

# Littoral Hawai'i – Situating the American West in Oceania through Hawai'i's History of Education By Derek Taira



**Friday, September 23rd, 12-1pm, [On Zoom](#)**

Within the histories of the American West and U.S. empire, Hawai'i exists in the gray zone and the story of HI's pre-statehood period (1900-1959) is no different. This history narrates Hawaiian statehood as a progressive linear development, from a Native monarchy to America's 50th state comprised of a majority non-white population, celebrated by all. A closer look at the history of education during the territorial period, however, tells a different story. I argue the territorial period was Hawai'i's formal colonial period – an active and contested era of colonization – and schools represented an important site for white settlers, Asian immigrants, and Native Hawaiians to shape their futures on their own terms and the future of the territory. Framing twentieth-century Hawaiian history in this manner reconnects Hawai'i to the Pacific World by highlighting how Hawai'i also experienced colonization similar to that of other Pacific Island nations during this time.

Dr. Derek Taira graduated from the PhD program in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at UW-Madison in 2016. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

