Interracialism: The Ideological Transformation of Hawaii’s Working Class

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A normative desire for interracialism undergirds and structures the sociology of race. However, focusing almost exclusively on racial divisions and conflicts, the sociology of race rarely subjects interracialism to explicit analysis. One consequence of this somewhat peculiar situation is that interracialism is understood negatively, as deracialization. Even the few studies that appear to redress this negativity through explicit analysis reproduce it. Prototypically, there has long been a scholarly consensus that Hawaii’s interracial working-class movement of the late 1930s and 1940s presupposed deracialization: that a “colorblind” class ideology, advanced by the left-led International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union, effaced racial divisions. Refuting this interpretation, this paper demonstrates that a deracializing class ideology was not straightforwardly adopted by Hawaii’s racially divided workers. Instead, a leftist ideology of class served as the initial pivot for an affirmative transformation of race, producing an interracial ideology that rearticulated, rather than disarticulated, race and class. The paper concludes with several implications of reconceptualizing interracialism affirmatively.

The sociology of race is quiet, nearly silent, on the concept of interracialism, which I define as the ideology and practice of forming a political community across extant racial boundaries.\(^1\) Instead, the sociology of race speaks almost exclusively to racial divisions and conflicts.

Despite this near silence, however, interracialism has long been present in and indispensable to the sociology of race. Since the decline of biologistic theories, a commonly shared but largely unspoken assumption has underpinned most explanations of racial divisions and conflicts: the normative desirability of interracialism. A pervasive shadow presence, interracialism functions as the analytically absent but “epistemologically structuring desire” (Kennedy and Galtz 1996: 437). That is, the sociology of race maintains its explicit focus on racial divisions and conflicts, while bracketing interracialism as

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\(^1\) By ideology, I mean simply a power-implicated discourse. I define political community as a social collectivity enmeshed and engaged in relations of power.

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something implicitly desired but seldom analyzed. As a consequence, interracialism is understood negatively: It is understood as necessitating deracialization. In a world divided by race, interracialism is what happens when, and only when, race lessens in salience. Even the few studies that appear to redress this negativity through explicit analysis reproduce it.

In this context, Hawaii’s working class provides a compelling case. It boasts a history of durable interracialism, formed in the late 1930s and 1940s, that followed a lengthy period of entrenched racial divisions. Moreover, the existing scholarship on this history mirrors the racially negative view of interracialism in the sociology of race. Bringing interracialism and its unquestioned theoretical link to deracialization under scrutiny and reconsideration, a detailed analysis could therefore produce findings with relevance far beyond this particular case.

Through such an analysis of Hawaii’s working class, this paper proposes a racially affirmative, or positive, view of interracialism, conceptualizing it as a transformation of racial meanings and practices rather than their necessary negation. First, I discuss and critique the racially negative presence of interracialism in the sociology of race, in general, and in the study of Hawaii’s working class, in particular. On theoretical and empirical grounds, I argue for a racially affirmative view of interracialism. Second, I provide a brief account of the racial divisions among workers in prewar Hawai‘i, which preceded interracialism. Third, I describe the changing political opportunities and resources in and through which Hawaii’s working-class interracialism developed. Fourth, I specify the ideological transformation in relation to race and class—the rearticulation of race and class—that characterized Hawaii’s working-class interracialism. Finally, this paper concludes with several implications of reconceptualizing interracialism affirmatively.

THE RACIALLY NEGATIVE PRESENCE OF INTERRACIALISM IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF RACE

In The Bridge over the Racial Divide, Wilson (1999) aims to deal squarely with interracialism, analyzing and advocating the formation of interracial political communities mobilized against the ever-growing economic inequality in the United States. Because racial ideology distorts “the real sources of problems” (p. 39), building interracial coalitions requires “an adequate understanding of the social, economic, and political conditions that cause racial ideology either to flourish or subside” (p. 7). Recognizing and acting upon the real, “race-neutral” sources of inequality are proposed as the keys to interracialism. In other words, interracialism entails deracialization.

Wilson (1999) is hardly alone, although he is notably more explicit than most. Ever since the eclipse of biologistic theories of race by assimilationist theories, the same two notions concerning interracialism evident in Wilson (1999) have held sway in the sociology of race: that interracialism is desirable and that it requires a retraction of race—in significance, if not in toto.

From the early decades of the twentieth century, assimilationist theorists constructed teleological explanations in which racial and ethnic conflicts and differences gave way inexorably to assimilation. As Park ([1926] 1950) memorably wrote, “The race relations cycle which takes the form, to state it abstractly, of contacts, competition, accommodation and eventual assimilation, is apparently progressive and irreversible” (p. 150). Nearly a half-century later, Glazer (1971) still asserted the soundness of the assimilationist framework, even proposing to cast African Americans as the latest ethnic group.

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2 As the obverse of Omi and Winant’s (1986: 64) definition of racialization, deracialization refers to the retraction, or negation, of racial meaning from a previously racially classified relationship, practice, or group. If deracialization were to obtain, one would expect to find, at minimum, decreasing references to race in relation to a particular relationship, practice, or group being analyzed.

3 Internal colonialism presents a major exception to this claim (Barrera 1979; Blauner 1969, 1972; Moore 1970). Although internal colonialism, like the other major theoretical frameworks, is largely silent on the concept of interracialism, this silence is not paired with a desire for interracialism.
in the immigration saga of assimilation. Based “almost always [on] an implicit, if not always precisely stated, hypothesis that trends will show a moderation of differences between ethnic populations” (Hirschman 1983:412; also see Nieminen 1997), many scholars proceeded productively within a broadly assimilationist approach into the 1980s and 1990s (Farley and Frey 1994; Jaynes and Williams 1989; Schuman et al. 1997).

A basic assumption of assimilationism is the normative desirability of assimilation, which is, in essence, the formation of a unified nation unstratified and undivided by race and ethnicity. In other words, a single, interracial political community coterminous with the nation (Anderson 1991). And the path toward its realization is an evolutionary—though, at times, conflictual—process of deracialization through which all within a nation would become raceless in their outlook and actions, save for politically amorphous celebrations of multiculturalism and diversity.

Although having developed in contradistinction to the assimilationist framework, the more conflict-based approaches to race share similar assumptions concerning interracialism. A leading conflict-based alternative to assimilationism has been Marxism, of which there have been two general variants.4 Racism is conceptualized either as an ideological epiphenomenon of the capitalists’ efforts at dividing and weakening the working class (Cox 1948 [1970]; Reich 1981; Szymanski 1981; Wilson 1978) or as an ideological epiphenomenon of higher-paid labor’s efforts at “prevent[ing] undercutting” by cheaper labor in a “split labor market” (Bonacich 1972:547, 1975, 1976; Boswell and Jorjani 1988; Wilson 1978). While retaining the centrality of class dynamics based on material interests (Bonilla-Silva 1997), others extend the preceding approaches by incorporating the state and the capitalist world-system (Boswell 1986; Boswell and Brown 1995; Burawoy 1981; Cheng and Bonacich 1984; Geschwender 1983, 1987; Smith et al. 1988; Wallerstein 1991a, 1991b).

Like their assimilationist counterparts, these Marxist analyses share a largely unspoken desire for interracialism; a major difference is that the interracial political community to which Marxists aspire is not a unified nation but a unified working class in struggle against capital. Also like the assimilationists, the implicit implication is that interracialism is brought about by deracialization, as workers get beyond race and organize around their common class interests.5

This implication is made explicit in the work of Boswell, Brown, and Brueggemann. Combining the split labor market approach to race and the political process approach to collective action, they identify the “necessary and sufficient” conditions for the development of working-class interracialism: an easing of split labor market conditions, a favorable political context, and an institutionalized union policy of racial inclusiveness (Brueggemann 1994:364; also see Boswell and Brown 1995; Brown and Brueggemann 1997; Brueggemann and Boswell 1998). Although the split labor market theory does not adequately explain the working-class racial divisions of prewar Hawai‘i, and therefore provides a poor basis for explaining subsequent working-class interracialism (Jung 1999b), I agree that a favorable political context and a union policy of racial inclusiveness figured importantly.6 But, intended to neither confirm nor refute the preceding studies, this paper focuses principally on what they do not examine.

Like Wilson (1999), the studies by Boswell, Brown, and Brueggemann recognize the vast void in studying interracialism explicitly. But also like Wilson (1999), their willingness to address interracialism head-on steers them back to maintaining a racially negative conceptualization of it. Interracial working-class solidarity, according

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4 Although not discussed here, there is a long and varied tradition of non-Marxist sociology of race premised on interest-based conflicts (e.g., Blalock 1967; Blumer 1958; Bonilla-Silva 1997; Olzak 1992; van den Berghe 1967; Wilson 1973).

5 For a similar assessment of labor historiography, see Hill (1996).

6 Even usually enthusiastic exponents of the split labor market theory do not find it an apt approach for pre-statehood Hawai‘i (Bonacich 1984; Liu 1985).
to Brueggemann and Boswell (1998), “requires that both cheap and higher priced labor give primacy to long-term, class-based interests” (p. 438), abandoning or holding in abeyance their short-term, race-based interests. Not surprisingly, given their ties to the split labor market and the political process theories, both of which have been criticized for their objectivist biases (Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Omi and Winant 1994), the studies’ account of the ideological dimension of interracialism remains underdeveloped: Racial ideologies arise when economic competition among workers corresponds to extant racial boundaries but do not figure centrally in structuring interracialism.

Labor history also offers no clear theoretical help in rethinking interracialism. The study of interracialism, and race generally, in labor history was long premised on a dichotomous understanding of race and class that privileged the latter. More recently, labor historians sought to move beyond this understanding, although the merits of this effort remain hotly debated in the field. Regardless, even a sympathetic reviewer notes that the recent scholarship on interracial unionism, particularly with regard to the CIO unions, has focused too narrowly on “variants of the ‘how racist/racially egalitarian were [the unions]?’ question” (Arnesen 1998:156), largely overlooking the related, less metrical “how” problem of explaining the ideological formation of interracialism and the role of race in it.

Perhaps we should not view the racially negative conceptualization of interracialism problematically. After all, that forming a political community across extant racial boundaries would require deracialization seems commonsensical. Certainly, the scholarship on Hawaii’s working class provides little reason to gainsay this commonsense: There has long been a consensus that the interracial working-class movement of the late 1930s and 1940s, mobilized through the left-led International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU), presupposed deracialization. Seeing the historically unprecedented interracialism among the workers not as a phenomenon needing explicit analytical attention but as part of a general postwar trend toward racial democracy in Hawai‘i, the more liberal, assimilationist studies presume, but do not to give a clear account of, the deracialization of the working-class (Brooks 1952; Daws 1968; Kuykendall and Day 1961; Larrowe 1972; Wills 1954; Zalburg 1979). The more Marxist-oriented studies tend to focus on the ILWU, casting it—most pivotally its leftist leadership—in the role of the vanguard of the proletariat (Beechert 1984, 1985; Geschwender 1981, 1982; Geschwender and Levine 1983, 1986; Kent 1983; Levine and Geschwender 1981; MacLennan 1979): “Constantly presenting a class analysis in vivid terms” to the workers, the ILWU appears in these explanations as the principal catalyst in pushing the workers away from racial consciousness and toward class consciousness (Geschwender 1981:200; also see Beechert 1983:169).9

There are two major weaknesses, one empirical and one theoretical, to the consensus concerning the deracialized view of interracialism that prevails in studies of Hawaii’s workers and in the sociology of race. First, comparing the scholarship on Hawaii’s workers against the historical evidence, it is apparent that a critical question has gone unasked: Did race in fact recede in significance for the workers as they forged an interracial solidarity? Extant scholarship assumes that race receded in inverse relationship to the swift success of the working-class movement, but the assumption turns out to have little empirical foundation. If Hawaii’s working-class interracialism was predicated on deracialization, should race not have faded from the workers’ discourses and prac-

7 One of their necessary factors, institutionalized union policy of racial inclusiveness, hints at the importance of workers’ ideology without fully analyzing it as such.


9 Takaki (1983, 1990) and Liu (1985) assert a similar argument. However, unlike others they date the making of Hawaii’s interracial working class much earlier—to the sugar strike of 1920.
tices? In this paper, I demonstrate that race did not fade but instead took on altered meanings and practices.

Second, theoretical developments on ideology and social change over the past few decades also cast serious doubt on deracialization as the apposite conceptual imagery for interracialism. Deracialization, whether gradual or sudden, implies a straightforward process toward an absence or insignificance of race. In the case of Hawaii’s working-class interracialism, the supposed deracialization of the class struggle entailed a seemingly straightforward retreat of racial ideology, which was actuated by a likewise straightforward diffusion of a “color-blind”—and hence more apt or “true”—class ideology advanced by the radical ILWU leadership. Accordingly, the workers’ new class ideology bore ostensibly little or no relation to their old racial ones.

But, more mindful of the continuities, as well as the discontinuities, in social change, social theorists argue variously against such clear-cut conceptual breaks in history, “because the concepts by which experience is organized and communicated proceed from the received cultural scheme” (Sahlins 1985:151; also see Bourdieu 1977, 1990; Calhoun 1983; Giddens 1984; Ortner 1984; Sahlins 1981; Sewell 1992). Labor historians and sociologists of class, among others, bear out this notion empirically, finding that workers’ ideologies and practices are not woven out of whole cloth but from threads of preexisting ones (Calhoun 1982; Griffin and Korstad 1995; Kelley 1990; Roediger 1991; Sewell 1980; Steinberg 1991; E. Thompson 1963). Some also show, albeit not in relation to interracialism, that class and race have been “historically fused categories” (Griffin 1995:1251), as workers’ participation in class-based organizations and activities often had to do inextricably with race (Griffin and Korstad 1995; Kelley 1990; Lewis 1991; Roediger 1991; Saxton 1971).

In the sociology of race, the Gramscian work of Omi and Winant, among others, points in a similar direction (cf. Cornell and Hartmann 1998, chap. 7). Although not concerned with interracialism per se, their notion of rearticulation signifies the construction of new racial ideologies and practices that “both build upon and break away from their cultural and political predecessors” (Omi and Winant 1994:89; also see Gilroy 1991; S. Hall 1980, 1986; Winant 1994, 2000). And, as S. Hall’s (1980) discussion of rearticulation stresses, this building upon and breaking away happen through the recombination of race with other categories and structures.

This overall theoretical development suggests an important implication for the study of interracialism: It must be recast as more than a straightforward process of deracialization. In the case of working-class interracialism, for example, rather than assuming race disappears from the workers’ discourses and practices, a more robust approach would be to analyze how the workers, who perceive their interests in racially divided terms, come to rearticulate, rather than necessarily disarticulate, race and class. In Hawai‘i, ideas of class advanced by the ILWU’s leadership were decisive. But rather than seeing interracialism as a direct, unilateral displacement of race by class, I argue that notions of class conflict were stretched and molded to reinterpret race. In other words, this paper contends that working-class interracialism, and interracialism generally, involves a transformation of race. Although a possible dimension of this transformation may indeed be deracialization, it is neither necessary nor exhaustive. To illustrate this idea that interracialism must be conceptually decoupled from deracialization, I argue and demonstrate that Hawaii’s working-class interracialism involved a transformation of race without deracialization.

As with most historical research on workers, the evidence of their discourses and practices is unavoidably fragmentary and often mediated. Nonetheless, to access the “relatively anonymous” ideology of the workers’ movement as a whole rather than just that of a few “highly self-conscious,

10 As one reviewer pointed out—and I agree—this development in social theory, labor history, and sociology of race “anticipates” my arguments concerning interracialism and deracialization. However, that the anticipation has gone almost entirely unmet evinces how deeply and unproblematically the two have been conjoined. For exceptions, see Gerteis (1999) and Letwin (1998).
puspative” leaders (Sewell 1985:60), I draw empirically—particularly in the section on the transformation—from all currently available primary sources: pamphlets and newspaper articles the workers read, and sometimes wrote; picket signs they held; leaflets they circulated; reports on them, written by employer-hired spies and by labor organizers; contemporaneous interviews of workers and organizers, conducted by employer-hired lawyers in their effort to temper the Wagner Act’s enforcement, and retrospective oral history interviews; votes the workers cast; union policies and practices they considered and adopted; letters to and from the International of the ILWU; and minutes of union meetings and conventions.

BEFORE THE TRANSFORMATION: PREWAR RACIAL DIVISIONS

Although dating back to the early nineteenth century, Hawaii’s sugar industry remained relatively undeveloped until the Reciprocity Treaty of 1876. The treaty between the Kingdom of Hawai‘i (and, from 1894 to 1898, the Republic of Hawai‘i) and the United States permitted the duty-free entry of unrefined sugar from Hawai‘i into the U.S. market.11 The U.S. annexation of Hawai‘i in 1898 as an “incorporated territory” continued the tariff protection.12

The access to the protected U.S. market led to a tremendous growth of the sugar industry.13 It also touched off an intense concentration of capital, as the large investments needed to finance the growth drove out small, independent producers. Consequently, a handful of agencies or factors, commonly referred to as the “Big Five,” came to dominate the industry.14 Moreover, the Big Five were, in turn, controlled and owned by a small number of haole families with self-important lineages to the Christian missionaries of the nineteenth century.15

The concentration of capital, as well as interlocking directorates among the Big Five and intermarriages among the “missionary” families, impelled industrial cohesion and the formation of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters’ Association (HSPA), the powerful decision-making body that coordinated the industry’s resources and activities (Jung 1999a; MacLennan 1979).

Leveraging their commanding position in sugar, the Big Five assumed a similar dominance in the maritime industry, considering it to be a subsidiary extension. Later, the Big Five also made considerable inroads in the pineapple industry, obtaining a majority market share of what had fast become Hawaii’s second largest industry by the early 1930s (Brooks 1952).

With the rapid development of Hawaii’s industries, labor supply was a constant concern for employers. From the mid-nineteenth century, Native Hawaiians and migrants—who were actively recruited by the sugar industry, in overlapping succession, chiefly from China, Portugal, Japan, and the Philippines—worked on the sugar plantations. Following their initial contractual stints in sugar, the workers drifted off, in varying degrees, and worked in Hawaii’s other industries, including pineapple and maritime. From the 1920s to the 1950s, an overwhelming majority of the workers were

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11 The Republic of Hawai‘i was established in 1894 by an elite group, led by Americans, through a forcible overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy.

12 Within the U.S. colonial scheme, “incorporated territories” like Hawai‘i were accorded the same tariff protection as the states—a protection that was denied the “non-incorporated territories” like the Philippines (Littler 1929:40–41).

13 The total area under cultivation expanded from 26,019 acres in 1880 to 254,563 acres in 1934 (Schmitt 1977:357–60). The number of employees grew from 3,786 in 1874 to a peak of 57,039 in 1933 (Hawaiian Annual 1934:21; Schmitt 1977:359). Sugar production soared from 12,540 tons in 1875 to top 1 million tons three times in the 1930s (Hawaiian Annual 1940:33; Taylor 1935:166).

14 The “Big Five” were Alexander and Baldwin, American Factors (formerly H. Hackfeld and Company), C. Brewer and Company, Castle and Cooke, and T.H. Davies and Company. By 1930, the plantations controlled by these corporations produced 95.2 percent of Hawaii’s sugar (Hawaiian Annual 1931:132–35).

15 Haole is the racial category in Hawai‘i referring to non-Iberian people of European ancestry, mostly of American, British, and German origins.
Filipino, Japanese, and, to a lesser extent, Portuguese.  

In the late 1870s and 1880s, pressured by the anti-Chinese movements in Hawai‘i and in the United States, Hawai‘i’s sugar industry, in which half the work force was then Chinese, turned to Europe for labor (Lydon 1975). Ineffective on the whole, the recruitment efforts in Europe found most success in the economically depressed Portuguese islands of Madeira and the Azores. 

Recruited expressly to “whiten” Hawai‘i’s labor force, these Portuguese workers accrued immediate material benefits from their privileged racial status. In relation to the plantation economy, they were expeditiously placed in skilled and low supervisory positions and paid higher wages, quickly leapfrogging their Chinese predecessors (Coman [1903] 1978:23; Fuchs 1961:57; Geschwender, Carroll-Seguin, and Brill 1988; Liu 1985). In relation to the state, as immigrants from Europe they were entitled to the franchise, both before and after U.S. annexation, which was denied their counterparts from Asia on racial grounds (Rowland 1943). 

However, the Portuguese began to lose their claim to “whiteness” almost immediately upon their arrival, as they were made socially distinct from, and by, haole. Their initially homogeneous class location as plantation labor set them apart from other sizable immigrant groups of European origin (Baganha 1991; Geschwender et al. 1988). Most of them arrived before the abolition of penal contract labor, which existed until U.S. annexation; thus their class position was doubly degrading for being unfree. Furthermore, the differentiation between the Portuguese and haole soon became codified in, and naturalized by, the distinct racial categories widely used by the Big Five employers and the territorial government.  

In contrast, workers from Asia were unquestionably considered racially distinct and were thus never considered for inclusion in the haole category. This exclusion placed them below the Portuguese in the plantation economic order and, for the first generation, outside the franchise. The exclusion, however, did not produce a common racial experience for the various Asian groups. The differences in racialization among Asian workers were most manifest for the Japanese and Filipinos. For each, the relationship between the workers’ nation of origin and the United States proved to be the crucial axis around which haole spun their racial imagination: Japan as the ascendant, rival imperialist power versus the Philippines as the semi-civilized, backward colony (Jung 1999b). 

Having rapidly emerged as a modern nation-state and imperialist power, Japan loomed large and ominous in the racial imagination of haole, especially as the number of Japanese in Hawai‘i rose rapidly from the 1890s onward (Conroy [1949] 1973). Anti-Japanese racism thus centered not on beliefs of racial inferiority but on fears of national disloyalty. The notions that Hawaii’s Japanese, including the nisei, were racially and therefore, in this age of biology, inherently beholden to Japan, and that they shared Japan’s putatively hostile intentions toward an “American” Hawai‘i, progressively gathered strength. Until near the end of World War II, anti-Japanese racism and American nationalism grew synonymous in Hawai‘i, placing nearly every

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16 For example, these three groups accounted for 91.6 percent and 90.9 percent of the male labor force in sugar in 1930 and 1944, respectively. In 1930, 70.1 percent, 18.1 percent, and 3.5 percent of the 49,532 employees were Filipino, Japanese, and Portuguese, respectively. In 1944, the comparable figures were 46.8 percent, 36.4 percent, and 7.7 percent of 24,863 employees (Hawaiian Annual 1931; HSPAPP, “Labor Report of All Islands,” June 1944, PSC40/7).

Throughout this paper, archival sources are cited in footnotes. These citations use the format shown above for the HSPAPP citation. Definitions of abbreviations and locations of archives used in these citations are shown in Appendix A. Also see footnote 23.

17 For examples, see Hawaiian Sugar Planters’ Association annual census reports of sugar plantations (HSPAPP, 1928–1935, KSC19/29); territorial vital statistics reprinted in Hawaiian Annual (1910–1940).

18 The term issei refers to first-generation immigrants from Japan; nisei refers to their children.
facet of Japanese life under suspicion of disloyalty.\textsuperscript{19} In stark contrast, having migrated from an impoverished and recently conquered colony of the United States, Filipinos were constructed as an unambiguously inferior race by haole. As Filipinos in the Philippines were deemed “not of a self-governing” but “a barbarous race” (Senator Alfred Beveridge, quoted in Schirmer and Shalom 1987:25), Filipinos in Hawai‘i were regarded as a “primitive” race “in an adolescent stage of development” (Porteus and Babcock 1926:58–70).

The haole planters’ and the public’s reaction to the long, bitterly waged 1920 sugar strike made clear the dissimilar racializations of the Japanese and Filipinos.\textsuperscript{20} Although the strike was conducted by both Japanese and Filipino workers, the haole employers, press, and public interpreted it as a solely “anti-American movement” of the Japanese “in line with Japanese policy wherever they colonize” (Pacific Commercial Advertiser, February 2, 1920). Although Filipinos had been more eager to go out on strike, and did so before the Japanese, Filipino strikers were thought of as “mere cats-paws” of “the wily Japanese agitators” and were all but disregarded (Pacific Commercial Advertiser, January 27, 1920). When Filipino sugar workers initiated another strike in 1924, “a suspicion that the Japanese secretly fomented and supported it” shrouded the Filipino effort (Porteus and Babcock 1926:62).

In employment, that Filipino workers would occupy the bottom of the racial order as unskilled labor was simply not questioned, either by the employers or by the other workers. On the other hand, Japanese workers fell between the Portuguese and the Filipinos, occupying skilled and semiskilled positions at a rate distinctly lower than the Portuguese but distinctly higher than the Filipinos. The Depression revealed that this economic order was not just a function of the Filipinos’ late arrival. While Filipinos were laid off by the thousands from the pineapple and sugar industries and repatriated to the Philippines, nisei, Portuguese, and other “citizen” workers were newly hired and promoted by the sugar industry, which, unlike the pineapple industry, was not severely affected by the Depression (Jung 1999b).

The qualitatively different racisms experienced by the Portuguese, Japanese, and Filipinos set them on divergent historical paths, which did not bode well for working-class interracialism. Although all three groups felt aggrieved, they reacted in mutually incompatible ways.

Above all, the Portuguese resented their distinction from haole. They insisted on their identity with, and overdue acceptance by, haole—that the Portuguese were “of the Caucasian race, and therefore white” (Honolulu Advertiser, October 29, 1940). Inversely, they insisted on their racial distance from other nonhaole, often evincing more antipathy toward them than did haole themselves (Estep 1941a, 1941b; Fuchs 1961; Jung 1999b; Kimura 1955). Both their longing for haole acceptance and their rebuffing of the other nonhaole workers may account for their prewar absence from labor conflicts.

The Japanese, an increasingly nisei and thus citizen population, resented their relentlessly oppugned place in the “American” nation and continually asserted their loyalty. This resentment, however, did not express itself in a renewed labor movement following the soundly defeated 1920 strike; the strike had indelibly fused Japanese labor activism with subversive anti-Americanism and immured the Japanese in assimilationist politics. According to a Japanese labor leader, “the Americanization movement swamped the Japanese” (quoted in Beechert 1985:212).

The nisei desire for acceptance as Americans also had a reactionary face. Along with the rest of the non-Filipino public, most Japanese assumed that Filipinos should occupy the bottom of the racial order. Particu-\textsuperscript{19} Although the conclusion of World War I ushered in a period of nativist American nationalism throughout the United States, the Americanization movement in Hawai‘i was unique in its single-minded focus on the Japanese (Weinberg 1967).
\textsuperscript{20} Attesting to its hostile posture, the sugar industry evicted the strikers and their families from their homes during an influenza epidemic. According to one estimate, 1,056 Japanese and 1,440 Filipinos fell ill, and 55 Japanese and 95 Filipinos died as a result (Reinecke 1979:109).
larly during the Depression, a discourse counterposing the *nisei*’s rights as Americans and the imputed deficiencies of the Filipino “alien race” who “grab[bed] jobs by underbidding the citizen labor” developed among the Japanese (*Hawaii Hochi*, February 7, 1930).

Whereas the true “Americanness” of the Japanese was being ceaselessly questioned, Filipinos were excluded from the nation without question and were treated primarily as cheap, discardable, and, during the Depression, actually discarded labor. However, as they were constructed as un-American but not anti-American, the 1920 strike and the subsequent escalation of the Americanization movement did not have the deadening impact on Filipino workers’ willingness to organize as it did on Japanese workers. After the 1920 strike, Filipino sugar workers regrouped and engaged in another long, unsuccessful strike in 1924 that ended in the shooting deaths of 16 strikers in Hanapēpē on the island of Kaua‘i at the hands of HSPA-financed special police. With the onset of the Depression, Filipino workers organized once again on their own, which led to a 1937 strike of sugar and pineapple plantations on the islands of Maui and Moloka‘i. Aware that they were discriminated against by both their employers and other workers, Filipinos pursued an “organization leaded [sic] by the Filipinos and not the other races.”

**THE NEW DEAL AND MARTIAL LAW: POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES**

How did Portuguese, Japanese, and Filipino workers, with their divergent racial and class politics, later form an interracial working-class movement? Beginning in the mid-1930s, Hawaii’s working-class interracialism developed, in part, to the halting rhythm of available political opportunities and resources.

Until the mid-1930s, the Big Five’s stranglehold on Hawaii’s economy was married to a “friendly” territorial government “directly centralized into [their] own hands,” enabling them to “pursue [their] opposition to the workers unfettered” (Therborn 1983: 46–47): The territorial government intervened consistently on behalf of powerful employers and against workers, most of whom were either disenfranchised or, as in the cases of the Portuguese and the *nisei*, pressured by haole into Republican consent (U.S. Department of Labor 1940; U.S. House of Representatives 1940). Consequently, “every . . . attempt to organize [was] broken—mostly with the aid of the [territorial] government.”

But the role of the state took a decided turn in the mid-1930s as the national government veered from its laissez faire course of leaving the islands’ employers and the territorial government to their own devices in dealing with labor. With the 1935 passage and, more critically, the later enforcement of the Wagner Act, the national government intervened in Hawai‘i class relations, curbing the previously unfettered opposition of the employers and enabling the workers to confront them on a less skewed field of struggle. For the first two years of the Wagner Act’s existence, employers openly disregarded the law, actually stepping up their often illicit antiunion efforts including organized violence (HC, USNLRB, 1937). Only when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) sent agents to Hawai‘i in 1937 to enforce the law actively, coinciding with the Supreme Court’s upholding its constitutionality, did the employers begin grudgingly and minimally to temper their antiunion activities (Dubofsky 1994; *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, April 12, 1937; Jung 1999a).

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21 From an espionage report of a union meeting in Ahukini (HSPAPP, April 8, 1938, LSC69/17). For a fuller account of the prewar racial divisions among Hawaii’s workers, see Jung (1999b).


23 A handful of archival sources are cited multiple times in this paper. Reference information for these sources is listed after the reference list in a section titled “Archival Sources with Multiple Citations.” Citations to these sources take the form of the HC citation in the text above. See Appendix A for definitions of abbreviations and locations of the archives used in these citations.
This political opportunity for labor closed abruptly on December 7, 1941, when the military displaced the civilian government and instituted martial law in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Among the many restrictions put into place, the military government froze plantation workers to their employers at prewar wages, compelled workers to work, severely limited travel, and suspended union contracts. All of these actions were enforced by military provost courts unsympathetic to labor (Allen 1950; Anthony 1955; van Zwalenburg 1961). The overall effect on labor was to stifle unions and organizing.

Then, from March 1943 to October 1944, martial law was gradually relaxed and finally lifted. A political opportunity reopened for Hawaii’s workers, as military restrictions eased and as the NLRB resumed its activity. Furthermore, when the labor movement grew dramatically from 1944 onward, the workers wielded their newfound collective strength in territorial electoral politics, securing the 1945 passage of the Hawai‘i Employment Relations Act. Extending the rights guaranteed by the Wagner Act to agricultural workers, the law forestalled a potentially crippling rift between the mostly Filipino field laborers, who were considered “agricultural” workers and therefore were not covered by the Wagner Act, and the other workers (ROHO, Louis Goldblatt, 1978 and 1979; Zalburg 1979).

Slightly preceding and, in part, facilitating the initial opening of political opportunity in the mid-1930s was the start of what was to become the ILWU movement in Hawai‘i. As on the West Coast, independent unionism in stevedoring had reached its nadir in the 1920s and early 1930s. The employers dominated, primarily through the notorious “shape-up” system of hiring and company unions (Beechert 1985; HC, USNLRB, 1937). The similarly bleak fates of the longshoremen on the West Coast and in Hawai‘i were not coincidental, given that the Big Five–controlled Matson was the largest shipping company in both regions.

Not surprisingly, the longshoremen’s fates remained intertwined when the West Coast maritime workers resuscitated their organizing efforts in the 1930s. Because of the constant circulation of workers, a sizable number of maritime workers from Hawai‘i participated in the West Coast movement, including the momentous 1934 strike in San Francisco. Inspired by the explosive movement, particularly the revival and radicalization of the Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA), many of the participants returned to Hawai‘i, beginning in 1935, with the express purpose of catalyzing a similar movement there. These workers, originally from Hawai‘i, were joined by other West Coast participants newly relocating there. From them, who became longshoremen and union activists in Honolulu and Hilo, grew an ever larger and denser network of organizers and unions that would eventually stretch throughout the islands (Beechert 1985; Jung 1999a; Zalburg 1979).

In 1935, longshore unions were established in Honolulu and Hilo, which later became ILWU locals when the left-led Pacific Coast District of the ILA broke free in 1937 and affiliated with the CIO. These local unions, along with the International of the ILWU, were instrumental in successfully pressuring the NLRB to establish an active presence in Hawai‘i. Soon thereafter, the unions assisted in the already ongoing organization of Filipino plantation workers on Maui and in the foundation of a longshore local on the island of Kaua‘i. The longshore local on Kaua‘i, in turn, initiated and supported the organization of the island’s sugar and pineapple workers into the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA).

By the time the United States entered World War II, this fledgling movement had made certain, if arduous and slow, progress. The longshore locals in Honolulu and Hilo and on Kaua‘i had signed their first union contracts with their respective employers, as had one union each in sugar and pineapple on Kaua‘i (Brooks 1952). Although representing not more than about 1,000 members, these foundational victories for the unions were unprecedented in Hawai‘i and proved to be indispensable bases for later organizing.

The arduousness and slowness of the movement’s prewar progress had two causes

24 ILWUH, HLA meeting minutes (March 10, 1937).
related to political opportunity and resources. First, although the NLRB’s enforcement of the Wagner Act had expanded political opportunity, employers attempted vigorously to minimize its effect, relenting as little as possible in their hostile opposition to workers. Second, although the institutional ties to the unions in the continental United States gave Hawaii’s workers unprecedented access to resources—especially financial funding and organizational know-how—this prewar support was limited, as both the ILWU in longshore and UCAPAWA in agriculture concentrated their resources on the continent.25

When martial law was relaxed, the employers were no less opposed to unions. But unlike before the war, the International of the ILWU placed Hawai‘i at the top of its organizing agenda, approving the Hawai‘i longshore locals’ urgent pleas for funds, experienced organizers, and other resources that had been withheld in the past. Also indicative of its redoubled commitment, the ILWU officially took over the organizing of sugar and pineapple workers, without a jurisdictional dispute with UCAPAWA that had neither the resources nor the inclination to carry on the task in Hawai‘i (LHA, Louis Goldblatt, 1979).

The ILWU movement also benefited from martial law, whose repressive conditions created a breeding ground for worker discontent, though suppressed and unarticulated. Moreover, the mutually beneficial and openly intimate relationship between the Big Five employers and the military before and during martial law generated sharp bitterness among the workers.26 For example, nothing made the inequities of martial law more immediately apparent to the workers than the infamous “labor loan” program in which sugar and pineapple companies contracted out workers to the military for guaranteed profits. At a time of rapid inflation, sugar and pineapple workers, frozen to their jobs at prewar wages, often worked alongside defense workers earning much higher wages for the same work. Echoing the sentiment of many others, an organizer concluded that such wartime conditions provided compelling “incentives to organize.”27

Class conflict, tightly covered and seething under martial law, boiled over when the cover was lifted. Having established a foothold before the war, the ILWU was positioned “in the right place at the right time, with the right forces, with the right program that moved in a situation where a social upheaval developed” (ZS, Robert McElrath, 1975, p. 20). With its estimated membership frozen at 900, and declining from the beginning of World War II until the end of martial law in 1944, the ILWU mushroomed to more than 33,000 members by 1946, accounting for almost the entire union membership of Hawai‘i (McElrath 1946:17).

THE TRANSFORMATION:
THE MAKING OF WORKING-CLASS INTERRACIALISM

The preceding discussion of political opportunities and resources helps explain key aspects of the formation of Hawaii’s interracial working class: the slow and then rapid growth of union membership, the war-interrupted timing, and the pattern of organizing from longshore to agriculture. The decade between the start of the NLRB’s active presence in 1937 and the passage of the antilabor, antileft Taft-Hartley Act in 1947 was a period of unique opportunity. And the ILWU’s commitment of resources, particularly in the mid-1940s, allowed those in Hawai‘i to take advantage of the opportunity. But opportunities and resources, however ripe, cannot account for the working

25 ILWUSF, Matt Meehan to Edward Berman (January 3, 1938, Box 5); also see Zalburg 1979.
26 WRD, “The War Record of Civilian and Industrial Hawaii,” produced by the HSPA for the Joint Congressional Committee to Investigate the Pearl Harbor Attack (December 1, 1945, 1.03); WRD, C. J. Fleener to Hans L’Orange, ([September] 1942, 1.03); LHA, Louis Goldblatt (1979); LHA, Jack Hall (1979).

There was an affinity of interests between the military and the employers. For the military, exercising power through preexisting industrial structures increased efficiency. For the employers, cooperating with the military allowed them to influence directly the military’s decision-making processes to minimize wartime disruptions to their operations.

27 ZS, Haruo Nakamoto, interview with Sanford Zalburg (1976, notes, Box 3); also see LHA, Jack Hall (1979).
class’s hitherto absent interracial form and substance. After all, U.S. labor history is replete with interracial paths not seen or taken, ideologically diverted even at otherwise seemingly propitious moments.

As the literature on Hawaii’s workers has stressed, the leadership of the interracial movement, from its beginning in 1935, tended to be peopled with leftist militants. Describing the returning and newly arriving maritime workers of the 1930s, the islands’ first CIO director recalled, “You had a sprinkling of practically every left-wing attitude among the people that came off the ships that were trying to organize labor here. You had anarchists of those days; you had the old Wobblies of the Wobbly movement; you had Socialists, and you had Communists and Trotskyites.”

Of the sprinkling, Communists were the most numerous and influential (Holmes 1994).

Like their counterparts on the West Coast, these leftist militants proved to be far from doctrinaire ideologues, sharing instead a primary commitment to grassroots organizing and a general but resolute working-class antipathy toward capital (Kimeldorf 1988). Drawing a solid conceptual line between the interests of the employers and the workers, the movement’s discourse left no room for the quasi-producerist ideology of employer-employee cooperation adopted by earlier movements and by the coeval, craft-oriented American Federation of Labor challengers.

A September 1937 meeting of sugar workers on the island of Kaua‘i, a hotbed of prewar organizing, typified the movement’s construction of a firm opposition between employers and workers. Relating a vaguely socialist notion of exploitation, a leader of the longshore local exclaimed to the gathered sugar workers, “We are not being treated right. The laborers make the money for the bosses. In Hawaii [a new] generation is coming up, and we don’t want to . . . have our children get $1.00 [per] day.” Or, as a sugar worker reiterated at the same meeting, “He [the plantation manager] gets all—we do the work.”

Even during the laborious progress of the early years, the movement’s aspiration was clear: “The entire laboring class must be organized.” In the context of working-class racial divisions of the 1930s, this capacious understanding of the working class, without regard to craft or skill, had unavoidable racial implications. It meant organizing “regardless of race, color, or creed,” a notion that may sound rather commonplace today but was quite discordant with contemporary, and earlier, practices. As an organizer proclaimed, “We want you in the CIO where all brothers are alike . . . Japanese, Filipinos, Portuguese, haoles and all are the same.”

Thus, what was needed, as a speaker told a racially mixed gathering of 400 to 500 workers in Hanapepe, was “a united front of all labor, Filipino, Japanese and Portuguese so that they could get their rights from the capitalist.”

In practical terms, organizing such a
A final way in which the movement’s early discourse, before World War II, incorporated race was to contrast the fledgling interracial movement to the various unsuccessful, racially exclusive movements of the past. As one speaker reminded the Japanese workers in attendance, “You have in your memory till to-day I’m sure the bitter fight in the strike[s] of 1909 and 1920. The reason the fight was bitter is because you were fighting alone, Japanese alone.”\(^{39}\) Delivering a similar message to Filipino workers, another organizer exhorted, “I call upon you brothers to avenge the Hanapepe affair when 17 [sic] of your brothers were shot in the back. This must not die and you can remember you got nothing out of the 1924 strike because you were doing it alone. It’s different now with all joining the CIO.”\(^{40}\)

These prewar articulations of race and class were important but proved inadequate. In addition to the employers’ opposition and the unions’ limited commitment of resources, racial divisions among the workers were resistant to ideological change. Not only did racial considerations keep workers from joining the movement in large numbers, some of the local unions that had formed split apart on traditional racial grounds.\(^{41}\) But upon the relaxation of martial law, the ideological transformation gathered momentum, extending prewar advances and driving the rapidly expanding movement.

The discourse of class that starkly pitted workers against employers widely took hold. The oppressive conditions of martial law for labor, especially for the much maligned but later vindicated Japanese, had sharpened the class cleavage, readying the workers for a leftist movement that would confront their powerful employers aggressively: “When the [military] controls were lifted,” an NLRB representative observed, “workers flocked into the unions by the tens of thousands.”\(^{42}\)

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\(^{37}\) ILWUH, William Craft, paraphrased in meeting minutes (January 13, 1937, HLA Minutes).

\(^{38}\) HSPAPP, Robles, quoted in espionage report from Andrew Gross [to C.E.S. Burns] (December 6, 1937, LPC17/12).

\(^{39}\) HSPAPP, George Goto, quoted in espionage report from Chas. Kaneyama to Lindsay Faye and Hans Hansen (July 31, 1937, KSC27/22).

\(^{40}\) HSPAPP, Edward Berman, quoted in espionage report from Andrew Gross [to C.E.S. Burns] (December 6, 1937, LPC17/12).

\(^{41}\) For examples, see the interviews with workers conducted by John E. Parks of Law Offices of Philip L. Rice for the Lihue Plantation Company (HSPAPP, LPC17/11); ILWUSF, Frederick K. Kamahoa to Harry Bridges (July 29, 1937, Box 5); and Izuka (1974).

\(^{42}\) HC, “History of Labor Relations in Hawaii.”
The ILWU in Hawai‘i also committed itself to organizing the sugar and pineapple industries, as well as longshore, thereby reflecting the industrial setup in the islands. Across industrial lines, the workers increasingly constructed their antagonist to be not only their immediate employers but also the “Big Five” that, in turn, owned and controlled those employers. Union newspaper articles detailing which companies the Big Five controlled and how profits were “drained off directly to the Big Five” appeared frequently, and the term “Big Five” gained ubiquitous and opprobrious currency among the workers (The Dispatcher, February 20, 1945, p. 4).\(^4\)

More or less coinciding with the foregoing development, suggesting an affinity, the movement’s discourse incorporated and aligned the workers’ racial antipathy toward the haole elite that had long been racially refracted and not expressed in uniformly conflictual terms. In an epiphanous tone of recognition, an internal ILWU report in early 1944, assessing the “organizing possibilities in Hawaii,” observed that “the biggest source of irritation [among the workers] is the ‘race’ bars to promotion”: “Top jobs are held 99 per cent by what Hitler would call Pure Aryan.” The report noted that Native Hawaiian and Portuguese workers had been treated by the employers as “second-class citizens”; Japanese and Filipino workers had been treated as “third-class” and “definitely ‘fourth-class’” citizens, respectively. The report concluded emphatically, “THE PRIMARY FACTOR IN THE NATIONAL QUESTION IS THE FACT THAT HAOLES (WHITES) OWN THE PLANTATIONS AND HAVE THE GOOD JOBS.”\(^4\)

It followed that “one of the popular slogans and demands” of the workers would be “for an end to discrimination” (D. Thompson 1951:40). Or, as the ILWU regional director for Hawai‘i stated in 1946, “Whether it is before the law, on the job, within the union, in the community, nation or world, the program of the ILWU can be summed up in two simple words: END DISCRIMINATION” (The Dispatcher, June 28, 1946). The movement thus provided “new avenues for the sharp and open expression of anti-Haole sentiment” among the workers and “channelized [sic] that sentiment” (D. Thompson 1951:40). It should be noted that discrimination, a term, before the war, denoting the unfair treatment of union members, assumed an additional, and promptly primary, racial meaning.

A common class and racial foe, however, did not necessarily mean that Portuguese, Japanese, Filipino, and other workers would form a coherent collective, given their history of racial divisions. A union officer described the early post-martial law organizing effort:

The Japanese . . . tended to under-rate the importance of other groups, dismissing the Portuguese as being generally “no-good” and not worth organizing, while the Filipinos were recognized as necessary to successful organization, but too “ignorant” to be admitted to leadership. Portuguese workers shared the Japanese scorn of the Filipino, but regarded the rising Japanese leadership with alarm and indignation as a threat to their own generally superior status on the job and in the community. Filipinos shared the Japanese suspicion of the more favored Portuguese, but were resentful of the condescending attitude of both groups toward them. (D. Thompson 1951:36)

The response to this situation was the notion of “divide and rule.” Given the leftward leaning of the movement, that the notion introduced before the war would reappear was hardly a surprise. Viewing the world, including race, through the lens of class, the prewar activists had invoked the notion of “divide and rule,” the quintessentially leftist explanation, to make sense of the racial divisions among the workers. But, abstractly and mechanically applied to Hawai‘i, the prewar deployment of this notion had been more of a left knee-jerk reaction than a fully articulated idea.

With repeated use, however, this interpretive schema became much more than perfunctory leftist rhetoric, becoming grounded in and contoured to the particularities of race speeches by Arnold L. Wills (November 15 and December 20, 1945, p. 13.) For the effects of the war and martial law on Japanese labor, see Okihiro (1991).

\(^4\) Also see The Dispatcher, July 3, 1944; July 8, 1944; August 15, 1944; September 26, 1944; and October 17, 1944.

\(^4\) ILWUSF, “Notes on Organizing Possibilities in Hawaii” (February 1944, Box 5; emphasis in original).
and class in Hawai’i. Articulated with another prewar innovation—that of contrasting the present against the past—"divide and rule" became central to the construction of working-class interracialism. Reinterpreting the past through this notion, the workers constructed an interracial, working-class "narrative identity," selectively appropriating their divergent and conflicting racial histories to create a common interracial identity and destiny (Somers 1994).

Surfacing in various embryonic forms before then, the use of "divide and rule" as a mnemonic schema was well developed by 1946. This construction of an interracial working-class narrative is clearly articulated in two union publications from 1946: a training manual drafted by a group of grassroots leaders (ILWUSF, Dominador Agayan et al., 1946) and a 45-page pamphlet called *Raising Cane* (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946). The main theme of these two publications was that "the employers were quick to see that the workers could be kept weak and divided by race prejudice, and they have always done their best to keep prejudice alive in the islands" (ILWUSF, Dominador Agayan et al., 1946, p. 59). According to the narrative, employers continually disparaged various racial groups already in Hawai’i to justify the recruitment of new racial groups. Once on the plantations, "under the planters’ divide and rule policy, no two national groups had the same working conditions" or wages (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946, p. 19), as employers "attempted to buy off the races which have been here longest" (ILWUSF, Dominador Agayan et al., 1946, p. 60). The employers also set up segregated plantation camps to divide the workers. These practices "create[d] resentment of the favored races among the members of the races who [were] discriminated against in promotion, housing etc." By keeping "the workers divided along racial lines, [the employers] could prevent union organizing and break any strikes" (ILWUSF, Dominador Agayan et al., 1946, p. 60). The turning point in the narrative was, of course, the emergence of the ILWU movement: "The new organizers did not accept the planter’s theory that a worker of one nation was better than the worker of another. All men, they held, are equal" (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946, p. 35).

In this narrative, employers were unequivocally the antagonists: the “haoles” of missionary background who “had taken the land” from Native Hawaiians and later owned the plantations and the “Big Five” (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946, p. 8). They were the antagonists not only because they exploited the workers but also because they were racists. Written a year after the end of World War II, frequent analogies to racism of Nazi Germany and choice quotes of employers’ racist remarks drove home this point.46

As the protagonists of the story, Native Hawaiian, Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese, Filipino, and other nonhaole workers were depicted as all having been subject to the employers’ racist divide-and-rule practices. The narrative thereby highlighted the parallels in the histories of the various nonhaole groups of workers, enabling them to “see” that the different racisms they each had been subjected to had the same source—the haole employers: “The workers had learned the evil of ‘divide-and-rule’” (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946, p. 33).

As the narrative wove together the fate of all nonhaole workers into a single story, a crucial effect was that each worker could identify with the entire history of labor and racism in Hawai’i rather than a particular portion of it.47 So the employers’ antiunion and racist practices, as detailed in the narrative (e.g., the anti-Japanese Americanization movement, the Hanapēpē massacre of Filipino strikers in 1924), became a part of all workers’ collective memory rather than just

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45 As a manual distributed to ILWU locals and units for everyday use and as a pamphlet published at the start of a major strike, both of these publications were widely circulated among the workers.

46 For example, one such remark, widely quoted, was made in 1930 by R. A. Cooke as the president of the HSPA: “I can see little difference between the importation of foreign laborers and the importation of jute bags from India” (LC, Victor Weingarten, 1946, p. 31).

47 In other words, all nonhaole workers could claim this collective history in the way that most (white) Americans, regardless of their degree of separation from the Mayflower, claim the entire U.S. history as their history.
the Japanese or Filipinos’. In other words, this reinterpretation of the past rendered the employers’ unrelenting hostility and racism meaningful for all nonhaole workers’ collective sense of class.

As important as what was collectively remembered was what was collectively forgotten. First, the positions of workers in the racial hierarchy did not strictly follow the pattern of placing the latest arrivals at the bottom (e.g., the Portuguese), as asserted in the narrative. Second, however the employers had wanted to pit the various racial groups of workers against each other, which they stated on numerous occasions, they mostly had not been able to do so because of immigration restrictions and recruitment costs (Beechert 1985). Third, the evidence is unclear on whether residential segregation on the plantations was carried out by the employers intentionally to divide and rule and/or whether it reflected the timing of immigration and the preferences of the workers.48 Finally, and most importantly, the workers’ prewar participation in the production of racial divisions was underplayed.

Through the unifying notion of “divide and rule,” the narrative reimagined the past in an effort to form a new political community: The ILWU embodied the workers’ interracial historical destiny, which, according to the narrative, had too long been thwarted by the employers’ racism and hostile opposition. Contrary to the pervasive deracialized view of interracialism in the sociology of race, note that neither the intent nor the effect of this reimagination was to replace the workers’ racial consciousness with a class consciousness but to render them coincident and mutually reinforcing.

Interracialism did not take place just in the realm of discourse but also became embodied in and justified the various institutional practices of the movement. The prewar practice of holding multilingual meetings continued after the war. In addition, much more extensively than before the war, there was a concerted effort to publish printed materials in multiple languages, including the union newspaper, bulletins, pamphlets, election ballots, and contracts. Later, this concern for full interracial participation led the union to broadcast its radio programs in Japanese and Ilocano as well as in English.49

The most important institutional innovation during the organizing drive of 1944–1946 was the race-conscious election of union leaders, applying what we would now refer to as “affirmative action” (Takaki 1989). Initiated by the International, the organizers sought to bring about multiracial representation at all levels of leadership in the islands. Rather than explicit quotas or percentages, the mode of intervention seemed to have been to convince workers, with varying degrees of pressure, of the necessity of racial integration prior to the nomination process.50 Consequently, election outcomes varied from one unit or local to the next, resulting in a fairly thorough but not strictly proportionate mixture of Japanese, Filipino, and Portuguese leaders, with a smattering of others.51

Initially, the policy caused racial tensions to flare up at some of the locals and units. Most forcefully at some of the sugar plantations on the island of Hawai‘i, Japanese leaders, who had become disproportionately numerous in leadership positions, objected to the inclusion of Filipinos. Resisting external pressure to integrate the leadership, one of the locals on the Big Island wrote angrily to the International, questioning “how democratically the I.L.W.U. . . . is run” and arguing that “qualification [should be] given greater consideration rather than solely along racial lines.”52 Moreover, some of the

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48 Most scholars tend to argue the former; Beechert (1985:234–35) strongly asserts the latter.
49 See ILWUSF, Frank Thompson to Louis Goldblatt (January 8, 1945 and April 5, 1945, Box 6); The Dispatcher, July 3, 1945; ROHO, Louis Goldblatt (1978 and 1979, pp. 345–48).
50 ILWUSF, Frank Thompson to Louis Goldblatt (December 14, 1944 and January 8, 1945, Box 6).
51 See ILWUSF, election results in the 31 letters from Frank Thompson to Morris Watson (February 27, 1945 to September 25, 1945, Box 6).
52 ILWUSF, Saburo Fujisaki to J.R. Robertson (December 20, 1945, Box 5). Also see LHA, Yasuki Arakaki, interview with Chris Conybeare for the Rice and Roses Program, “1946, The Great Hawaii Sugar Strike” (1996, transcript); LHA, Jack Hall (1979, p. 13).
Portuguese leaders, representing a significant but small constituency, seemed to be leveraging the Japanese-Filipino split to secure their leadership positions, at times alluding to the racist imagery of the “domineering” Japanese.\textsuperscript{53} Not backing down from the policy of interracial leadership, which it considered to be essential, the International responded by pressing the Big Island’s locals and units into agreement, for example, by selecting one of the vocal opponents for a leadership training program that was consciously interracial in its makeup (\textit{The Dispatcher}, April 19, 1946).

The interconnection between the race-conscious practice of electing officers and the concurrent elaboration of an interracial ideology can be seen in the widely accepted justification for the practice. As the secretary-treasurer of the International recalled, “the employers had done a very thorough job of dividing the people” over the years and thus had laid the basis for the decision to “in effect, if necessary, force integration” (ROHO, Louis Goldblatt, 1978 and 1979, pp. 319–20; LHA, Louis Goldblatt, 1979, pp. 31–32). Affirming what had become a commonly held interpretation throughout the union by 1946, even on the initially resistant Big Island (Arakaki 1946:16), a low-level officer at an Oʻahu sugar plantation reported on the workers’ strengthening interracial solidarity, “Includ[ing] leader[s] from each racial group on all union committees . . . prevents the bosses from dividing us among ourselves” (emphasis in original).\textsuperscript{54}

By mid-1946, nearly all workers in longshore, sugar, and pineapple had joined the ILWU. As the U.S. Department of Labor (1948) reported, “Until 1944 Hawaii was one of the least organized areas in the United States, but within 2 years it had become one of the most highly organized areas” (p. 188).

Almost immediately, the ILWU’s nascent working-class interracialism was put to a test. Beginning on September 1, 1946, the sugar workers waged an industry-wide, territory-wide strike for 79 days. Although important demands including a wage increase, the union shop, a seniority clause, and a no-discrimination clause were at issue, the strike was foremost a premeditated test of strength for both the employers and the workers: Employers wanted to assess how strong the union was and render it ineffectual, and the newly organized workers had been chafing to assert their strength against the Big Five—reflected by better than 99 percent of the over 15,000 strike ballots cast (\textit{Honolulu Advertiser}, August 1, 1946; Zalburg 1979).

Sown during the course of the organizing drive, the interracial working-class ideology took root during the strike. The workers continued to define their foe as not only the sugar plantations, or even the HSPA, but the “Big Five.”\textsuperscript{55} They also constructed the strike, like their movement as a whole, as a fight for racial equality. Aside from the wage demand, the “no discrimination” and “seniority” clauses—aimed at eliminating discrimination based on “race, creed, or color”—captured the imagination of the strikers. As their picket signs read, the workers were “STRIKING FOR END OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION,” “EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL,” and “SENIORITY RIGHTS,” as well as “FIGHTING FOR INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY” and “AGAINST BIG FIVE DICTATORSHIP.”\textsuperscript{56}

As a fulcrum of the interracial ideology, the “divide and rule” narrative assumed central importance in the effort to maintain solidarity. Published in the first month of the strike, the pamphlet \textit{Raising Cane} was “recommended reading during the strike period.”\textsuperscript{57} Strike leaflets and advertisements referred continually to the Big Five’s long history of antunionism and racism and the resultant racial divisions among the workers.

\textsuperscript{53} ILWUSF, Frank Thompson to Louis Goldblatt (December 28, 1945, January 23, 1946, February 4, 1946, and May 13, 1946, Box 6).

\textsuperscript{54} ILWUH, “Report on Second Day of Territorial Strike Committee Meeting with Filipino Leaders” (August 20, 1946, TSSC Minutes; emphasis in original).

\textsuperscript{55} For example, see “THE BIG FIVE DECLARES WAR!” ILWU advertisement, \textit{Honolulu Star-Bulletin} (September 28 and 30, 1946) and \textit{Hilo Tribune Herald} (September 28 and 30, 1946).

\textsuperscript{56} ILWUH, TSSC to all island strike strategy committees (October 8, 1946, Union:Circulars).

\textsuperscript{57} ILWUH, regional office to all island strike strategy committees (October 8, 1946, Union: Circulars).
setting the workers’ present struggle as establishing a different racial and class future.58

As during the organizing drive, “all major racial groups [were] represented in strike leadership” to prevent racial divisions, a practice routinized among the workers (Allied Labor News, September 20, 1946).59 Also firmly established as routine, the union held meetings and distributed information in Japanese and Ilocano as well as in English. Furthermore, recognizing that Filipino workers were generally the worst off and thus most vulnerable to the employers’ divisive tactics, the union stayed vigilant in attempting to meet their needs:

Because . . . our Filipino brothers are either new arrivals or have been employed at the lowest wage rates, few have substantial cash reserves with which to meet the strike. It is imperative, therefore, that responsible officials in each local and unit contact during the next few days each worker of Philippine nationality and determine his relief needs if any. These needs must be met at once.

A number of small committees should be recognized at each unit, with an inter-racial composition, to make these contacts and determine the needs before Monday.60

On November 18, 1946, the strike officially ended with the workers’ claiming a clear victory, having won most of their demands. For the workers—those in sugar and also those in longshore and pineapple who had aided the strikers—the 1946 sugar strike proved the viability of the ILWU and firmly established it as an interracial working-class movement. On the night of the settlement, the union declared its strike victory over the radio, touting interracialism as the pivotal factor:

It is the first time in the history of Hawaii that a strike of sugar workers on the plantations of Hawaii has ever been won. The first time in the history that a strike of sugar workers has been conducted where there has been no split [along] racial lines. The first time in the history of Hawaii when the leadership of that strike on the plantations, in the camps, in the islands, and on a territory wide has been completely representative of all racial and national groups that make up plantation workers. Never at a single moment in this strike has there been any indication of a split among these workers.61

That “history” should be evoked repeatedly to describe the workers’ interracial solidarity seems fitting, as the workers had come to define themselves in decidedly historic terms.

The success of the 1946 strike convinced the workers that they were right to have organized interracially. As the ILWU’s chief negotiator during the strike observed, “whatever doubts or reservations any groups might have had about the program of [racial] integration . . . I’m convinced disappeared entirely with the 1946 strike” (LHA, Louis Goldblatt, 1979, p. 33). While the workers faced more tests of their interracialism, and while racial divisions did not disappear altogether, the subsequent history of the ILWU has borne out this assessment, as seen in the following two episodes.62 Revealing how deeply a deracialized view of interracialism structures the existing scholarship epistemologically, many studies acknowledge the importance of both episodes but do so invariably in distinctly nonracial terms.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a fierce anti-Communist movement besieged the ILWU. The first major manifestation came to be known as the “Ignacio Revolt.” In late 1947, Amos Ignacio, the vice president of the ILWU sugar union on the Big Island, announced the formation of an expressly anti-Communist Union of Hawaiian Workers, proclaiming the secession of eight ILWU units and calling for more.63

58 For example, see ILWUH, “The Record,” leaflet, TSSC (n.d., Strike Leaflets), and The Dispatcher, September 20, 1946.

59 For examples, see ILWUH, folders TSSC Minutes, KSSC Minutes, and HSSC Minutes.

60 ILWUH, TSSC to all island strike strategy committees (September 26, 1946, Union: Circulars; emphasis added).

61 HSPAPP, Louis Goldblatt, transcript of radio address (November 15, 1946, PSC29/10).

62 For examples of continuing racial friction among the workers, see the reports in ILWUSF, folder David Thompson:1946–1951 (Box 6).

63 ILWUH, minutes of the Hawaii Division Executive Board Meeting, ILWU Local 142 (December 14, 1947, History Files); ILWUH, Union of Hawaiian Workers, pamphlet (December 17, 1947, History Files).
the issue, a disproportionate number of those leading the secession, including Ignacio, were Portuguese, and were apparently motivated, in part, by their perception that the Japanese had “seized” the leadership.64 Faced with the prospect of losing several units, and possibly far more units later, the ILWU held a “Sugar Unity Conference” to debate the matter openly. In the end, not a single unit withdrew from the ILWU, as 98 percent of the workers voted to stay (Honolulu Star-Bulletin, January 20, 1948).

Two aspects of this incident are worth highlighting in regard to the ideological transformation that had taken place among the workers. First, in addition to the near unanimity of the vote, the workers’ discourse at the conference revealed their newfound mastery or “knowledge” of interracialism, if knowledge “by definition means the ability to transpose” (Sewell 1992:18). Ingrained in the political culture of the workers, the logic of interracialism had become transposable to analogical situations—in this case, to “red-baiting.” At the conference, a recurrent theme, and the most effective argument against the anti-Communist attacks, dealt with race, drawing a conceptual parallel between the racist “divide and rule” the workers had overcome and the anti-Communist “divide and rule” they now faced.65 Such analogies to interracialism would have been nonsensical just a short decade earlier.

Second, the appeal to anti-Japanese racism failed. By contrast, 10 years earlier, at the start of the movement, a similar appeal on the island of Kaua‘i had had the opposite outcome. In 1937, as soon as the longshore local had been established in Port Allen through a successful interracial strike, it had split apart. Claiming that “only the Japanese were running the union,” the non-Japanese members had deserted, not to return until after the war.66

In 1949, less than two years after the “Ignacio Revolt,” the ILWU longshore union engaged in a six-month strike, one of the longest in U.S. history, that shut down shipping at all the islands’ ports. Marked by another intense red-baiting campaign, the strike also aroused widespread anti-Filipino racism. Enraged that a majority of the strikers were Filipino, the public responded with calls for their deportation and a law prohibiting “aliens” from being employed as stevedores. Portraying the Filipino workers as uneducated and ignorant, as being duped by their leaders, and above all, as “aliens” not entitled to equal rights, a typical Honolulu Advertiser editorial declared, “Deportation to the Philippines would be a logical next step. Swift action [through] a special session of the Legislature also could remove aliens from the ranks of stevedores permanently” (July 20, 1949). A special session of the territorial legislature did seriously consider, if not deportation, a bill to limit employment in stevedoring to U.S. citizens.

Immediately, the ILWU lambasted the “shameless, selfish, and bigoted men [who] could ask that our Territorial Legislature deprive of their American rights those aliens who built Hawaii by their blood, sweat and tears.”67 Furthermore, the entire membership of the longshore union unanimously passed a resolution that warned, “In case any legislation is adopted which would bar non-citizens from employment in the stevedoring industry, the strike will go on. . . . Discrimination against our Filipino workers will not be tolerated.”68 No such legislation was passed.69

Again, a comparison to the 1930s attests to the workers’ ideological transformation. For

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64 ILWUSF, David Thompson to Lou Goldblatt, J.R. Robertson, and Jack Hall (December 15, 1947, Box 6); ZS, Robert McElrath (1975, p. 46).

Also see the statement of Frank Silva, a Portuguese ILWU member from Kaua‘i, who stated that Ignacio had told him the defection was a move against Japanese leadership (ILWUH, conference minutes, January 4, 1948, p. 9, History Files).

65 ILWUH, conference minutes (January 3–5, 1948, History Files).

66 HSPAPP, espionage report of a PAWWA meeting (August 20, 1937, LPC17/12).

Also see HSPAPP, espionage report (September 4, 1937, LPC17/12) and ILWUSF, Tsuruo Ogoshi, delegate report, Proceedings of the First Annual Convention of the ILWU (April 4–17, 1938, p. 178).

67 ILWUH, ILWU press release (July 18, 1949).

68 ILWUH, strike bulletin 54 (July 21, 1949).

69 ILWUH, meeting minutes (October 8, 1949, KSSC Minutes).
example, at the port of Ahukini in 1937, the incipient ILWU movement had found success in organizing Filipinos, who, as in the 1949 strike, had constituted a majority of the longshore work force there. Unlike in 1949, however, most of the other workers had balked, perceiving the union as an exclusively “Filipino” organization of “practically bums, all uncivilized monkeys.”

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As in the sociology of race generally, the consensus in the study of Hawaii’s working class has been that its interracialism required deracialization: that a leftist class ideology, introduced and proselytized by militants, provided the necessary deracializing force. However, in this paper, I have argued that a leftist class ideology was not straightforwardly adopted by Hawaii’s workers. Instead, it served as the initial pivot for a transformation—a rearticulation—of race and class. The resultant interracial working-class ideology was thereby an ideology of class that transformed and was transformed by race. It was through race, not its erasure, that Hawaii’s interracial working class was made.

Sahlins (1985) refers to transformation as “a pragmatic redefinition of the categories that alters the relationship between them” (p. 143). Hawaii’s working-class interracialism of the late 1930s and 1940s was precisely a pragmatic redefinition of class and race that altered the relationship between the two categories: It redefined class as dichotomous and antagonistic between the workers and the employers, while it redefined race as historically and relationally more akin, though not identical, among the nonhaole racial groups and more uniformly at odds between them and haole. The consequent alteration of the conceptual relationship between class and race was not that race subsided in significance but that it no longer “cut at right angles to class” (Saxton 1971:1).

Radicalized by their participation in the West Coast labor movement, the returning and newly arriving activists shared an understanding of class that sharply divided the workers, regardless of race or skill, from the employers. But the workers’ conceptions of class in Hawai’i up to that point had been articulated with race in ways that were not altogether compatible with this dichotomous view. Negotiating qualitatively different racisms, Portuguese, Japanese, and Filipino workers had comprehended and related to each other hierarchically and contrarily. Even their seemingly shared distinction from and resentment of the haole elite had been racially refracted: On the whole, Portuguese and Japanese workers had sought acceptance as haole and unquestioned Americans, respectively, while Filipino workers alone had persisted in labor organizing to fight unemployment and discrimination.

What transpired then, through discourse among the organizers and the workers, was a rearticulation of class and race. Increasingly, the leftist discourse of class incorporated race in a predictable, but consequential, fashion, leading to a couple of significant innovations before World War II. One was the tentative introduction of the “divide and rule” notion to explain racial divisions, and another was the invocation of past labor struggles in Hawai’i to highlight, by contrast, the need to organize interracially. Growing moderately in size, the prewar movement experienced intermittent successes, such as the official recognition of several locals, and setbacks, such as the racial rifts in Port Allen and Ahukini.

With the relaxation of martial law, the pace of the movement’s growth quickened. In part, because of having lived through the repressive conditions of military rule, the workers took more readily to the view of class that defined the interests of the workers and the “Big Five,” which had enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with the military government, as being in utter conflict. This development also may have spurred, and been spurred by, the recognition and alignment of the workers’ racial antipa-

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71 HSPAPP, interview with Bruce Knight Sandlin, conducted by John E. Parks of Law Offices of Philip L. Rice for the Lihue Plantation Company (October 26, 1938, pp. 2, 12, LPC17/11). Also see other interviews in this folder.
thy toward their haole employers, which had been racially differentiated and not expressed in uniformly conflictual terms.

Sharing a common class and racial antagonist, however, did not necessarily mean that Portuguese, Japanese, and Filipino workers would see themselves as a coherent collective, given their history of racial divisions. But projecting the leftist notion of “divide and rule” onto the past, the workers reimagined this racial history, constructing a narrative that “remembered” the employers’ racist divide-and-rule practices and “disremembered” the workers’ participation in the construction of racial divisions: Promising a new racial and class future, working-class interracialism, through the ILWU, therefore embodied their historical mandate and destiny.

In the late 1930s and 1940s, this evolving discourse structured and justified the movement’s other race-conscious practices, including the use of multiple languages, the attention to the material needs of the generally worst-off Filipinos, and perhaps most critically, the race-conscious election of the leadership. Firmly established by the conclusion of the 1946 sugar strike, Hawaii’s working-class interracialism could then be transposed to novel analogical situations both similar, like the 1949 longshore strike, and dissimilar, like the anti-Communist “Ignacio Revolt.”

To specify a general theory of interracialism based on this one counter-exemplary historical case would be, inter alia, premature. But, this is not to say that the case does not yield findings of general application and interest. What one counterexample can do effectively is to undermine the prevailing consensus, prying open an alternative theoretical space, and to generate provisional propositions for further research.

For the sociology of race, the most important and generalizable implication of this case is that the study of interracialism should not presume a priori the negation or the receding significance of race: The tight theoretical link between interracialism and de-racialization, which flattens and disfigures the analysis of interracialism, must be severed. In other words, interracialism should be conceptualized as an affirmative transformation of race that, discursively and practically, deals with and rearticulates extant racial boundaries.72

Although it is too early to set the scope conditions, there is little reason to suppose that Hawaii’s working class is singular with respect to its racially affirmative interracialism. Given the continuing focus of U.S. sociology on blacks and whites, some may object that Hawaii’s polyracial population is exceptional. But even a cursory glance at the recent census figures should disabuse us of any lingering illusion that the continental United States still warrants a biracial lens, if it ever did (e.g., Almaguer 1994; Foley 1997; Tchen 1999). Beyond the United States, a biracial approach is even less tenable. Furthermore, if the historical relationship between blacks and whites in the United States has been more thoroughly racialized than others, this would seem to argue even more strongly against a deracialized approach to studying interracialism.

A corollary implication is that the widespread calls of the past decade to study the mutual constitution of race and class (and other categories) should not be confined to cases of racial divisions and conflicts but should be extended to those of interracialism. Such an analytical move would reveal, I argue, a previously unnoticed, wide range of interracialisms—not only working-class or progressive ones—to be examined and would open up the concept to comparisons and further theorizing.73 Interracialisms should be thought of as constituting, in the theoretical idiom of Omi and Winant (1994), a broad category of “racial projects” that,

72 Whether or not the race-conscious choosing of leaders characterizes all interracialisms—or even all working-class interracialisms—the significance of the practice I would like to emphasize is that it recognizes explicitly and seeks to alter existing racial divisions.

73 For example, as an ever-growing literature has shown, the historical making of whiteness was not the amalgamation of already white ethnic groups but the contested construction of one racial group that incorporated multiple “off-white” racial groups. Thus, this new area of scholarship, which includes both working-class and non-working-class varieties, can be read fruitfully as providing examples of interracialism that are neither deracialized nor progressive (Jacobson 1998; Roediger 1991).
through a collective cumulation of studies, may lead to a number of “historically conditional theor[ies]” of interracialism (Paige 1999:784).

If there is a wide range of interracialisms, as I suggest, how do we account for their differing “successes”? That is, how do we explain the variable durability, or “depth,” of interracialisms (Sewell 1992:22)? In the realm of working-class interracialisms, for example, they can range from frangible coalitions, like the 1920 strike in Hawai‘i, to lasting elisions of extant racial boundaries, like the making of U.S. working-class whiteness (Barrett and Roediger 1997; Roediger 1991); Hawai‘i’s working-class interracialism of the 1940s would fall somewhere between these poles. I propose and discuss three factors related to the durability of interracialisms.

One factor may be sufficient ideological openness to the rearticulation of race toward interracialism. Put another way, although the requisite openness may empirically prove to be minimal in some cases, ideological fundamentalism would be ill-disposed to durable interracialism. For example, had the early activists insisted on doctrinaire adherence to any of their various leftist class-based ideologies, Hawai‘i’s working-class interracialism would likely have suffered, for it would have been less able to rearticulate race with class. On the other end of the political spectrum, an inflexibly impervious racism of “Anglo-Saxon” or “Nordic” supremacy would surely have failed to enlist large numbers of the “Celtic,” “Latin,” and “Slavic” races in the formation of broader white supremacist projects of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A second factor may be inflection-event outcomes. The depth of interracialisms is, I submit, path-dependent and nonlinear in its development. In the face of contrary forces, interracialisms likely encounter inflection event(s) that test their viability. Contingent upon the outcomes, such tests can reinforce and naturalize the interracial political communities being formed or can destabilize and even destroy them. For example, the 1946 strike, the first major clash between the Big Five and the newly organized ILWU, still stands as the most critical moment in the entrenchment of Hawai‘i’s working-class interracialism. By contrast, the workers’ defeat in the 1920 strike sealed the dismal fate of the fledgling interracialism between Japanese and Filipino workers.

The last factor I propose is resources. Although the two dimensions, as Sewell (1992) points out, are not intrinsically linked, I would conjecture that “depth” and “power” are correlated in the case of interracialisms. That is, whether an interracialism takes root is partly dependent on the resources marshaled for and against it and on the resources to be gained or lost as a consequence. One reason for the success of working-class interracialism in post-martial law Hawai‘i, for example, was the ILWU’s increased commitment of resources. And as this and other studies reveal, the state, with laws and other considerable resources at its disposal, may figure prominently in many, if not all, interracialisms.

For the study of Hawai‘i, reinterpreting working-class interracialism as an affirmative transformation rather than as a necessary negation of race resolves two previously unposed and unanswerable questions. First, why have the prewar working-class racial divisions been so poorly, but similarly, remembered? Endemic not only to scholarly writings, the oral histories of workers and the ILWU’s official histories both attest to a particular amnesia: They attribute the prewar racial divisions wholly to the employers’ racist divide-and-rule practices, disremembering the substantial role of the workers. Only when we consider the central importance, and success, of “divide and rule” as a mnemonic schema in the making of working-class interracialism, can we apprehend its profound impact on how

74 The state, however, should not be understood solely in relation to resources (Bourdieu 1994; Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Mitchell 1991). Although not in the present case, the state can decisively shape interracialisms conceptually as well as materially (Barrett and Roediger 1997: 186–91). As Bourdieu (1994) notes, “one of the major powers of the state is to produce and impose . . . categories of thought” (p. 1).

75 For examples, see the oral histories collected and published by the Ethnic Studies Oral History Project at the University of Hawai‘i, and International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (1996, 1997).
the workers’ pre-interracial past has been remembered.

Second, if the making of the interracial working class was but a part of a more general postwar trend toward interracialism in Hawai‘i, as is often supposed, why was it first and foremost a working-class phenomenon? For example, the workers of the ILWU were virtually the only ones to fight against, or even find problematic, the heightened anti-Filipino racism occasioned by the sugar and pineapple industries’ recruitment of 6,000 workers from the Philippines in 1945 and 1946 and by the 1949 longshore strike (Jung 1999a). Only when we consider that the workers’ interracialism derived from a leftist discourse of class—a discourse that had little resonance and appeal outside of the working class—can we apprehend the worker’s historical position at the forefront in the racial democratization of Hawai‘i.

Finally, for a progressive interracial politics of antiracism, an affirmative conceptualization of interracialism offers a firmer theoretical basis for action. In the decades following the civil rights movement, conservatives effectively appropriated the movement’s early ideology of “colorblindness” and integration, or deracialized interracialism, as the means and the goal of their racial politics. Conservatives oppose race-conscious policies and programs (i.e., affirmative action) on the grounds that they are not “colorblind” and therefore are racist. The liberals’ and the left’s response, particularly among whites, is often one of deep ambivalence, unable to reconcile fully their defense of race-conscious policies and programs and their own longing for a raceless society or working class.76 Consonant with this paper’s thesis, I suggest that interracial antiracist politics be conceptualized as engaging in progressive transformations of race that necessarily “see” and rearticulate race, rather than engaging in absolute and utopian breaks with it onto “colorblindness”—a fool’s gold whether sought from the left or the right.

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APPENDIX A

Abbreviations of Organization Names and Archival Sources Used in the Text and Footnotes: Definitions and Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Hawaiian Collection. Special Collections, University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, HI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HLA</td>
<td>Honolulu Longshoremen’s Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSPAPP</td>
<td>Hawaiian Sugar Planters’ Association. Plantation Papers. Special Collections, University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, HI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSSC</td>
<td>Hawai‘i Strike Strategy Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILWUH</td>
<td>International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union. Papers. ILWU Local 142 Library, Honolulu, HI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILWUSF</td>
<td>International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union. Papers. Anne Rand Research Library, ILWU, San Francisco, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSSC</td>
<td>Kaua‘i Strike Strategy Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Labadie Collection. Special Collections Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHA</td>
<td>Labor History Archive, Center for Labor Education and Research, University of Hawai‘i, West O‘ahu, HI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAWWA</td>
<td>Port Allen Waterfront Workers Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROHO</td>
<td>Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSSC</td>
<td>Territorial Strike Strategy Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRD</td>
<td>War Records Depository. Papers. Special Collections, University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, HI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZS</td>
<td>Zalburg, Sanford. Papers. Special Collections, University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, HI.</td>
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76 The liberals’ ambivalence can be seen, for example, in the language with which they defend affirmative action, especially in relation to university admissions, emphasizing “diversity” in an effort to deracialize the issue (Takagi 1992).

Examples of the left’s conflation of progressive interracial politics and deracialization are the not infrequent attacks on “identity politics” and ethnic studies, which are untenably placed in binary opposition to the supposedly universalist politics and studies of class (Gitlin 1995; Hobsbawm 1996; Tomasky 1996). See Kelley (1997, chap. 4) for a critique.
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