her all to "make this world a better place to live in" and for her "interest in Hawaiian girls and ability to manage them."<sup>132</sup>

We cannot really know from such public pronouncements the extent of student enthusiasm towards Pope and her efforts at KSG. Much of what is understood of the Native response to the passing of Pope has been mediated through English-language publications that include reflections from her friends, family, and colleagues. Little evidence exists from student-generated sources to corroborate this sentiment, and the few student accounts that provide positive remembrances were either recorded decades later or were carefully selected and entered into official KSG reports and newsletters. Also, Hawaiian-language newspapers are silent on both the passing of Pope and any impact she may have had on Native Hawaiian female education.

This disparity in the sources does not imply students and their families completely opposed or resisted their schooling. Rather, their response to Pope

128. Bonura, *Light in the Queen's Garden*, 244–46, 249, 242–53.

129. "Good Hawaiian Music Will Be a Feature of Concert and Dance," *The Maui News*, July 29, 1921, 2.

130. "Ida Pope Fund Will Supply Scholarships for Hawaiian Girls," *The Honolulu Advertiser*, June 29, 1923, 1.

131. Hawai'i Community Foundation website, listing for Ida M. Pope Memorial Scholarship Fund, [https://hcf.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com/scholarx\\_scholarshipsearch.aspx](https://hcf.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com/scholarx_scholarshipsearch.aspx), accessed November 18, 2022.

132. "Good Hawaiian Music Will Be a Feature."

and her leadership at KSG resembled the complex range of experiences and emotions of Native Hawaiian students in the public schools during the territorial period that included active resistance, resigned engagement, and enthusiastic participation.<sup>133</sup> However, more studies are needed to better understand KSG student views on their educational experiences.

In providing an intimate home-like environment, Pope believed she was empowering young Native girls by giving them what she thought they failed to receive at home: proper care and useful skills. As a surrogate mother, she may have developed genuine relationships of affection with a number of students. But KSG was neither a benevolent nor benign institution. “Mama Pope” sought to profoundly change how her Hawaiian students appeared, behaved, and believed in order to acculturate them to a new Americanized Hawai‘i. This process involved infantilizing her students in order to develop a parent-child relationship that established her as a special guardian of what she perceived as a deprived and degraded race. In doing so, she failed to see the full humanity of her students and remained confident she knew what was best for them. Despite her idealistic rhetoric of uplift, she was not interested in restoring the Hawaiian nation, advancing Native social mobility, challenging systemic inequality and white supremacy, or listening to what Native Hawaiians wanted or needed from their education. Instead, her educational philosophy was based on ideas of Hawaiian inferiority and white saviorhood, ideas that were implemented at KSG through instruction and training that supported the islands’ industrial and service economy and promoted white middle-class homemaking and mothering in an attempt to erase her students’ Indigenous identities. Through these efforts, and through her refusal to find value in Indigenous ways of life, Pope was an agent of the larger process of Americanization in Hawai‘i.

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133. Derek Taira, “Embracing Education and Contesting Americanization: A Reexamination of Native Hawaiian Student Engagement in Territorial Hawai‘i’s Public Schools, 1920–1940,” *History of Education Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2018): 361–91.