

INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES AMONG ASIAN AMERICANS IN THE U.S. WEST, 1880-  
1954

By

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To my Mom and Dad

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EIP	Estelle Ishigo Papers, Japanese American Research Project, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.
MMP	Mixed Marriage Policy Files 291.1, Box 28, Record Group 499, Central Correspondence, 1942–1946, Wartime Civil Control Administration and Civil Affairs Division, Western Defense Command and the Fourth Army, Records of U.S. Army Defense Commands (WWII), National Archives at College Park, Maryland.
RJAR	Records about Japanese Americans Relocated during World War II, created 1988-1989, documenting the period 1942–1946, Record Group 210, National Archives at College Park, Maryland.
SRR	Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
WRACF	War Relocation Authority Case Files, Record Group 210, National Archives at Washington D.C.

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My work is about the first two generations of Chinese and Japanese Americans who married whites in the U.S. West between 1880 and 1954. It was a time when interracial marriage was illegal in most of the states. From two major archival sources—the Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927, and records about Japanese American internees during World War II—, my work finds that more than two hundred Chinese and Japanese Americans and their white spouses could circumvent miscegenation laws and lived as legally married couples in the U.S. West before the 1950s.

Existing scholarship on the history of miscegenation laws has revealed the role of the laws in making racial categories and stigmatizing interracial intimacy between non-white men and white women. My work shows that marriages between white women and Chinese and/or Japanese men were major targets of racist and misogynist assumptions about interracial intimacy in the U.S. West. Such marriages were further marginalized by federal government's policies on Asian exclusion and on the mixed marriage families during the World War II internment of Japanese Americans. Government policies upheld a white male citizen's ability to assimilate his Asian wife and his patriarchal prerogative to his interracial family. The same government

policies persistently denied the claims of white women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men that they, as wives and mothers, were assimilating agents in their interracial families.

My work uncovers the history of a small but significant number of interracial couples consisting of Chinese and/or Japanese husbands and white wives, who argued against the negative construction of their interracial marriages. My work also notes the emergence of a cultural pluralist defense of interracial marriage between non-white men and white women by progressive intellectuals such as Franz Boas, W.E.B. Du Bois, Sidney Gulick, and Robert Park in the early twentieth century. White women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men claimed that their interracial families were legitimate American families decades before postwar American liberals began to openly support interracial marriage.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In 1972, Estelle Ishigo, a white woman in her seventies, published *Lone Heart Mountain*, a book about her camp life at Heart Mountain, Wyoming, during the World War II internment of Japanese Americans.<sup>1</sup> This book was based on her writings and sketches of the Heart Mountain camp that she entered with her American-born Japanese husband, Arthur Shigeharu Ishigo. Estelle was one of the 63 white women married to Japanese Americans, who endured camp lives in order to keep their families together during the war.

My work is about interracial marriages between Chinese and/or Japanese Americans and whites in the U.S. West between 1880 and 1954. At the time most states in the West did not issue a license for a marriage between a “white” person and a “Chinese,” “Japanese,” or “Mongolian.” Nonetheless, most of the Asian-white couples evaded anti-miscegenation laws and legalized their marriages by obtaining marriage licenses in states that did not prohibit interracial marriages between Asians and whites. Between 1882 and 1952, Asian immigration was largely restricted and Asian immigrants were deemed ineligible for naturalized citizenship because they were not white. In part due to anti-miscegenation laws and in part due to anti-Asian sentiments among whites, rates of interracial marriages among Chinese and Japanese Americans were very low during this seventy-year period. It is estimated that less than fifty Chinese Americans found their spouses among whites. Moreover, most of these marriages were between Chinese men and white women due to the extremely skewed gender ratios among Chinese Americans at the time. The same phenomenon held true for Japanese Americans. The database on Japanese American internees during World War II and other military documents indicates that slightly more than 200 Japanese Americans were recorded as married to whites and approximately 120 of these

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<sup>1</sup> Estelle Ishigo, *Lone Heart Mountain* (Los Angeles, Calif., 1972).

Japanese Americans were married to white women. In short, before Asian immigration resumed in 1952, marriages between Chinese and Japanese men and white women were a major form of interracial marriages among the first two generations of Chinese and Japanese Americans.

Thus, there were more than one hundred white women married to Chinese and Japanese Americans despite legal barriers in the West before the 1950s. This number is particularly striking in light of the fact that white women rarely married black or Native American men during this same period. In the post-Civil War South, as the work of Martha Hodes and Peggy Pascoe have revealed, it was nearly impossible for white women to circumvent anti-miscegenation laws in order to marry black men because white women in relationships with black men became targets of white violence.<sup>2</sup> Unlike blacks and Asians, Native Americans were not legally prevented from marrying whites in most of the states throughout U.S. history. Yet, such marriages occurred mostly between white men and Native American women, reflecting the history of sexual exchange between English settlers and Native American women in colonial times.<sup>3</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, marriages between Native American men and white women were unusual.<sup>4</sup> For instance, Katherine Ellinghaus, who has written the

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<sup>2</sup> Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th-Century South* (New Haven, Conn., 1997); Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York, 2009); Charles Frank Robinson II, *Dangerous Liaisons: Sex and Love in the Segregated South* (Fayetteville, Ark., 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Rachel F. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy: the Regulation of Marriage and Romance* (Chicago, 2001), 48–50. Regarding sexual relationships between English settlers and Native American women in the early English settlements, see Richard Godbeer, “Eroticizing the Middle Ground: Anglo-Indian Sexual Relations along the Eighteenth-Century Frontier,” in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York, 1999), 91–111. With regard to interracial intimacy in settler society in Canada, see Sylvia Van Kirk, *“Many Tender Ties”: Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670–1870* (Norman, Okla., 1983).

<sup>4</sup> In the last decade, interracial marriage between Native American men and white women was a popular topic among historians of interracial marriage. Yet, scholars have built their work on a few known cases of such marriage. Katherine Ellinghaus, “Margins of Acceptability: Class, Education, and Interracial Marriage in Australia and the U.S.,” *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 55–75; Margaret Jacobs, “The Eastmans and the Luhans: Interracial Marriage between White Women and Native American Men, 1875–1935,” *Frontiers* 23, no. 3 (2002): 29–54; Maureen Reed, “Mixed Messages: Pablita Velarde, Kay Bennet, and the Changing Meaning of Anglo-Indian Inter-marriage in Twentieth-Century New Mexico,” *Frontiers* 26, no. 3 (2005): 101–134.

most detailed account of marriages between Native American men and white women to date, based her account on six Native American students in Hampton Institute who were married to white women in the 1890s.<sup>5</sup>

My work focuses on interracial marriage, not on other forms of interracial intimacy. Although anti-miscegenation laws in the South often punished interracial sex as well as interracial marriage, the primary goal of the laws across the South and the West was to prevent interracial marriage. As Pascoe argues, miscegenation laws were central to white supremacy after the Civil War.<sup>6</sup> I have benefited especially from the insights of several prominent scholars who have noted how anti-miscegenation laws played a significant role in producing “race.” For example, Nancy Cott has argued that anti-miscegenation laws have been “instrumental in articulating and structuring distinctions grouped under the name of ‘race’.”<sup>7</sup>

Pascoe has concurred but has brought gender into the analysis of interracial marriage more forcefully, arguing that “in much the same way that miscegenation law was a kind of factory for the production of race, marriage was a kind of factory for the production of gender.” Pascoe’s great contribution to historians’ understanding of interracial marriage is to show us how race and gender were historically intertwined: “Interracial marriage brought these two processes [of the production of race and gender] together,” Pascoe argues, “rooting race and gender in larger discussions of the rights of citizens.”<sup>8</sup> In line with Pascoe, my work shows that marriages between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans were intricately connected to ideologies of

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<sup>5</sup> Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in the United States and Australia, 1887–1937* (Lincoln, Nebr., 2006), 2.

<sup>6</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: a History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, Mass., 2000), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 11.

race, gender, and citizenship between 1880 and 1954. This was a time when nativism, white supremacy, and patriarchy served as ideological backbones of both state and federal laws on marriage and citizenship.

Scholarship on the history of miscegenation laws has revealed that the enforcement of miscegenation laws and extralegal white violence made interracial marriage between blacks and whites nearly impossible in the Jim Crow South. As Hodes has revealed that although legal bans on interracial marriages were lifted in Reconstruction South, white women could not take advantage of this opportunity because Klan violence threatened white women in relationships with black men as well.<sup>9</sup> Pascoe and Hodes have brilliantly revealed how the Southern legal system used miscegenation laws to criminalize interracial sex between black men and white women. However, such laws were not used to restrict white men's sexual access to black women, a common-enough practice that was largely condoned in the Jim Crow South. Thus, it can be concluded that legal marriages between blacks and whites hardly existed in the South. Before and after slavery, intimacy between black men and white women was considered what Hodes calls illicit sex. White men continued to make black women their concubines before and after the Civil War.

Difficulties in finding evidence for legal marriages between blacks and whites in the Jim Crow South often led scholars to conclude that interracial marriages between blacks and whites became possible only after the U.S. Supreme Court declared anti-miscegenation laws unconstitutional in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967. In the South and across the nation, it was extremely difficult for interracial couples to challenge the constitutionality of miscegenation laws because the Court upheld anti-miscegenation laws in *Pace v. Alabama* (1883). According to

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<sup>9</sup> Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, 150–151.

the *Pace* decision, Alabama's miscegenation laws did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment not only because the laws were equally applied to both whites and non-whites but also because the regulation of marriage and sex was considered a matter for state (not federal) governments.

Without much information about actual cases of interracial marriages between Asians and whites, Asian American scholarship has assumed that Asian Americans suffered from anti-miscegenation laws and the stigmatization of interracial sex in the West in ways similar to blacks in the South.<sup>10</sup> According to this assumption, Asian men were deemed as sexual threats to white women as just as black men were.<sup>11</sup> Asian women were considered as objects of white men's sexual desire as much as black women were. Therefore, the reigning assumption has been that if interracial marriages between Asians and whites actually existed, they were not only extremely rare but also individual incidents that could not be used to reach any conclusions. For example, Henry Yu asserts that he found only three reported cases of intermarriages between Asians and whites on the West Coast in the Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927, a research project led by progressive social scientists and missionaries. And Yu concludes that the “individual examples of intermarriage between ‘Orientals’ and ‘white’” showed “little pattern except for a stubborn peculiarity unique to each case.”<sup>12</sup> What is more important to Yu is that American social scientists who designed the Survey of Race Relations project showed “a peculiar fascination with sex between ‘Orientals’ and ‘whites,’ particularly between ‘Oriental’ men and ‘white’ women,

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<sup>10</sup> Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: a History of Asian Americans*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston, 1998), 101–102; Henry Yu, “Mixing Bodies and Cultures: the Meaning of America’s Fascination with Sex between ‘Orientals’ and ‘Whites’,” in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History* (New York, 1999), 444–463.

<sup>11</sup> Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 101–102; Paul R. Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth Century America* (Madison, Wis., 1989), 25–46.

<sup>12</sup> Yu, “Mixing Bodies and Culture,” 445. Unlike Yu, Paul Spickard and Mark Wild found more cases of intermarriages in the Survey of Race Relations. However, both still tend to treat intermarriages as aberrant to racial relations in the West prior to World War II. Spickard, *Mixed Blood*, 47–93; Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005), 121–147.

which was disproportionate to the small number of publicly reported cases.”<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that Yu refers to actual cases of marriages between Asian men and white women as “sex.”

I argue that neither the negative stereotypes of Asians held by anti-Asian propagandists nor the supposedly exotic attentions of progressive social scientists to “sex” between Asian men and white women explain the experiences of actual interracial families consisting of Chinese or Japanese husbands, their white wives, and their mixed race children prior to the 1950s. Asian American scholarship’s assumption that intermarriage was almost non-existent in early Asian American history has prevented more thorough research on extant sources. For instance, my research on the Survey of Race Relations reveals that there were more than 40 cases of intermarriage between Chinese and/or Japanese and whites reported by the Survey of Race Relations, which included more than 60 interviews with Chinese and Japanese immigrants who expressed their opinions about intermarriage. Contrary to Yu’s assumption, my research also shows that there were patterns in these intermarriages. I also argue that social scientists in the Survey of Race Relations were interested in marriage, not “sex,” between “Orientals” and whites and in the social positions of interracial families in the West.

My work builds upon existing scholarship on the history of interracial marriage and antimiscegenation laws, which has analyzed the role of the laws in developing racial categories and in generating anxieties over interracial sex and marriage.<sup>14</sup> Asian American scholarship has contributed to the historiography of interracial marriage and has produced a more thorough

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<sup>13</sup> Yu, “Mixing Bodies and Culture,” 445.

<sup>14</sup> For a detailed discussion of anti-miscegenation laws in the U.S. West and of the laws’ function of constituting peoples from Asia as a non-white racial category, see Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*; Megumi Dick Osumi, “Asians and California’s Anti-Miscegenation Laws,” in Nobuya Tsuchida, ed., *Asian and Pacific American Experiences: Women’s Perspectives* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1982), 1–37; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*. For an overview of laws on Asian immigration, see Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990* (Stanford, Calif., 1993). Mark Wild has treated a few actual intermarriages between Chinese or Japanese and whites as reflecting the emergence of multiethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles. Wild, *Street Meeting*.

analysis of interracial marriages involving Chinese Americans in New York City and in the South.<sup>15</sup> These case studies of interracially married Chinese Americans on the East Coast and in the South revealed that some Chinese Americans spearheaded a family life in the U.S. when most Chinese Americans and other Asian Americans remained “bachelors.”<sup>16</sup> It should be noted, however, that the state of New York never prohibited interracial marriage. In the Jim Crow South, interracial marriages involving Chinese often occurred between Chinese men and black women, reflecting the status of Chinese as “partially colored.”<sup>17</sup> Chinese and Japanese Americans’ experiences of interracial marriages in the U.S. West reveal the range of Asian American intermarriage based on regional differences. At the same time, my work focuses on the

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<sup>15</sup> The existing literature on Asian American intermarriage tends to use such intermarriages as evidence for the ambiguous race status of Asian Americans on the East Coast and in the South since the mid-nineteenth century. Sociologists spearheaded this topic in their study of Asians in the American South. James W. Loewen’s study on the Chinese in Mississippi inspired Asian American scholarship as well as scholars interested in race relations in the South since his book was first published in 1971. James W. Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese: between Black and White* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971). Lucy Cohen dealt with the history of mixed marriages between Chinese and Louisiana natives—both white and black—since Reconstruction. Lucy M. Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: a People without a History* (Baton Rouge, La., 1984). Since the late 1990s, historians of Asian Americans have included interracial marriage in their study of Chinese Americans’ lives before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era. On intermarriage between Chinese men and Irish women in New York before the Chinese Exclusion Act, see John Kuo Wei Tchen, *New York before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776–1882* (Baltimore, Md., 1999). Mary Ting Yi Lui nicely captures the ways in which negative stereotypes of Chinese men and myths about interracial relationships regulated interracial sex and marriage between Chinese and whites in turn-of-the-century New York. Mary Ting Yi Lui, *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery: Murder, Miscegenation, and Other Dangerous Encounters in Turn-of-the-Century New York City* (Princeton, N.J., 2005). Regarding an analysis of intermarriage among Japanese Americans, see Spickard, *Mixed Blood*. With regard to progressives’ construction of “Orientals” in the U.S. West and their interests in “Oriental-white” marriages, see Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, Exoticism in Modern America* (New York, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> For more information on early Asian American literature’s reflection of the relationship between Asian exclusion acts and Asian American families, see Patricia Chu, *Assimilating Asians: Gendered Strategies of Authorship in Asian America* (Durham, N.C., 2000); David Eng, *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham, N.C., 2001); Susan Koshy, *Sexual Naturalization: Asian Americans and Miscegenation* (Stanford, Calif., 2004). Regarding the relationship between Chinese exclusion acts and the development of modern immigration law, see Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995); Erika Lee, *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2003). For an analysis of exclusionary immigration laws’ racialized construction of American citizenship, see Lisa Lowe, *Immigration Acts: on Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, N.C., 1996); Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, N.J., 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Leslie Bow, “Racial Instability and the Anxieties of the ‘Partly Colored’: Representations of Asians under Jim Crow,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 10, no. 1 (2007): 1–30.

West because the concentration of these two Asian racial groups on the West Coast prompted states across the west to prohibit marriages between Asians and whites.

My work probes the following question: what enabled interracial marriages—not sex—between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans to take place in the West despite the existence of miscegenation laws? This question cannot be answered if we treat interracial marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans as individual incidents. My work explores how the individual experiences of interracial marriages between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans were connected to the changing legal, social, and ideological contexts of interracial marriage in the U.S. For this purpose, I refer to legal history scholarship on federal laws on immigration, marriage, nationality, and citizenship.<sup>18</sup> My subject is also closely related to the increasing power of state governments to regulate the institution of marriage after the Civil War.<sup>19</sup> I also focus on how the subject of interracial marriage between Asians and whites was framed by two conflicting race discourses: social Darwinism and its early twentieth-century version, the eugenics movement,<sup>20</sup> and cultural pluralism.

My work focuses on instances of interracial marriages among Chinese and Japanese Americans, to the exclusion of other Asian-ethnic groups, for two reasons: Chinese and Japanese were the two largest and earliest Asian immigrant groups in the mainland U.S. before Asian immigration resumed in 1952 and Chinese and Japanese were specific targets of anti-Asian discourses and protests. The Yellow Peril was an example of the American construction of

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<sup>18</sup> Candice Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998); Linda Kerber, *No Constitutional Rights to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York, 1998), 3–46; Virginia Sapiro, “Women, Citizenship, and Nationality: Immigration and Naturalization Policy in the United States,” *Politics and Society* 13 (1984): 1–26.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth: Law and the Family in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1985).

<sup>20</sup> Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley, Calif., 2005); William H. Tucker, *The Science and Politics of Racial Research* (Urbana, Ill., 1994).

Chinese and Japanese as bearers of a supposedly heathen civilization. On the West Coast, working-class white Americans and nativist politicians attacked Chinese and Japanese laborers as undermining the cause of free white labor as early as the 1860s.<sup>21</sup> The anti-Chinese movement of the postbellum period resulted in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Anti-Japanese propaganda lasted until Congress excluded Japanese in the 1924 National Origins Act.

Until 1924, the main purpose of antimiscegenation laws in the West was to prevent “Chinese” and “Japanese,” who were referred to as “Mongolians,” from marrying “white” persons. Although the term “Mongolians” occasionally generated controversies over who was to be included in this group, marriage clerks and judges often interpreted “Mongolians” as encompassing both “Chinese” and “Japanese.” Other ethnic groups from Asia were not classified as “Mongolians” and were often allowed to marry persons belonging to the “white” race. In turn-of-the-century California, as the anthropologist Karen Leonard has revealed, immigrants from India’s Punjab region, who were identified as “Hindus,” could marry “Mexican” women, despite “Mexicans” being classified as “white” by the U.S. Census Bureau at the time.<sup>22</sup> Yet, marriage clerks did not issue marriage licenses to Punjabi-Mexican couples if the skin tones of potential partners appeared too different.<sup>23</sup> In the 1920s, marriage clerks in California often issued a marriage license to a Filipino man who wanted to marry a “white” woman because these clerks interpreted Filipinos as not belonging to the race category “Mongolians.” In the 1930s,

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<sup>21</sup> Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley, Calif., 1971).

<sup>22</sup> Karen Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices: California’s Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia, 1992).

<sup>23</sup> Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, 68.

lawmakers in the West added the race category—“Malays”—to extend existing anti-miscegenation laws to Filipinos.<sup>24</sup>

For the purpose of my work, I use the phrase the U.S. West to designate mainly three Pacific Coast states—California, Oregon, and Washington—where approximately 90% of Chinese and Japanese immigrants and their descendants resided before World War II. Yet, I also include other western states as part of the U.S. West for my purposes because these other states’ anti-miscegenation laws contributed to the creation of race taxonomies referring to Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian ethnic groups. In the U.S. West, interracial marriages between Chinese and/or Japanese men and white women became an explosive issue because of the anti-Chinese and anti-Japanese movement that attacked Chinese and Japanese as unassimilable and thus undesirable for the ideal racial makeup of the American nation. My work does not examine intermarriages in Hawaii. Hawaii was not a U.S. state at the time and race relations in Hawaii was a reversal of those in the mainland U.S. In Hawaii, whites were a minority race in Hawaii and mixed marriage was believed to be common there.<sup>25</sup>

The foremost goal of my work is to restore the voices of actual interracial couples from extant sources. Existing scholarship on interracial marriage and antimiscegenation laws has relied on examining court cases on actual interracial marriages to reconstruct stories behind these marriages.<sup>26</sup> These legal documents often conveyed mainly whites’ disapproval of marriage

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<sup>24</sup> Leti Volpp, “American Mestizo: Filipinos and Antimiscegenation Laws in California,” *U.C. Davis Law Review* 33 (2000): 795–835.

<sup>25</sup> Intermarriages in Hawaii garnered Chicago sociologists’ attention as early as in 1924 when the Survey of Race Relations was conducted. While Robert Park, the director of the Survey, did not materialize his research interests in intermarriages in Hawaii, Romanzo Adams, another Chicago sociologist influenced by Park, published a book on the subject. Romanzo Adams, *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii: a Study of the Mutually Conditioned Processes of Acculturation and Amalgamation* (New York, 1937).

<sup>26</sup> Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*; Peter Wallenstein, *Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law—an American History* (New York, 2002).

across racial lines. Scholars of interracial marriage have been eager to unearth how interracial couples survived and kept lifelong relationships while living under the reign of anti-miscegenation laws.

Answers to this question have been elusive due to an apparent lack of sources. The number of interracial marriages in the U.S. before 1960 is not known since the U.S. Census only began to count interracial marriages starting in 1960.<sup>27</sup> Most importantly, interracial couples and families kept their marriages private. Hodes, who has brilliantly read into the voices of interracial couples (between black men and white women) in legal and social documents written by white supremacists, has confessed that she has “had to invert the narratives of the powerful to find the stories of the voiceless.”<sup>28</sup> Even Pascoe, who has done the most to uncover the voices of interracial couples, acknowledges that her research on interracial couples “falls short of answering the question that lies at the center of their stories: what was in the hearts of the men and women who were so determined to live together, marry, and maintain their relationships that they defied the law, and nearly unanimous White public opinion, in order to do so?”<sup>29</sup>

Two archival sources have enabled me to explore the stories told by actual members of interracial families. The Survey of Race Relations archive at Stanford University includes more than 50 interviews with white women married to Chinese or Japanese immigrants and mixed race individual of part white, part Asian ancestry.<sup>30</sup> The Survey archive also includes sources recording whites’ and Asian immigrants’ opinions about interracial marriage and newspaper

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<sup>27</sup> Renee C. Romano, *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 3.

<sup>28</sup> Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, 13.

<sup>29</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 313.

<sup>30</sup> The Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927, Hoover Institute Archives, Stanford University, [retrieved 12 June 2010], available from <http://collections.stanford.edu/srr/bin/page?forward=home> (hereafter SRR).

clippings about reports of intermarriage between Asians and whites at the time. The Survey of Race Relations was a research project directed by Chicago sociologist Robert Park and was funded by the Institute of Social and Religious Research in New York City. Progressive scholars and missionaries reacted to the intensity of the anti-Asian movement in the early 1920s, which pressed Congress to complete Asian exclusion by halting Japanese immigration, by creating this project. Park and the other members in the Survey were concerned that the anti-Asian movement spread racist propaganda targeting Asians in the U.S. The purpose of the Survey was to promote white Americans' understandings of Asian immigrants by getting and transmitting information on the social and cultural lives of Asian immigrants and their American-born descendants. Park and other leading members of the Survey considered interracial marriage between Asian men and white women as one of the most misunderstood subjects concerning Asian immigrants.

The second archival sources critical to my work are the War Relocation Authority case files at the National Archives in Washington D.C. and the database on Records about Japanese Americans Relocated during World War II.<sup>31</sup> This database on approximately 110,000 Japanese American internees allowed me to identify approximately 200 interracial marriages between whites and Japanese Americans as well as records pertaining to more than 300 mixed race individuals of part Japanese ancestry. This database includes information pertaining to an internee's name, race, birthplace, birth date and year, parents' birthplace and date, marital status, the race and name of spouse, previous addresses, education, and occupation. Most of the sources on members of Japanese-white families came from individual case files. These individual case files of interracial families often included handwritten letters of the white spouses of Japanese

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<sup>31</sup> War Relocation Authority Case Files, Record Group 210, National Archives at Washington D.C. (hereafter WRACF); Records about Japanese Americans Relocated during World War II, 1942–1946, Record Group 210, National Archives at College Park, Maryland, [retrieved 10 December 2010], available from <http://aad.archives.gov/add/series-description.jsp?s=623&cat=WR26&bc=,sl> (hereafter RJAR).

Americans and reference letters written by whites who had known for interracial families for years. Because individual case files include private information about individual internees, these files have been only recently available to the public. Between winter 2006 and summer 2008, I could retrieve case files of internees who were born before 1910, which means that I gathered nearly all the case files of marriages between first-generation Japanese Americans and their white spouses, and more than half of the case files of second-generation Japanese Americans who had been married to whites by 1942.

Because of the wealth of information that is contained in the War Relocation Authority case files, my work contains far more detailed information about marriages between Japanese Americans and whites than that about marriages between Chinese Americans and whites. The difference is mostly due to gaps in extant records about these two racial-ethnic groups, for which there are historical reasons. Due to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the size of the Chinese population in the West diminished significantly in the early twentieth century. Most first-generation Chinese Americans were not survived by any American-born descendants because they were forced to remain bachelors due to the restriction of female immigration from China. Since female immigration from Japan was allowed between 1908 and 1921, the Japanese American community suffered far less lopsided gender ratios than the Chinese American community. In fact, the increase in birthrates among Japanese during the 1910s made Japanese Americans a major target of anti-Asian sentiments in the early 1920s.

The first set of questions that my work addresses is how anti-miscegenation laws and regulations of interracial marriage were implemented in the U.S. West, and what enabled or forced interracial couples consisting of Chinese and/or Japanese men and white women to legalize their marriages despite the existence of anti-miscegenation laws. Pascoe has recently

suggested that there were nuanced differences between the racial and sexual marginalization of Asian Americans and that of blacks.<sup>32</sup> Pascoe's major historical references are interracial couples of Filipino men and white women who could legalize their marriages by circumventing antimiscegenation laws in the late 1930s and 1940s.<sup>33</sup> My work finds that as early as the 1890s Chinese and Japanese Americans and their white spouses in the West evaded antimiscegenation laws. Chinese and Japanese Americans—both men and women—could at least claim the status of legal spouses of whites, while blacks were prohibited from marrying whites until 1967.

Interracial unions between Asians and whites in the West had some room to circumvent regulations pertaining to interracial marriage unlike the unions between blacks and whites in the South. The legalization of interracial marriages between Asians and whites were feasible because of the looser grip of anti-miscegenation laws in the West compared to those in the South. Anti-miscegenation laws in the West were written as civil codes that denied an issuance of a marriage license to an interracial couple and that annulled a license issued to an interracial couple. However, anti-miscegenation laws in the West rarely had the effect of annulling out-of-state interracial marriage, nor criminalizing interracial sex.

Nonetheless, what drove those involved in interracial unions between Asians and whites to travel across the states to obtain marriage licenses in the West was the moral stigma attached to interracial sex and cohabitation. White women in relationships with Asian men felt an imperative to remove such stigmas. Furthermore, interracial cohabitation between Asian men and white women could result in the prosecution of Asian men for “white slavery” under the Mann Act.

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<sup>32</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 83.

<sup>33</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 195.

Extant records tell that even interracial couples consisting of white men and Asian women circumvented antimiscegenation laws and legalized their marriages. Asian-white couples' motif of legalizing interracial marriage can be better understood if we refer to the ways that cohabitation and common-law marriage were regulated by states after the Civil War. After the Civil War, most states claimed states' right to set the norms of domestic relations.<sup>34</sup> As a result, states did not recognize cohabitation as common-law marriage. Cohabiting couples were often forced to legalize their marriages by obtaining marriage licenses.

Despite—or because of—interracial sex and marriage being fraught with moral stigmas, white partners in interracial relationships with Chinese and/or Japanese Americans wanted to obtain marriage licenses in order to meet the standard of what states defined as an acceptable form of marriage. In some cases, white neighbors pressed interracial couples to get legally married in order to demonstrate the moral character of their relationships. During World War II internment of Japanese Americans, government officials administering internment camps stipulated that only legally wedded white spouses of Japanese Americans could enter the camps as internees. Unlike cohabitation between Asians and whites, Asians living with their Mexican or Native American partners were recognized as having common-law marriage status. For instance, during the internment of Japanese Americans, Mexican women who were common-law wives of Japanese Americans were admitted to enter internment camps as spouses of Japanese Americans.

Second, my work examines how federal policies on Chinese and Japanese Americans, including immigration restriction laws and the internment of Japanese Americans, treated white men and white women married to Chinese or Japanese Americans differently. Gender gaps in interracial marriages were articulated at the level of federal laws and policies on marriages

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<sup>34</sup> Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth*; Göran Lind, *Common Law Marriage: a Legal Institution for Cohabitation* (New York, 2008), 143.

between citizens and noncitizens. These laws and policies respected white male citizens' decisions to choose their marital partners among Asians and accommodated the unity of these families. American male citizens married to Asian women could make their Asian spouses legal immigrants at a time when all persons of Asian nationalities denied entry to the U.S. According to the sources of my work, Asian wives of white male citizens were exempted from the 1924 National Origins Act and could enter the U.S. as non-quota immigrants.

Federal laws on immigration, overseas marriage, and citizenship punished white women citizens married to Asian husbands by stripping them of their citizenship.<sup>35</sup> Between 1907 and 1934, American female citizens married Asians lost their citizenship for the duration of their marriages. The 1922 Cable Act allowed American women married to foreigners to regain their citizenship by naturalization. However, American women married to men of Asian nationalities could not restore their citizenship because they were married to men who were deemed ineligible for naturalized citizenship.

The military's policies on mixed marriage families during World War II reflected the practice of federal policies that had protected white male citizens' rights to keep their Asian wives within their households. During the internment of Japanese Americans, Japanese women who were married to white men and who had children with their husbands could return to their homes on the West Coast to be with their husbands. However, the military squarely denied the request of white wives of Japanese men that their husbands be allowed to join their families on the West Coast.

Third, I also explore how whites were divided over the issue of marriages between Asians and whites and the desirability of mixed race offspring of part Asian part white ancestry and how

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<sup>35</sup> Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*; Kerber, *No Constitutional Rights to Be Ladies*, 3–46.

interracial couples made sense of their own interracial marriages and the racial identity of their mixed race children. During the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, the existence of more than 300 mixed race individuals of part Japanese ancestry generated controversy over their racial identification. Based on the database on Japanese American internees, approximately 185 of these part Japanese internees were also persons of part white ancestry. The Western Defense Command (WDC) in charge of the internment program released some of these part Japanese internees and returned them to the West Coast under the mixed marriage policy. Karl Bendetsen, the inventor of the mixed marriage policy, insisted that those who met the condition of being half or less than half Japanese “blood” were allowed to return to the West Coast. In addition to the blood quanta rule, the policy required mixed bloods to prove that their “environment” had been “Caucasian” before the war. The implementation of the policy revealed that the WDC saw white paternity as the preferred condition for a “Caucasian environment.” If such mixed bloods fathered by whites and mothered by Japanese were underage children, the Japanese mothers were also allowed to return to their husbands on the West Coast. While mixed bloods fathered by Japanese and mothered by whites could return to the West Coast with their mothers, the Japanese fathers were never allowed to do so.

My work argues that the mixed marriage policy was the recognition of white men’s patriarchal prerogatives over their Japanese wives and mixed race children rather than the recognition of the difference between mixed bloods and “full-blooded” Japanese. Bendetsen never accepted mixed blood individuals’ claims to their “Caucasian” environment if they did not meet the requirement of half or less than half Japanese “blood.” In a word, the military denied mixed bloods’ racial self-identification during the internment of Japanese Americans. This is somewhat similar to the ways that the U.S. government restricted the rights of mixed blood

Indians to Indian land ownership in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Examining the Allotment policy on the White Earth Reservation, Katherine Ellinghaus has argued that the U.S. government “used the phenomenon of intermarriage between Indians and non-Indians to undermine Indian control of their own lands and legal identity.”<sup>36</sup>

The official rationale for the mixed marriage policy was to return certain mixed bloods to the “Caucasian environment” from which they had come. I argue that the policy was used to entrench race and gender hierarchies among intermarriages between Japanese and whites. The mixed marriage policy underlined white men’s right to keep their interracial families within their homes on the West Coast while it denied the same right to Japanese men married to white women. Some white women married to Japanese Americans protested the race-and-gender biases in the mixed marriage policy by claiming their “Caucasian” influence upon their Japanese husbands.

Fourth, my work explores the ways that Asian-white intermarriage and the racial identification of mixed race individuals of part Asian, part white ancestry were related to ideologies of race and culture. Since the 1850s, the subjects of interracial marriage and mixed race were central to American racial discourses. What we now call scientific racism offered scientific-sounding grounds for conservative and nativist politicians’ claims to legal bans on interracial marriage. Social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century and the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century spread the belief of a racial hierarchy with whites above non-whites and in which “mixing” the two races would lead to the birth of infertile and inferior mixed race individuals.<sup>37</sup> The popularity of scientific racism, as Pascoe argues, made opposition

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<sup>36</sup> Katherine Ellinghaus, “The Benefits of Being Indian Blood Quanta, Intermarriage, and Allotment Policy on the White Earth Reservation,” *Frontiers* 29, nos. 2–3 (2008): 83.

<sup>37</sup> Tucker, *The Science and Politics of Racial Research* (Urbana, Ill., 1994).

to interracial marriage look “natural.”<sup>38</sup> In the U.S. West, the alleged undesirability of mixed race offspring legitimized opposition to interracial marriage between Asians and whites among anti-Asian proponents.

My work focuses on the ways that progressive scholars, with their approval of interracial marriage and mixed race offspring, countered the coalition of white supremacists and race scientists in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The German-born Jewish-American anthropologist Franz Boas, the black civil rights leader and scholar W. E. B. Du Bois, the white American missionary Sidney Gulick, and the white Chicago sociologist Robert Park considered interracial marriage and the mixed race results as a solution to what they called race problems in the U.S. These progressive intellectuals squarely denied the existence of hereditary biological traits connected to race and argued that the social and cultural environment determined the character of what people called race. These four progressive intellectuals felt an urgent need to debunk eugenic beliefs in the superiority of the pure white race and the inferiority of racial intermixture. They argued that the government should conduct scientific research on the physical and mental characteristics of “mulattoes” and “Eurasians” in order to confirm whether or not eugenic beliefs were true. These progressive scholars’ main target was anti-miscegenation laws. They criticized anti-miscegenation laws as flawed since the laws relied on the unscientific idea that all interracial marriage would lead to allegedly inferior racial intermixture.

Boas, Gulick, and Park expressed their support of interracial marriage as a means of racial assimilation. They believed that blacks and Asians should be allowed to assimilate socially without actual interracial marriages, but because their social assimilation into mainstream society was unlikely to happen under segregation policies, these progressive intellectuals hoped that

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<sup>38</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 1.

interracial marriage might help in assimilation. According to Boas and Gulick, interracial marriage would induce the biological absorption of the black and Asian physiological markers and that continuous race mixing between whites and non-whites might erase physiological differences between the two races. Du Bois and Park were skeptical about this process of racial assimilation as long as the negative meanings attached to non-white races and mixed bloods remained intact.

These four progressive scholars did not view all types of race mixing as conducive to the social assimilation of blacks and Asians. Du Bois and Gulick denounced white men's sexual transgressions with black women in the U.S. and indigenous women in Asia as immoral. Du Bois's and Gulick's criticism of interracial sex between white men and non-white women was centered on the failure of white men to take non-white women as their legally wedded wives and to recognize their mixed race children as their legitimate heirs. According to Du Bois, white men should be responsible for the stigmas attached to mixed bloods, which was a result of their bastardy.

Thus the more desirable race-and-gender matches between whites and non-whites were supposed to be those between white women and non-white men. However, at the time Du Bois found it difficult to openly put forth his support of marriages between black men and white women as marital freedom of choice because such a claim would invoke the sensationalism attached to sex between black men and white women. Gulick, in turn, supported marriages between westernized Asian men and middle-class white women as the ideal form of marital assimilation because of middle-class white women's nurturing and civilizing capabilities. Gulick's views were similar to those of white reformers like Richard Pratt, who thought that

marriages between educated Native American men and middle-class white women would be the marker of the assimilation of Native Americans.<sup>39</sup>

These progressive intellectuals' support of interracial marriage was unpopular even among mainstream progressives, who wanted to avoid mention of this taboo subject. Nonetheless, it is worth revisiting the ways that Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park defended the recognition of interracial marriage and mixed race when whites in general demonized these subjects. Du Bois is more notable than the others for his criticism of racial taxonomies and inconsistent use of the "mulatto" and "black" categories in the U.S. censuses as early as 1911.<sup>40</sup> While the U.S. censuses had the "mulatto" category between 1850 and 1920, the purpose of the category was not to recognize the reality of race mixing. As Melissa Nobles has recently revealed, politicians and race scientists lobbied Congress to adopt the "mulatto" category in order to provide demographic data for race scientists who wanted to prove their theory of "mulatto" inferiority.<sup>41</sup> The U.S. census dropped the "mulatto" category in 1930 and until 2000 mixed race populations in the U.S. had to choose only one race category.

Chapter 1 offers an overview of the legal and social restrictions surrounding interracial marriage between Asians and whites between the 1880s and the 1930s. This chapter notes that anti-miscegenation laws had conflicting ramifications in their policing of interracial intimacy.

These laws were effective enough to prevent interracial marriages between whites and Chinese

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<sup>39</sup> Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*, 10. Regarding the view of white women as the "agents and promoters of civilization" in modern America, see Louise M. Newman, *White Women's Rights: the Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (New York, 1999), 117.

<sup>40</sup> Du Bois, "The Negro Race in the United States of America," in Gustav Spiller, ed., *Papers on Inter-Racial Problems, Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress held at the University of London, July 26–29, 1911*. (London: P.S. King & Son, 1911), 350, [retrieved 15 October 2010], available from <http://www.archive.org/details/papersoninterrac00univiala>.

<sup>41</sup> Melissa Nobles, "Race/Colour Categorization in US and Brazilian Censuses," in Simon Szreter, Hania Sholkamy, and A. Dharmalingam, eds., *Categories and Contexts: Anthropological and Historical Studies in Critical Demography* (New York, 2004), 111.

and Japanese Americans from taking place in large numbers. At the same time, because of the moral stigma that antimiscegenation laws attached to interracial intimacy, most interracial couples evaded state laws to legalize their marriages and to claim their right to marriage.

Chapter 1 also reveals that the anti-Asian movement in the West took advantage of the subject of interracial marriage to make a case for Asian exclusion. The federal government responded by creating gradual bans on immigration from various parts of Asia. This chapter also examines the ways that whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans on the ground reacted to intermarriage. According to the Survey of Race Relations, both everyday white Americans and Chinese and Japanese Americans objected to interracial marriage during the height of the anti-Asian movement in the early 1920s. White Americans almost unilaterally opposed interracial marriage between whites and Chinese or Japanese based on their belief in the intrinsic racial difference between the two races. Chinese and Japanese Americans expressed disapproving opinions about the subject of interracial marriage not because of the undesirability of race mixing but because of whites' racial prejudice toward Chinese and Japanese.

Chapter 2 explores the ways that progressive missionaries and scholars questioned the eugenicist belief in race as a biological fact and criticized anti-miscegenation laws based on that belief. Those progressive intellectuals defended interracial marriage and mixed race offspring as a means of easing racial tensions among whites and non-whites in the U.S. Franz Boas set the ground for progressive criticism of anti-miscegenation laws. As early as 1909, Boas notably criticized anti-miscegenation laws of the U.S. South for perpetuating a belief in White purity and Black inferiority as facts.<sup>42</sup> Instead of the eugenic myth of race, Boas called for the adoption of cultural anthropological ideas of racial characteristics as determined by social environment.

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<sup>42</sup> Franz Boas, "Race Problems in the United States," in Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York, 1922), 251–278.

W.E.B. Du Bois, Sidney Gulick, and Robert Park applied Boas's challenges to the eugenic myth of race as a biological fact to their criticism of anti-miscegenation laws and whites' opposition to interracial marriage between whites and blacks or Asians.<sup>43</sup> Du Bois and Gulick similarly deployed moral crusades against white men's sexual exploitation of black women in the U.S. and indigenous women in Asia. Gulick specifically supported interracial marriage, especially Asian men's marriages to white women, as a means of assimilating "Orientals" into American civilization.<sup>44</sup>

Chapter 3 reconstructs life histories of interracial families between 1890 and 1941, focusing on marriages between Chinese or Japanese immigrants and white women. Although a very small fraction of Chinese and Japanese population on the West Coast married across racial lines, their marriage and family stories reveal the ways that everyday Americans of different racial and ethnic origins defined racial boundaries. Economically stable and more educated Chinese or Japanese missionary students or sons of wealthy merchants tended to meet and marry their native-born, middle-class, young, and white wives at public schools, colleges, and churches. Less well-to-do and working-class Japanese immigrants found their wives among lower-class whites. A few Japanese women entered the U.S. as wives or fiancées of their American or European spouses.

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<sup>43</sup> Du Bois published several articles on the issue of interracial marriage and anti-miscegenation laws from 1909 to 1913 in the *Crisis*, the official magazine of the NAACP. For a later and longer version of Du Bois's criticism of anti-miscegenation laws, see W. E. B. Du Bois, "Miscegenation," in Werner Sollors, ed., *Interracialism: Black-White Intermarriage in American History, Literature, and Law* (Oxford, 2000), 461–473. Sidney Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem: a Study of Race Relations of the East and the West* (New York, 1914). Regarding Robert Park's essays on interracial marriage and racial intermixture, which were originally published in journals in the 1920s, this dissertation refers to the anthology which was published after his death. Robert E. Park, *Race and Culture* (Glencoe, Ill., 1950).

<sup>44</sup> Gulick's view of a white woman as a civilizing influence upon her Chinese or Japanese husband was quite similar to the ways that white reformers in the late 19th and early 20th century considered marriages between Native American men and white women as conducive to the assimilation of Native Americans. See Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*.

In the late 1920s and 1930s, when Chinese and Japanese Americans met far more severe racial discrimination in terms of jobs and housing, second-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans did not exhibit the diverse racial and class pairings that their parents' generation had. Nonetheless, the rate of interracial marriages among American-born men and women of Japanese ancestry increased as a result of emerging multi-ethnic urban working-class neighborhoods. Both generations of Asian American men in intimate relations with white women legalized their marriages in order to avoid white society's suspicion of white slavery and stigmatization of interracial cohabitation.

Chapter 4 examines how the mixed marriage policy of the Western Defense Command (WDC) in charge of the internment of Japanese Americans determined the racial and cultural identity of mixed race children.<sup>45</sup> This chapter also addresses the ways that the policy generated controversies among both government officials and interracial families. The purpose of the mixed marriage policy was to remove children of part white and part Japanese ancestry from the "Japanese environment" of the internment camps. In theory, internees of mixed ancestry were to be allowed to return to their homes on the West Coast if they met the following conditions: they had to be of no more than 50% Japanese "blood" and be able to prove that their "environment" before the war had been "Caucasian."

However, the actual implementation of the mixed marriage policy revealed that the "Caucasian environment" was construed in a racialized and gendered way. A "Caucasian" father of mixed race children was deemed as embodying a stronger and more desirable element of the "Caucasian environment" than a "Caucasian" mother of such children. The WDC decided to

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<sup>45</sup> Mixed Marriage Policy Files 291.1, Box 28, Record Group 499, Central Correspondence, 1942–1946, Wartime Civil Control Administration and Civil Affairs Division, Western Defense Command and the Fourth Army, Records of U.S. Army Defense Commands (WWII), National Archives at College Park, Maryland (hereafter MMP); Paul Spickard, "Injustice Compounded: Amerasians and Non-Japanese Americans in World War II Concentration Camps," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 5, no. 2 (1986): 5–22.

respect the right of a “Caucasian” patriarch to protect his Japanese wife and minor children and so released the Japanese mothers of mixed race children from camps, allowing them to join their white or other non-Japanese husbands on the West Coast. The same treatment was never applied to Japanese fathers who had had children with white or other non-Japanese wives.

The WDC’s differing treatments of interracial families met with challenges from white women who were married to Japanese men and had children with them. Government officials in internment camps and the War Department in Washington also raised questions about the contradictory ways in which the WDC constructed and implemented the meanings of “Caucasian environment.” Although less than one hundred Japanese women returned to the West Coast under the mixed marriage policy, anti-Japanese politicians of western states caused quite a commotion about this decision because the WDC bent its original policy that no Japanese Americans would be allowed to enter the West Coast.

Chapter 5 examines the ways that white wives of Japanese Americans experienced the internment and postwar reparation processes and shows how white women fashioned their racial and cultural identities to keep their families intact. More than half of the approximately 120 white women who were married to Japanese Americans decided to evacuate with their husbands and children in 1942, and most of these women remained in the camps with their husbands until the war was over. To be with their family in the camps, these white women had to agree to assume a quasi-Japanese identity by signing a waiver form that stipulated that they would be treated “as if” they “were persons of Japanese ancestry.” However, when the U.S. government offered reparations to former internees, to compensate them for the loss of their personal property, under the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, the white spouses of Japanese Americans

were excluded from the legislation and were unable to file an evacuation claim on grounds that they, as white, were not subject to evacuation orders in 1942.

During the war, white women married to Japanese Americans resisted the way that government policies constructed their racial identities and challenged the white patriarchal assumptions implicit in the military's mixed marriage policy. The WDC and military hardliners denied these white women's influence upon their Japanese husbands and mixed race children as bearers of a "Caucasian environment." For instance, Karl Bendetsen, the creator of the mixed marriage policy, considered that these white women had forsaken their whiteness to become Japanese when they decided to marry a Japanese man. However, these women drew upon their whiteness when they pleaded for the release of their husbands from the camps, claiming that just like white men who were married to Japanese women, they had provided a "Caucasian environment" for their Japanese husbands and biracial children. These women argued that they had an equal right to have their Japanese American husbands returned home just like white husbands could have their Japanese American wives returned home.

In postwar years, Estelle Ishigo, the white wife of an American-born Japanese American, fought against the exclusion of her interest in their families' claims for compensation under the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act.<sup>46</sup> Ishigo claimed that she had no choice but to follow her husband into camps because she had been acculturated into the Japanese American community through marriage and because she experienced anti-Japanese racial baiting due to her last name. According to her, the 1948 Act was unconstitutional because it dismissed the right of her interracial family to evacuation claims. Ishigo persuaded Democratic congressmen and civil

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<sup>46</sup> The Estelle Ishigo Papers, Japanese American Research Project, Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles, [retrieved 11 November 2009], available from <http://hamachi.library.ucla.edu/ishigo/toc.html> (hereafter EIP).

rights groups to propose Congress to amend the 1948 Act. In 1952, Congressman Cecil King and the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) unsuccessfully prompted Congress to extend the right to evacuation claims to non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans. These postwar civil rights advocates avoided pushing Ishigo's case further simply because cases similar to Ishigo's comprised a very small part of the entire evacuation claims. In 1954, Estelle Ishigo eventually gave up her legal battle with the U.S. government over the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948.

In the Conclusion, I examine how the Truman administration's policies on white American GIs married to Japanese women abroad contrasted with their policies on the non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans under the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948. The influx of Japanese war brides of white soldiers in the early 1950s has been viewed as one of the major postwar social changes in the U.S. Young white soldiers returning home with their Japanese brides were depicted as heroes who challenged the social and legal barrier to interracial marriage. I argue that the entry of thousands of the Japanese war brides between 1948 and 1952 was another instance in which the U.S. government recognized white men's rights to choose marital partners.

My work proves that despite the racialization of Chinese and Japanese Americans by antimiscegenation laws, Chinese and Japanese Americans and their white spouses circumvented the laws and lived as legally married couples. Marriages between white women and Chinese and Japanese men evoked racist rants among white supremacists. At the same time, such marriages provided the fuel for progressive scholars and missionaries to support interracial marriage and "Eurasians" as a desirable type of mixed race in the U.S.

Interracial marriages between whites and Chinese and/or Japanese Americans significantly reveal the process in which citizenship rights to marriage were distributed along

race and gender lines in the first half of the 20th century. White men's marriages to Japanese women did not cost them their citizenship rights or their patriarchal prerogatives to keep their interracial families under their control. White wives of Chinese/Japanese men had a lot to lose in their choice of spouse. White women's marriages to Chinese/Japanese immigrants cost them their citizenship. During World War II, white women married to Japanese Americans suffered the suspension of their civil rights if they wanted to be with their husbands and children in the internment camps. Risking their citizenship rights, most white women married to Japanese Americans prioritized the protection of their marriages and mixed race children. These white wives of Chinese and Japanese Americans played a significant role in keeping their interracial families intact in the U.S. West under the reign of anti-miscegenation laws and anti-Asian federal policies.

CHAPTER 2  
THE LEGAL AND SOCIAL REGULATION OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN ASIAN  
AMERICANS AND WHITES IN THE AMERICAN WEST, 1880S TO 1930S

In June 1922, the *San Francisco Bulletin* published the marriage story of Emma Fong Kuno with the title, “My Oriental Husbands.” The article’s subtitle read, “The story of a San Francisco girl, who married a Chinese graduate of Stanford University, and a year after his death became the wife of his lifelong friend, a Japanese instructor of the University of California.”<sup>1</sup> Emma Fong Kuno was a native-born white woman. She met her first husband, Walter Ngon Fong, at Stanford University in the mid 1890s. In June 1897, they travelled to Denver, Colorado, to get married. Emma sharply noted the discrepancy between Pacific Coast states and some other Western states, stating that there were “laws in all the Pacific Coast States forbidding the issuing of licenses for marriages between whites and Orientals, but that none of the other States had any such restrictions.” When a local newspaper in Denver wired the news about her marriage across the country, Emma received congratulations from her relatives on the East Coast and in the Midwest. In mid 1910s, after the death of her first husband, Walter Fong, Emma married Yoshi Kuno. She observed that it was “very strange” that her citizenship changed depending on the nationality of her husband. Lamenting the “loss of my citizenship” due to her “Oriental alliances,” she confirmed her loyalty to America. “Through it all, however, my loyalty has never been affected, for whether technically Chinese or technically Japanese, my heart has always been American, and never [*sic*] I have acknowledged allegiance to any flag other than that of my own United States.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR. I locate the original publisher of Kuno’s story from a reader’s opinion about her marriage story. *San Francisco Bulletin*, “Why Japanese and Americans Should Not Intermarry,” June 15, 1922, #255, Box 35, SRR.

<sup>2</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR.

Emma Fong Kuno was among approximately 100 white women who were married to Chinese or Japanese immigrants in the U.S. West between the 1890s and the mid-1920s.<sup>3</sup> Her marriage story reveals the ways that interracial marriage was regulated by both the federal and state governments between the 1870s and the 1930s. Although her family and close relatives respected her decision to marry a Chinese man, this couple could not marry in California, which prohibited a “white” person from marrying a “Mongolian” since 1880. Upon her marriage first to a Chinese man and then to a Japanese man, Emma suffered the loss of her citizenship under the Expatriation Act of 1907, which divested an American woman of her citizenship for the duration of her marriage to a foreigner. The 1907 Expatriation Act was rescinded in 1934. She was also unlikely to be able to regain her citizenship based on the 1922 Cable Act, which allowed American women married to foreigners to restore their citizenship by naturalization as long as their husbands were eligible for naturalized citizenship.<sup>4</sup> Because all persons of Asian nationalities were defined as ineligible for naturalization by the 1924 National Origins Act, Emma Fong Kuno lost her citizenship for the duration of her marriage to her second and Japanese husband.

This chapter examines the ways that the American legal system, anti-Asian politics and the white community in the West, and Chinese and Japanese immigrants viewed interracial marriage between Asians and whites between the 1880s and the 1930s. This chapter also explores the ways that a handful of Asian-white couples coped with the legal obstruction to their marriages and lived as legally wedded couples. Anti-miscegenation laws in Western states, combined with federal laws on the restriction of Asian immigration and on married women’s

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>4</sup> Regarding laws on overseas marriage and citizenship, see Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own*; Kerber, *No Constitutional Rights to Be Ladies*, 3–46; Sapiro, “Women, Citizenship, and Nationality.”

citizenship, spearheaded the racialized and gendered construction of American citizenship, marriage, and family in this period. In the post-Civil War years, legislators and judges prioritized the right of state governments to regulate marriage over individuals' freedom to enter into marital contract and legitimized states' bans on interracial marriage.<sup>5</sup> In the U.S. West, a state's right to regulate interracial marriage served the political and racial interests of anti-Asian politicians and labor leaders who called for Asian exclusion in order to keep the West white.<sup>6</sup>

Proponents of anti-Asian sentiment justified anti-miscegenation laws based on the belief that Asians could not be assimilated and should not be mixed with whites. Western states' anti-miscegenation laws were designed to prevent and decry the marriages of white women and Asian men despite the laws' race-and-gender-neutral language. Between the 1870s and the 1910s, nativist politicians expressed their opposition to interracial marriage by invoking the stereotype of Chinese and Japanese laborers as sexually deviant bachelors who preyed upon innocent middle-class white women. In the 1910s and 1920s, anti-Asian politicians opposed interracial marriage between whites and Asians based on the eugenicist belief that race mixture between members of two difference races would result in the degradation of the race of either parent.<sup>7</sup>

The racialized and gendered nature of laws banning marriage between whites and Asians became more striking when they were combined with the Expatriation Act of 1907 and the

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<sup>5</sup> Cott, *Public Vows*, 4; Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth*, 136–140.

<sup>6</sup> The scope of the anti-Asian movement scattered all over areas of North and South America facing the Pacific Ocean. Regarding the transnational nature of the anti-Asian movement in Americas, see Erika Lee, "Orientalisms in the Americas: A Hemispheric Approach to Asian American History," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2005): 235–256; "The 'Yellow Peril' and Asian Exclusion in the Americas," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (2007): 537–562.

<sup>7</sup> V. S. McClatchy, a journalist, asserted that "intermarriage between races widely different in characteristics does not perpetuate the good qualities of either race." "The differences between Japanese and American whites," he continued, "are claimed to be so radical as to bring them within this category." Valentine Stuart McClatchy, "Japanese Immigration and Colonization: Brief Prepared for Consideration of the State Department, Sacramento, California, October 1, 1921," *Four Anti-Japanese Pamphlets* (New York, 1978), 42.

National Origins Act of 1924. As shown in the case of Emma Fong Kuno, when an American woman married a man of Asian nationality, who was deemed ineligible for naturalized citizenship due to his race, she lost her citizenship and was unable to regain it for the duration of the marriage. If an American woman were married to a man of European nationality, she was at least given an opportunity to regain her citizenship by naturalization after 1922. Throughout U.S. history, however, American men who married foreigners never lost their citizenship because of their foreign wives throughout the U.S. history even if their wives were of Asian nationality.

Nonetheless, the racial qualification for American citizenship, however, placed limits on the patriarchal prerogatives of American men married to Asian women. While European women married to American men could become naturalized citizens, Asian women married to American men were never allowed to. In cases where Asian women's native countries adopted the same policy on married women's citizenship as the U.S., Asian wives of American citizens could become stateless. Yet, Asian women married to American men fared better than Asian men married to American women in terms of freedom to travel abroad and to return to the U.S. Asian women married to American men were allowed to freely leave and reenter the U.S. as "non-quota immigrants" even after the National Origins Act of 1924 prohibited both new and returning Asian immigrants from entering the U.S.

Regulation of interracial marriage was related to the fact that states increased their power to enforce legalized and licensed marriage and punish cohabitation and unlicensed marriages in post-Civil War America. A marriage license was necessary for interracial unions between non-white men and white women as a form of protection from the moral stigmatization of interracial cohabitation. Extant records on marriage between Asians and whites in the U.S. West reveal that almost all of these couples legalized their marriage by circumscribing anti-miscegenation laws.

Because Western states recognized out-of-state interracial marriage as legal, interracial couples travelled to the states that did not prohibit marriages between whites and Asians to obtain a marriage license.

Journalists contributed to the spread of negative stereotypes of marriage between Asian men and white women. West Coast journalists' representation of interracial marriage tended to lean toward the anti-Asian stance of nativist politicians between 1909 and 1922. In the first decade of the twentieth century, West Coast publications featured sensational reports of actual cases of interracial marriage. Newspapers were inclined to report the white community's disapproving opinions about such marriages and invoked the racial and sexual stereotypes of Asian men as vile seducers and white women as deluded victims. In the early 1920s, West Coast newspapers began to develop an exotic interest in the subject, especially in the physical appearance and intellectual ability of mixed race offspring as a result of intermarriage between Asians and whites. Progressive-leaning media began to publish the stories of white women who had been married to Asian men.

In the 1920s, progressive missionaries and scholars addressed the desirability of intermarriage between Asians and whites in response to the anti-Asian movement. Contending that Asians could in fact be assimilated, these progressives probed the possibility that intermarriage could ameliorate whites' antipathy toward Asians. The progressive challenge to the anti-Asian movement emerged in the mid 1910s and was materialized in a research project called the Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927. Progressive missionaries and scholars squarely denied the eugenicist belief in a racial hierarchy and denounced policies on immigration restriction for racial reasons as contradicting the ideal of American democracy. Decisions on immigration, they maintained, should be based on facts about Asian immigrants, not on race prejudice. These

progressives viewed interracial marriage as one of the most misinformed and misunderstood subjects concerning Asian immigrants.

By early 1924, as Congress prepared to pass the National Origins Act and to put a complete restriction on all Asian immigration, the Survey of Race Relations investigated the opinions of whites and Asian immigrants about intermarriage between whites and “Orientals.” The majority of both whites and Asian immigrants on the West Coast opposed marriage between the two races but not for the same reasons. Whether or not they agreed with the anti-Asian movement and the idea of Asian exclusion by law, white Americans on the West Coast firmly believed that intermarriage of whites and Asians would lead to the degeneration of both races physically and intellectually. Chinese and Japanese immigrants tended to consider intermarriage as less desirable in part because Asians and whites held different social and cultural ideas and in part because white Americans were prejudiced against Asians. Regardless of their opinions about intermarriage, Chinese and Japanese immigrants opposed anti-miscegenation laws because they believed that marriage was a matter of love between individuals and that laws should not intervene in such decisions.

### **Articulating Racial and Sexual Qualifications for American Citizenship through Regulation of Interracial Marriage between Asians and Whites**

Between the 1880s and the 1920s, the state regulation of interracial marriage and Congress’s gradual bans on Asian immigration were closely connected legislative processes that were mediated by the anti-Asian movement on the West Coast. The prevention of interracial marriage between Asians and whites was among the major political goals that the Western states’ anti-Asian movement pursued, with the goal of keeping Asian immigrants from settling in the U.S. As early as 1866, all of the state legislatures in the West, except for Washington, designated peoples from Asia as persons who were not permitted to marry whites.

Between the 1880s and the 1930s, anti-miscegenation laws in Western states shifted their targets to coincide with changes in the ethnic make-up of Asian immigrants. During the late nineteenth century, the target of anti-miscegenation laws in the West was the Chinese, the first immigrant group from Asia. Beginning in the late 1890s, Japanese immigrants replaced their Chinese counterparts, as a consequence of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, Western state legislatures confirmed that the Japanese, like the Chinese, were prohibited from marrying whites. As a result of the 1924 National Origins Act, Japanese immigration stopped. Beginning in the late 1920s, Filipino laborers began to fill the vacancies created by the absence of Chinese and Japanese laborers because Filipinos were exempted from the rule of Asian exclusion because they were “American nationals” during the U.S. Occupation of the Philippines. In the 1930s, Western states focused on cracking down on marriages between Filipino men and white women.

However, in classifying peoples from Asia as impermissible to marry whites, state governments in the West did not reach an agreement on the question of how to classify different nationalities and ethnicities in Asia. This was why different states’ anti-miscegenation laws used different racial categories for peoples from Asia between 1866 and 1939—“Chinese,” “Japanese,” “Mongolian,” “Malay,” “Corean,” “Yellow Race,” and “Asiatic Indian.”<sup>8</sup> Despite the discrepancies in the race identification of peoples from Asia, toward the twentieth century, most Western states followed the example of California, which spearheaded the use of the term “Mongolian” over terms “Chinese” and “Japanese” in 1880.

In 1880, when anti-Asian lawmakers of California discussed a bill that would revise the state’s existing anti-miscegenation laws in order to prohibit the marriage of “a white person” and

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<sup>8</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 92.

a Chinese, the meaning of the term “Mongolian” remained elusive. These members of the California legislature debated over what the Chinese should be called. Besides “Mongolians,” there were other options such as “Asiatics” and “Coolies.”<sup>9</sup> California lawmakers chose the term “Mongolian” over other options because it was used by “some of the leading authorities on ethnology” who “divided the [human] species into three classes—Mongolian, Caucasian, and Negro.”<sup>10</sup> California’s anti-miscegenation laws spearheaded the eugenicist way of classifying peoples from Asia as belonging to the racial category of “Mongolians” two or three decades before the eugenics movement swept the country and spread the belief that “the human species” had “the major divisions”—“the Caucasian, the Mongolian, and the Negroid.”<sup>11</sup>

Although it was commonly accepted that the term “Mongolians” denoted a certain racial group larger than persons of the “Chinese” nationality, the state legislature of California had another debate over the elusiveness of the term “Mongolians” in the first decade of the twentieth century when the anti-Japanese movement swept the state. Some members of the legislature were concerned about the lack of direct reference to Japanese in the term “Mongolians” in the state’s anti-miscegenation laws. In 1910, Alexander Drew, an Assemblyman from Fresno, California, who worked with the Asiatic Exclusion League, called for a stronger anti-miscegenation law that

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<sup>9</sup> Osumi, “Asians and California’s Anti-Miscegenation Laws,” 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of California* (Sacramento: State Office, 1880), 2:717; quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 85. In the 1880s, the term “Mongolian” was interpreted as “Chinese” in other statutes in California. In 1885, the California legislature passed an amendment to the State School Law regarding the establishment of separate public schools for “children of Mongolian or Chinese descent.” California Statutes and Amendments to the Codes, 1885, quoted in Reginald Bell, *Public School Education of Second-Generation Japanese in California* (New York, 1978), 11.

<sup>11</sup> *New York Times*, April 8, 1924; quoted in Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 92.

would directly mention the Japanese as a category of people who were prohibited from marrying whites.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1879 and 1910, California's anti-Asian politicians explicitly expressed their racialized concerns about the degeneration of the white race if the Chinese and the Japanese would be allowed to immigrate and to marry whites. These anti-Asian politicians' concerns about miscegenation were centered on the issue of gender and class. Because the majority of Chinese and Japanese immigrants were male and laborers, an anti-Asian crusade against miscegenation put forth the rationale of protecting white women from Chinese and Japanese "bachelors" of the laboring class.

In 1879, the anti-Chinese movement reached its peak in California as members of both Democratic and Republican parties in the state legislature voted for the end of Chinese immigration. Opposition to miscegenation was one of the major rationales for excluding the Chinese from immigrating to the U.S. In 1880, John Miller, chairman of the Committee on the Chinese, asserted that "already two-fifths of the adult male population of California is Chinese" and that they were "an unassimilative population and unfit for assimilation with people of our race."<sup>13</sup> Miller also warned against the outcome of miscegenation between whites and Chinese: "Were the Chinese to amalgamate at all with our people, it would be the lowest, most vile and degraded of our race, and the result of that amalgamation would be a hybrid of the most

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<sup>12</sup> *Correspondence from Candidates for Federal Offices and State Offices* (Asiatic Exclusion League, 1910), 19; quoted in Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 14. Apparently, by that time, the term "Mongolians" was understood as being inclusive of Japanese. The United States Immigration Commission report of 1911 stated that the 1905 amendment to California's miscegenation law was "meant to relate specifically to marriages between them [Japanese] and whites." *Immigration Commission Reports*, XXIII (Washington D.C., 1911), 163; quoted in Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 13.

<sup>13</sup> *Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of California, 1878-9* (Sacramento: State Office, 1880), 1: 632; quoted in Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 5.

despicable, a mongrel of the most detestable that has ever afflicted the earth.”<sup>14</sup> Yet Chinese immigrants did not pose an imminent threat of miscegenation among anti-Chinese propagandists because the size of the Chinese population significantly decreased as a result of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Between 1900 and 1910, anti-Asian politicians and labor leaders portrayed Japanese immigrants, who were mostly male and single, as sexual threats to white women. In 1900, Olaf Tveitmoe, Secretary of the Building Trades Council and one of the labor leaders who contributed to the establishment of the Asiatic Exclusion League in 1905, wrote in the Council’s newspaper *Organized Labor* that the Japanese replaced “white workmanship both in field and factory” and drove American women “into the stifling beer joints” and “into the bawdy-house and slums of the tenderloin district and the Barbary Coast.”<sup>15</sup> Hiram Johnson, who established himself as a Republican progressive reformer and later became the governor of California, stated in a 1909 address before the California Assembly that he was distressed at the sight of white girls “sitting side by side in the schoolroom with matured Japs, with base minds, their lascivious thoughts...”<sup>16</sup>

White women’s protection from Chinese and Japanese laborers was the major rationale for opposition to marriage between Asians and whites between 1880 and 1910. By the early 1920s, proponents of the anti-Asian movement began to reinforce the racial rationale for anti-miscegenation stances by adopting the language of the eugenics movement. The high birth rates

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<sup>14</sup> *Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of California, 1878-9* (Sacramento, State Office, 1880), 1: 632; quoted in Osumi, “Asians and California’s Anti-Miscegenation Laws,” 5.

<sup>15</sup> Floyd Matson, “The Anti-Japanese Movement in California, 1890-1942,” (M.A. Thesis, University of California, 1953); quoted in Osumi, “Asians and California’s Anti-Miscegenation Laws,” 10.

<sup>16</sup> Franklin Hichborn, *The Story of the Session of the California Legislature of 1909* (San Francisco, 1909), 207; quoted in Osumi, “Asians and California’s Anti-Miscegenation Laws,” 13.

among Japanese immigrants between 1908 and 1920 alarmed anti-Japanese politicians. Although the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 was intended to control Japanese laborers' immigration to the U.S., the Agreement resulted in an almost balanced gender ratio in the Japanese immigrant community because it did not specify the prohibition of female immigration from Japan.<sup>17</sup> The settlement of Japanese male immigrants with their wives and children and the increase in the Japanese population caused concerns among anti-Japanese politicians.<sup>18</sup>

Between 1910 and 1920, anti-Japanese politicians pressed Congress to pass immigration laws declaring Japanese exclusion, denying the Japanese assimilability through all means, including intermarriage. Valentine Stuart McClatchy, one of the leading anti-Japanese writers of the 1920s and the co-owner of the *Sacramento Bee*, newspaper, argued that the racial difference between whites and Japanese was so fundamental that even intermarriage could not help Japanese assimilate. On October 1, 1921, he submitted a brief "on behalf of the Japanese Exclusion League of California" titled "Japanese Immigration and Colonization" to the Department of State.<sup>19</sup> According to McClatchy, what made the Japanese "undesirable" as immigrants and citizens was not any "racial inferiority" but the "racial differences and characteristics" of the Japanese.<sup>20</sup> He asserted that the differences between Japanese and "American whites" were "so radical" as to fall within "a principle enunciated by biologists" that

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<sup>17</sup> Married women comprised 1.7% of the Japanese population in 1900, 7.7% in 1910, 20 in 1920, and 17.2% in 1930. Although the Gentlemen's Agreement made the gender ratios in the Japanese population less skewed, the Japanese community remained a male-dominant group. Paul Spickard, *Japanese Americans: the Formation and Transformations of an Ethnic Group*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Brunswick, N.J., 2009), 35.

<sup>18</sup> In three Pacific Coast states—California, Oregon, and Washington—where the Japanese population was concentrated, the size of the Japanese population increased significantly between 1900 and 1920. In 1900, 18,269 Japanese residents took residence in these states; in 1910, the number had increased to 57,703; and in 1920, the number had grown to 93,490. Spickard, *Japanese Americans*, 176.

<sup>19</sup> McClatchy, "Japanese Immigration and Colonization," 1.

<sup>20</sup> McClatchy, "Japanese Immigration and Colonization." 41.

“intermarriage between races widely different in characteristics does not perpetuate the good qualities of either race.”<sup>21</sup>

Between 1875 and 1924, Congress gradually reflected the idea of Asian exclusion in immigration laws. Before the National Origins Act of 1924 declared the exclusion of all immigrants of Asian national origins for racial reasons only, Congress focused on introducing immigration policies that excluded women and laborers. In prohibiting Asian female immigration, Congress intended to prevent Asian immigrants from marrying and settling families. The Page Act of 1875 put a halt to Chinese female immigration in the name of prevention of prostitution and as a result, the Chinese community became a “bachelor society.”<sup>22</sup> Regarding Japanese female immigration, the Japanese government agreed to stop Japanese women from emigrating to the U.S. in 1921 in order to assuage anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast and maintain diplomatic relations with the U. S.<sup>23</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882, 1892, 1902, and 1904, and the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1908 stipulated the exclusion of Chinese and Japanese laborers. However, between 1882 and 1924, certain groups of Chinese immigrants such as students, merchants, teachers, and missionaries were still permitted to immigrate to the U.S. with their wives and children.<sup>24</sup>

Congress began to enact the idea of Asian exclusion in 1917 and completed it in 1924. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1917 established the barred “Asiatic” zone, which

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<sup>21</sup> McClatchy, “Japanese Immigration and Colonization,” 42.

<sup>22</sup> George Peffer, *If They Don’t Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Immigration before Exclusion* (Urbana, Ill., 1999). The percentage of Chinese female immigrants remained less than 1–10% between 1870 and 1883. See Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 117.

<sup>23</sup> Yamamoto Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States: A Critical Study of the Problems of the Japanese immigrants and Their Children* (Stanford, Calif., 1932), 92.

<sup>24</sup> Regarding the Chinese reactions to evade the Chinese Exclusion Act, see Lee, *At America’s Gate*, 111–145. On the legal challenges to the Chinese Exclusion Act, see Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: the Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley, Calif., 1994), 147–172.

excluded East Asia and parts of South Asia.<sup>25</sup> The National Origins Act of 1924 allotted no immigration quota to persons of Asian “national origins”<sup>26</sup> and completed the exclusion of peoples from East and South Asia.<sup>27</sup> In 1924, Congress rationalized Asian exclusion based on the U.S. Supreme Court decisions that prevented persons of Asian nationalities from becoming naturalized because they were non-white. In *Takao Ozawa v. United States* (1922) and *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923), the U.S. Supreme Court denied a person of “the Japanese race” and “a Hindu of full Indian blood” the right to become naturalized American citizens on the grounds that such persons did not belong to the category of “white” persons.<sup>28</sup> The *Ozawa* and *Thind* decisions, as historian Mae Ngai has observed, “completed the legal construction of ‘Asiatic’ as a racial category.”<sup>29</sup>

After 1924, the racial exclusion of Asians incorporated gendered difference to the legal status of Asian men and women married to Americans. An Asian man’s marriage to an American woman did not make any difference in his status; he was still an alien who was ineligible to become a naturalized citizen. An Asian man married to an American woman was under the same

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<sup>25</sup> The “barred Asiatic zone” included part of Arabia, Afghanistan, India, Burma, Thailand, Indochina, the Malay States, the East Indian Islands, Asiatic Russia, and the Polynesian Islands.

<sup>26</sup> A detailed list of “national origins” with quotas allotted was announced in 1929. According to this list, the following “national origins” were excluded: Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Japan, Muscat (Oman), Nepal, Territory of New Guinea, Siam, Yap and other Pacific Islands under Japanese mandate. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 28–29.

<sup>27</sup> Mae Ngai succinctly analyzes the ways that the apparently non-eugenicist notion of national origins paradoxically constructed the consolidation of the white race and the racial exclusion of Asians in the 1924 Immigration Act. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 21–55.

<sup>28</sup> The Naturalization Act of 1790 stipulated that only a “free white person” had a right to naturalization. For the Court’s interpretation of this term in the *Ozawa* and *Thind* rulings, see Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 37–46. The 1870 Naturalization Act added immigrants from Africa to the category of immigrants eligible for naturalization. Prior to the *Thind* decision, immigrants from India were treated differently from their counterparts from the Far East. Lower federal courts granted Indians citizenship on the grounds that the “Hindus” allegedly coming from the “Aryan” race were “Caucasians.” See Takaki, *Strangers From A Different Shore*, 298–299. Due to the U.S. occupation of the Philippines, Filipinos constituted a category of U.S. nationals, neither citizens nor immigrants.

<sup>29</sup> Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 46.

restrictions as other Asian immigrants were subject to after 1924. Although Asian women married to American men were not able to become naturalized citizens, the U.S. Government qualified these Asian wives of American citizens with a “non-quota immigrant” status, which exempted these women from the rule of giving no quota for Asian immigrants. This established a precedent of the U.S. government’s post-World War II policy on Asian war brides of American soldiers. The Soldier’s Bride Act of 1947 briefly allowed these war brides to enter the U.S. as non-quota immigrants. The 1952 Immigration Act resumed Asian immigration but did not repeal the quota system. Because immigration quotas allotted to Asian countries were still limited, Congress expanded the practice of recognizing Asian spouses of American soldiers as non-quota immigrants until the 1965 Immigration Act rescinded the quota system.<sup>30</sup>

The National Origins Act of 1924 immediately restricted the freedom of Asian immigrants to travel to their home countries. Once they left the U.S. for Asia for business trips or family visits, these immigrants could not reenter the U.S. An Asian woman married to an American man was exempted from this restriction. In 1933, Katsu Woolverton, a Japanese wife of an American citizen, Chester Ray Woolverton, visited Japan with her American-born children and tried to return to the U.S. Because Woolverton was married to a foreigner, she lost her Japanese citizenship; the U.S. government denied her access to U.S. citizenship, leaving her stateless. Therefore, Katsu Woolverton could not procure a passport by either the Japanese government or the U.S. government. The U.S. consul in Kobe, Japan, issued her an affidavit for a travel document that could be used instead of a passport. The affidavit defined Woolverton’s

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<sup>30</sup> For more information on the War Brides Acts, see Elfrieda Berthiaume Shukert and Barbara Smith Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II* (Novato, Calif., 1988), 197–218; Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1850–1990*, 37.

legal status as “a returning non-quota immigrant” and she was also given an immigration identification card.<sup>31</sup>

The legal processes leading to the National Origins Act of 1924 defined the racial, social and sexual qualifications for desirable immigrants who were considered deserving of American citizenship. Prohibition of marriage between Asians and whites in Western states played a significant role in transforming all persons of Asian nationalities into members of an undesirable racial component in American society and in legitimizing anti-Asian propagandists’ call for Asian exclusion. Yet, the very small number of actual interracial unions between white women and the first two generations of Chinese or Japanese Americans silently disobeyed anti-miscegenation laws, legalized their marriages, and claimed the legitimacy of their relationships against white society’s ostracism.

#### **Protecting Their Matrimony against Anti-Miscegenation Laws: Interracial Couples’ Evasion of the Laws**

According to extant records on the cases of interracial marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans, almost all of these interracial couples legalized their marriages. Most of these couples were able to make use of gaps in different states’ anti-miscegenation laws by practicing what the historian Peggy Pascoe calls geographies of evasion.<sup>32</sup> These couples travelled to states without anti-miscegenation laws on their books—Washington, New Mexico, and Iowa—or to Colorado, which did not include “Mongolian,” “Chinese,” or “Japanese” in its anti-miscegenation laws. Starting in the late 1920s, Tijuana, Mexico, became one of the popular destinations for interracial couples. Unlike some Southern

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<sup>31</sup> Letter from Nils Aanonsen to R.L. Nicholson, June 22, 1942, Katsu Woolverton case file, Box 6683, WRACF.

<sup>32</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 191.

states, Western states recognized out-of-state marriages and interracial marriage was not an exception to this rule of comity.

In the early twentieth century there were no attempts to repeal anti-miscegenation laws; therefore, evading anti-miscegenation laws was the only form of opposing the laws that could be practiced by individual interracial couples.<sup>33</sup> There was another critical reason that interracial couples did not bother to travel to Midwestern states or Mexico in order to legalize their marriage. Since the end of the Civil War most of the states had regulated common-law marriage and recognized ceremonial or licensed marriage as legal.<sup>34</sup> California, where most of the interracially married Chinese and Japanese immigrants lived, was one of the states that spearheaded regulation of common-law marriages in the 1870s.<sup>35</sup> Marriage licenses became increasingly significant and by 1931, every state in the U.S. had a licensing law and officials to examine whether applicants were fit to marry.<sup>36</sup> Regulation of unlicensed marriage could be used to criminalize interracial cohabitation, which was considered a more serious sex crime than same-race cohabitation. While same-race couples could avoid conviction on the charge of illicit sex by marrying, interracial couples were denied the right to claim an existing marriage or to marry.<sup>37</sup>

Yet, Western states did not completely rule out common-law marriage and recognized certain race-and-gender-pairings of cohabitation as legal. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, judges in Western states recognized white men living with Native American women as their

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<sup>33</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 193.

<sup>34</sup> Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth*, 86–90.

<sup>35</sup> Lind, *Common Law Marriage*, 143.

<sup>36</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 138.

<sup>37</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 135.

common-law husbands in order to grant these white men rights to Indian land.<sup>38</sup> Cohabitation between Asian men and Mexican women was recognized as common-law marriage although Western states' anti-miscegenation laws viewed Mexicans as belong to the racial category of white.<sup>39</sup> However, interracial couples composed of non-white men and white women were susceptible to the charge of illegal cohabitation and unable to claim common-law marriage status.

Between 1890 and 1930, California did not take specific actions to halt the marriages of Chinese and Japanese Americans and their white spouses that occurred out of the state. That the actual members of interracial marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans were very low may explain the state's apparent non-reactions to these marriages. It was reported that there were only three cases of marriage between Chinese men and white women in 1883, and that only a total of twenty white women lived with their Chinese husbands in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1903.<sup>40</sup> The cases of first-generation Japanese Americans married to whites were also limited. In 1914, H.A. Millis estimated that there were "about fifty instances in the West where Japanese men have married American women."<sup>41</sup> According to the database on Japanese American internees, approximately sixty first-generation Japanese American men were recorded as married or once married to white women. The database also indicates that ten first-generation Japanese American women were married or had once been married to white men by

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<sup>38</sup> When Native American wives of white men claimed their right to inheritance as common-law wives, judges denied their claim. Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 94–104. See also Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender, the Privileges of Property: On the Significance of Miscegenation Law in the U.S. West," in Valerie J. Matsumoto and Blake Allmendinger, eds., *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West* (Berkeley, Calif., 1999), 215–230.

<sup>39</sup> There were two Japanese-Mexican couples in World War II internment camps; Yosotaro and Carmen Yamamoto; Kamenosu and Carmen Ito. RJAR.

<sup>40</sup> Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 8.

<sup>41</sup> H.A. Millis, *The Japanese Problem in the United States* (New York, 1915), 274–275; quoted in Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States*, 218.

1942. Scholars have attributed the small number of Japanese immigrants married to whites to the enforcement of anti-miscegenation laws as well as to the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908.<sup>42</sup>

Although California did not criminalize interracial marriage, marriages between non-white men and white women were still subject to white society's ostracism of interracial relationships. A criminal charge of "white slavery" was leveled against such relationships.<sup>43</sup> In 1910, Congress passed the White-Slave Traffic Act, which was also known as the Mann Act. The act was originally introduced to penalize the transportation of women across state lines for immoral purposes such as prostitution. In Northern and Midwestern states without anti-miscegenation laws, the Mann Act was used to criminalize interracial unions between non-white men and white women under the pretense of protecting white womanhood.

The case of Karl and Elaine Yoneda reveals that the specter of "white slavery" lived well beyond the mid-1930s on the West Coast. In 1935, Karl Yoneda, a second-generation Japanese American, and Elaine Black Buchman, a second-generation Russian Jewish American, decided to get legally married after living together in San Francisco for two years. On a trip to Seattle, Washington, Karl and Elaine did not sit together: "We were to cross state lines, and under the Mann Act they might charge him with transporting me for immoral purposes." They obtained a marriage license at City Hall in Seattle and solemnized their marriage in front of a "progressive Methodist minister" on November 5, 1935.<sup>44</sup>

The course of the events before and after the matrimony of Karl and Elaine Yoneda indicates that a marriage license was significant for this couple to avoid questions over the moral

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<sup>42</sup> Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States*, 92; Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 14.

<sup>43</sup> According to Nancy Cott, the discourse of white slavery was related to the boom of the so-called new immigration from eastern and southern Europe. Cott, *Public Vows*, 146.

<sup>44</sup> Vivian McGuckin Raineri, *The Red Angel: the Life and Times of Elaine Black Yoneda, 1906–1988* (New York, 1991), 224–225.

status of their relationship, which might harm their friends and co-workers. Karl and Elaine Yoneda were active members of the Communist Party and Elaine was a secretary of the International Labor Defense (ILD), a legal auxiliary of the Communist Party. Although Karl and Elaine thought of a marriage license as a “piece of paper,”<sup>45</sup> they decided to get married legally because their cohabitation could disbar Leo Gallagher, a lawyer representing the ILD. They could not put Gallagher in danger because his tenure at Southwestern University had already been suspended due to his labor activism and his “association with lewd and dissolute people.”<sup>46</sup> Soon after she obtained a marriage license in Seattle, Elaine found herself acting as her own attorney at her trial for rioting for free speech, along with Gallagher and another member of the CP, six months earlier. The prosecutor brought up her relationship with Karl: “Elaine, what I know about your personal life...” Elaine pounded the table and told the prosecutor if he knew anything “that had to do with the charge of rioting...tell it to the jury.” The prosecutor stopped pursuing the subject and Elaine recalled that “that legal [marriage] document” saved her.<sup>47</sup>

In the West, white society tended to make white women in relationships with Asian men a target of moral criticism or even placed these women under suspicion of prostitution. Even though Elaine Yoneda was known for her fearless defense in courtrooms among her comrades in the Communist Party, she gave up fighting against prejudice toward her private life. When she went to a hospital named Mt. Zion with Karl, a male doctor saw Karl and assumed that Elaine was a prostitute. His first question to her was, “When did you have gonorrhoea or syphilis last?” The doctor attempted to send Elaine to the County Hospital with “suspected VD.” Fortunately, Elaine’s nurse friend at the hospital overheard the doctor’s phone call and brought Elaine to a

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<sup>45</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 121.

<sup>46</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 109.

<sup>47</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 122–123.

woman doctor who was a member of the ILD. This doctor recommended Elaine to sue the Mt. Zion hospital doctor. Elaine refused to do so: “I’m in the middle of a trial and Leo [Gallagher] is involved...that’s why I went to Seattle last week.”<sup>48</sup>

Evading anti-miscegenation laws and obtaining a marriage license out of state was the only venue that Chinese and Japanese Americans and their white spouses could use to protect their relationships from white society’s suspicious scrutiny of these couples’ presence in public. Chinese and Japanese American men and their white wives were still vulnerable to the moral stigmatization of a relationship between a non-white man and a white woman. West Coast journalists played a major role in spreading negative stereotypes of white women’s marriages to Chinese or Japanese men.

#### **Journalists’ Representations of Intermarriage between Asian Men and White Women: From Sensationalism to Exoticism, 1909–1922**

Interracial marriages between Chinese or Japanese men and white women caught the attention of newspaper reporters and editors in the West beginning in 1909. Between 1909 and the mid-1910s, newspapers delivered the news of actual cases of such interracial marriages in a sensational way and reinforced negative stereotypes of interracial relationships between Asian men and white women. By the early 1920s, West Coast newspapers began to show exotic queries about the children born to Asian fathers and white mothers. As shown in the case of Emma Fong Kuno, newspapers and magazines in the West searched for white women who had lived with their Asian husbands for years and were willing to publish their marriage stories.

The predominant image of a Chinese or Japanese man and his white partner in West Coast newspapers’ reports differed from portrayals of the relationship between a black man and a white woman in the post-Civil War South, where such a relationship was likened to between a

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<sup>48</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 121–123.

dangerous rapist and a pure and innocent victim. If black men were constructed as hypersexual, mainstream American society fabricated the gendered stereotype of Chinese and Japanese men as sex-craving but effeminate bachelors.<sup>49</sup> Driven by the belief in the questionable masculinity of Chinese and Japanese men compared to black—or white—men, West Coast newspapers employed a psychological analysis of the character of a white woman who was willing to marry a Chinese or Japanese man. Such a white woman was classified as neurotic and romantic.

In March, 1909, the story of Helen Emery's marriage to Gunjiro Aoki became front-page news along the West Coast.<sup>50</sup> Newspaper reporters kept track of every possible detail of the Aoki-Emery marriage. Helen Emery, 22, the daughter of John Emery, a respected archdeacon of an Episcopal Church, met Gunjiro Aoki, a Japanese student, when he was introduced to the Emery family as a cook via his brother, who was a pastor at a Japanese Episcopal Church.<sup>51</sup> It was reported that a kiss between Helen Emery and Gunjiro Aoki at a depot in Corte Madera, California, stirred the local residents to demand an explanation for their relationship.<sup>52</sup> According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, this relationship spurred a serious quarrel between John Emery, who opposed the couple's plan to be married, and his wife, who supported it.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The literary scholar Jennifer Ting analyzes how turn-of-the-century literature on Chinese Americans channeled its understandings about Chinese immigrants with a focus on the subject of bachelor society and what she calls deviant heterosexuality. Jennifer Ting, "Bachelor Society: Deviant Heterosexuality and Asian American Historiography," in Gary Y. Okihiro and others, eds., *Privileging Positions: the Sites of Asian American Studies* (Pullman, Wash., 1995), 270–279.

<sup>50</sup> For a detailed description of Helen Emery's marriage to Gunjiro Aoki, see Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 87–91.

<sup>51</sup> Early Japanese immigrants were students who were educated by American missionaries in Japan and came to the U.S. for higher education. These Japanese students consisted of those with financial resources and those without. Historian Yuji Ichioka calls the latter group "indigent private students" and classifies them as the "real forerunners" of early Japanese immigration. Ichioka refers to these indigent students, who were forced to work, as "student-laborers." Gunjiro Aoki appeared to be one of these "student-laborers." Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: the World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885–1924* (New York, 1988), 7–16.

<sup>52</sup> "Progeny of Jap-White Union Amaze," *San Francisco Examiner*, November 11, 1922, #222, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>53</sup> "Aoki Engaged to Daughter of Prelate," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 3, 1909, I; "Archdeacon Does Not Approve Alliance," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 11, 1909, 9; quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 87.

With the help of Helen's mother, the couple travelled to other states that did not prohibit marriages between whites and Japanese.

Newspaper reports on the journey of Helen Emery and Gunjiro Aoki to legalize their marriage revealed the ways that anti-miscegenation laws gave marriage license clerks the authority to judge whether or not interracial couples were fit to marry. In the Aoki case, clerks could deny a marriage license to a white person marrying a Japanese person even when states' miscegenation laws did not specify a "Japanese" person as ineligible to marry a white person. The first city that Emery and Aoki visited was Portland, Oregon. A marriage license clerk in Portland was aware of Emery and Aoki's intent to legalize their marriage and made sure that his staff would not issue them a marriage license. The issue was whether Oregon, which added the term "Mongolian" to its miscegenation law in 1893, regarded a Japanese person as a "Mongolian." According to the *Oregonian* newspaper, the marriage clerk and the district attorney of Portland agreed that "a Jap and a Mongolian are one and the same."<sup>54</sup> The couple's next destination was Seattle, Washington. Despite the lack of a legal impediment to interracial marriage in Washington, the state's public officials openly expressed their personal opposition to the marriage between Helen and Gunjiro.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, Helen and Gunjiro succeeded in getting a marriage license in Seattle, Washington, on March 27, 1909.

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<sup>54</sup> "Law Will Block Mesalliance," I, 3; "A Disgusting Spectacle," *Oregonian*, March 26, 1909, 10; quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 89.

<sup>55</sup> *Oregonian* and *San Francisco Chronicle* covered the hostility of public officials in Washington towards the couple. See Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 89-90, 341, fn. 25. After the Civil War, the state of Washington repealed its anti-miscegenation laws that prohibited a "white" person from marrying a "black" person and never reintroduced such laws. Because it was the only state in the West that did not ban interracial marriage, Seattle became one of the most frequently visited cities for interracial couples to legalize their marriages. However, in 1935 and 1937, two congressmen proposed an anti-miscegenation bill and the coalition among the African, Filipino, Japanese American communities, and other progressive labor organizations protested the bill. Stefanie Johnson, "Blocking Racial Intermarriage Laws in 1935 and 1937: Seattle's First Civil Rights Coalition," *Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project*, [retrieved 14 December 2010], available from <http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/antimiscegenation.htm>.

Newspapers' sensational coverage of the marriage between Helen Emery and Gunjiro Aoki ultimately fitted Aoki's character into the stereotype of sex-craving Chinese or Japanese bachelors of the laboring class.<sup>56</sup> At first, however, newspaper reports were not driven by the stereotype. In early March, Gunjiro Aoki was depicted as a Christianized Japanese student of "noble" lineage.<sup>57</sup> In mid-March, newspaper reports characterized him as an uneducated farm boy and as "a trouble maker among women, Japanese and white," and reported both Japanese and white society's opposition to Aoki's marriage to Emery.<sup>58</sup>

West Coast newspaper reporters offered a psychological interpretation of Emery's motivation to marry a Japanese man. Although she confessed that she was in love with Aoki, reporters did not acknowledge Emery's agency in choosing a marital partner and avoided portraying her marriage to a Japanese man as consensual. Some reporters framed her as a victim of "hypnotism" that caused her "wild infatuation for Japanese." Other reporters described her as a shy and unpopular girl. One reporter even blamed Emery's mother for failing to stop her from marrying a Japanese man, and labeled both Emery and her mother as "religious and social perverts."<sup>59</sup>

Journalists' interest in the Aoki family continued well beyond the 1920s as significant changes in the topics and tones of newspaper reports on the family occurred. Earlier, newspaper

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<sup>56</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 91.

<sup>57</sup> "Aoki Engaged to Daughter of Prelate," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 3, 1909, I; "Archdeacon Does Not Approve Alliance," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 11, 1909, 9; quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 87.

<sup>58</sup> "Brother of Aoki Frowns on the Match," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 12, 1909, I; "Don't Want Aoki in Their Town," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 15, 1909, 16; "Kissing Is Barred," *Morning Oregonian*, March 15, 1909, 2; "Both Families Are Divided," *Oregonian*, March 25, 1909, 4; "Law Will Block Mesalliance Here," *Oregonian*, March 26, 1909, 3; quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 87.

<sup>59</sup> "Friends of Emery Family Seeks Medical Advice as to Whether Hypnotism Can Explain Girl's Wild Infatuation for Japanese," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 12, 1909, I; "Aoki Greets Girl Only for Moment," *Oregonian*, March 27, 1909, quoted in Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 91.

reports conveyed only white Americans' opposition to these marriages, but the focus in the 1920s was on the success of these marriages. In 1922, the *San Francisco Examiner* reported that "the four youngsters of mixed race" of Gunjiro and Helen Aoki belonged to the "genius" class because they attained a record-breaking average on the Terman-Binet test, taken at the department of psychology at Stanford University. The same article on the brilliance of the Aoki children also noted the need for biologists to study whether the Aoki children were smarter than average children due to their mixed parentage: "Biologists, it is indicated, will have much food for argument, as to whether the unusual brilliance of the children is due to the mixture of races with resultant versatility, or whether it is due to the unusual emotional tension that from the first has been the lot of the parents."<sup>60</sup>

In the early twentieth century, West Coast journalists' reports of marriages between white women and Chinese and Japanese men largely reflected the interest of anti-Asian politics. Newspapers represented White society's anger over those marriages and reinforced racial and sexual stereotypes of interracial relationships between Asian men and white women. However, in the early 1920s, these newspapers demonstrated their curious and exotic attention to mixed progeny without denouncing race mixing as harmful to the white race, as anti-Asian propagandists like V. S. McClatchy did. Newspapers' less disapproving and exotic portrayal of an interracial family by newspapers might signify changes in the ways that white Americans on the West Coast viewed intermarriage between Asians and whites.

### **Progressive Missionaries and the Birth of the Survey of Race Relations, 1923–1924**

In 1923, when Congress was examining a bill on complete Asian exclusion, a group of progressive missionaries and scholars addressed their concerns about passing the bill without

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<sup>60</sup> "Progeny of Jap-White Union Amaze," *San Francisco Examiner*, November 11, 1922, #222, Box 28, SRR.

determining the facts about the economic, cultural, religious, and social conditions of Asian residents and their relations with white Americans and other non-white ethnic groups on the West Coast. With major funding from the Institute of Social and Religious Research, a New York organization, these missionaries and scholars organized a research project, the Survey of Race Relations. In late July 1923, Robert Park, one of the founders of the Chicago School of Sociology, was appointed as the research director of the Survey of Race Relations.<sup>61</sup> The Survey of Race Relations commenced in mid-1924 and concluded in 1927.

Soon after the news of the Survey of Race Relations broke, proponents of the anti-Asian movement began to criticize the Survey for promoting miscegenation. On August 1, 1923, Miller Freeman, a Seattle publisher, described the Institute of Social and Religious Research as “the Rockefeller Foundation.” According to Freeman, the Survey was the product of a conspiracy of East Coast missionaries and capitalists that intended to prevent the Pacific Coast from keeping white by bringing Japanese workers to the U.S. Freeman asserted that these East Coast missionaries wanted to promote “a sentimental idealism of the brotherly love and intermingling of all races—a doctrine which the people of the Pacific Coast do not propose to accept.”<sup>62</sup>

Quite contrary to Freeman’s assertion, some leaders of the white community on the West Coast expressed their wish to know about the facts and desirability of interracial marriage between Asians and whites, although they did not promote the direct approval of intermarriage. In August 1923, the central committee of the Survey of Race Relations sent out letters to white leaders in religious, educational, and business organizations, asking them what subjects those leaders “personally” wanted the Survey to secure “more light and more accurate data” about “the

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<sup>61</sup> For more information on the formation of the Survey of Race Relations, see Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 19–22.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Freeman to Davis, August 1, 1923, #12, Box 6, SRR.

Oriental problem on the Pacific Coast.”<sup>63</sup> Assimilation and intermarriage between Asians and whites was among the major subjects that these leaders of the white community addressed. Regarding intermarriage, these white leaders wanted to know about the following subjects: the “possibilities of biological assimilation [of Orientals],”<sup>64</sup> the willingness or capability of Orientals to be assimilated,<sup>65</sup> Orientals’ “attitude on inter-marriage,”<sup>66</sup> the extent of “intermingling in marriage” between Orientals and whites<sup>67</sup>, and “any data really satisfactory bearing on the question of racial amalgamation.”<sup>68</sup> Along with the subject of intermarriage, these white men were curious about “the results of intermarriage on the (1) physical equipment of the children, (2) on their mentality.”<sup>69</sup> Some revealed their apprehension about children of mixed parentage by asking whether or not the “children of mixed marriages” were “defective or subnormal.”<sup>70</sup>

The central committee of the Survey of Race Relations, in the end, used the subject of interracial marriage between Asians and whites in two ways. First, the committee conducted interviews with actual interracial families consisting of a Chinese or Japanese husband, his white wife, and their children. Second, the committee investigated Chinese and Japanese Americans’ opinions about intermarriage. For the former purpose, Robert Park wrote a questionnaire that

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<sup>63</sup> Letter from Davis to Chapman, August 20, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from C.A. Kofoid to Davis, August 27, 1923; Letter from Frederick Koster to Davis, August 9, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>65</sup> Letter from Kofoid to Davis, August 27, 1923; Letter from Koster to Davis, August 9, 1923; Letter from W.D. Lane to Davis, August 27, 1923; Letter from J.F. Mead to Davis, August 30, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Lucius Baird to Davis, August 24, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from W.H. Malkin to Davis, August 28, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Edward Parsons to Davis, September 5, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Harvey Guy to Davis, September 21, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Lane to Davis, August 27, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

would be used as a guideline for interviewers. In fact, intermarriage was the first subject that Park worked on as director of the Survey of Race Relations in November 1923.<sup>71</sup>

In the questionnaire, Park addressed the necessity of “getting facts” on “the actual cases of intermarriage between Orientals and whites” in the U.S. in order to “correct” the existing literature on this topic, which had been based on the belief in the undesirability of mixed offspring resulting from intermarriage. Park intended to achieve two things in the questionnaire on intermarriage between Asian men and white women. First, he questioned respondents on some of the myths and stereotypes associated with intermarriage. For example, he wrote, “Are the American women who have married Orientals wholesome and conventional people? Do any of them belong to marked psychological types, the romantic, the neutral, etc?” Second, and far more importantly, Park focused on the examination of the social and cultural relations that interracial families consisting of an Asian husband, his white American wife, and their children had with “an American community, an Oriental community, and a mixed community.”<sup>72</sup>

Missionaries, who were major staff members of the Survey committee, and those who were familiar with these missionaries showed excited reactions to Park’s intermarriage questionnaire. J. Merle Davis, a missionary and the administrative director of the Survey of Race Relations, found the questionnaire on intermarriage “intensely interesting” and “stimulating.” In Seattle, he mimeographed fifty copies of it and showed them to “people who are vitally interested in.” According to Davis, “practically everyone is crazy to get a copy, and it is plain that there is much more interest in this topic than appears on the surface.” Davis construed white Americans’ serious interest in intermarriage as their approval of actual practices of marriage

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<sup>71</sup> Letter from Park to Davis, November 8, 1923, #12, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>72</sup> Park, “Intermarriage,” #10, Box 17, SRR.

between whites and Asians. “From the way folks act or react to it,” Davis wrote, “one would be led to believe that most of these good people at one time or another had had serious thoughts about marrying a Chinese or Japanese.”<sup>73</sup>

In May 1924, Congress passed the National Origins Act and Asian exclusion became the law of the land. Nonetheless, progressive missionaries and scholars, who were supportive of or participated in the design and organization of the Survey of Race Relations, did not give up on the possibility that the Survey would enlighten the American public with facts about intermarriage between Orientals and Whites. On June 13, 1924, Thomas E. Jones, an American missionary, sent a letter to Davis from Tokyo, stating, “I hope you will be given strength and time to carry the research to a successful conclusion.” “The world must have,” Jones added, “more unimpeachable facts regarding the problem of racial characters and mixture with other races.”<sup>74</sup> In hindsight, it appears to be wishful thinking that getting facts about intermarriage alone might change white Americans’ deep-seated prejudice toward the subject.<sup>75</sup> Nonetheless, the historical significance of the Survey of Race Relations lies in the fact that it left invaluable sources to explore the pervasiveness of white Americans’ opposition to interracial marriage in 1924.

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<sup>73</sup> Letter from Davis to Park, November 21 and 25, 1923, #6, Box 11, SRR.

<sup>74</sup> Letter from Jones to Davis, June 13, 1924, #1, Box 7, SRR. In his letter, Jones expressed his disappointment at Congress’s action to block Japanese immigration. “The action of the Senate regarding Japan has of course made a deep and unfortunate impression here,” he wrote. For more information on Japanese’s protest against the 1924 National Origins Act, see Izumi Hirobe, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice: Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act* (Stanford, Calif., 2001).

<sup>75</sup> The Survey of Race Relations produced 600 documents including approximately 40 documents on interracial families. The materials gathered by the Survey were used in the works of the sociologists who participated in the design of the Survey in the late 1920s and the 1930s. Park intended to write a book about the Survey but did not materialize this plan. Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 231, fn. 9.

## **White Society's Opinions about Intermarriage between Chinese and Japanese Men and White Women, 1924**

When the anti-Japanese movement was at its peak in the early 1920s, social science research on white Americans' opinions about Japanese immigration had already begun on the West Coast. The research staff of the Survey of Race Relations gathered existing theses and papers on the anti-Japanese sentiments among white Americans, in addition to the Survey's own interviews with white Americans in 1924. Whether or not they agreed with the anti-Asian movement, white Americans took opposition to marriage between whites and Asians for granted. White Americans who opposed Asian immigration tended to harbor strong objections toward interracial marriage. White Americans who knew Chinese and Japanese immigrants in person as employers or through missionary work avoided making judgments on the issue of intermarriage. However, it was very rare for these sympathetic white Americans to openly recognize interracial marriage.

Papers written by white college students rationalized their opposition to interracial marriage between whites and the Chinese or Japanese based on the notion that race crossing between whites and non-whites would lead to the degeneration of the progress and civilization of "the White race."<sup>76</sup> These papers anticipated that the mixing of "the White race" and "the Yellow race" would be as undesirable as the race crossing between whites and "Indians" or between whites and "Negroes" had been. Ethel Coller at the State Teachers' College in San Francisco, asserted that "the Yellow race" might be "teachable" but not able to "create" the civilization of "the White race": "Japanese and Chinese are copyists. They are not original and therefore bid fair to decay as history has shown us." Coller maintained that the "superiority of the White race

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<sup>76</sup> Ethel Coller, "Just How Wide Should We Open Our Door to Japan?," #76, Box 34, SRR; Edna McKinley, "Hybridization of Races," #75, Box 34, SRR.

cannot be questioned” and that there was “nothing to gain through amalgamation with other races.”<sup>77</sup>

White Americans justified their advocacy of segregation as a means to keep whites pure from the alleged desire of the Chinese and Japanese to marry whites. The research staff of the Survey of Race Relations investigated racial conflict between white and Japanese residents in Long Beach, California, over the construction of a Japanese mission in a white residential area in the city in 1924. A Los Angeles physician who owned a lot near the scheduled construction site of the Japanese church in Long Beach joined other white property owners in the area in petitioning the Long Beach City Council to cancel the construction permit for the church. The staff of the Survey interviewed the physician and found that he objected to the Japanese “on the grounds of miscegenation”: “The American race is rapidly becoming negroid—we can’t help that now—but do we want these yellow rats contaminating our race?”<sup>78</sup>

White Americans with strong anti-miscegenation and anti-Asian views asserted that they would not antagonize the Chinese and Japanese personally as long as the Chinese and Japanese did not attempt to transgress the existing racial hierarchy. The Los Angeles physician who opposed the construction of the Japanese mission near his property in Long Beach stated that his “personal experiences with the Japanese as janitors of his buildings have never been unpleasant nor have brought on conflict.” The Japanese were, the doctor said, “all right in their place.”<sup>79</sup> While Mrs. C. S. Eddy, a white woman from Sacramento, California, claimed that she bore no antipathy toward the Chinese, she objected to the Japanese. She explained that her “chief

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<sup>77</sup> Ethel Coller, “Just How Wide Should We Open Our Door to Japan?,” #76, Box 34, SRR.

<sup>78</sup> Frances Lucas and Gretchen Tuthill, “An Investigation of Two Specific Instances of Racial Conflict in Long Beach, California,” June 1924, #89, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>79</sup> Frances Lucas and Gretchen Tuthill, “An Investigation of Two Specific Instances of Racial Conflict in Long Beach, California,” June 1924, #89, Box 25, SRR.

objection” to the Japanese was that they “wish to inter-marry while the Chinese do not seem to attempt to.”<sup>80</sup>

White Americans who opposed interracial marriage were often unaware of actual cases of marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans. When they did have some direct knowledge, they viewed the couple from the perspective of a negative stereotype. Eddy, the Sacramento woman who resented the Japanese for seeming to be more inclined to marry whites than the Chinese appeared to be, opposed marriage between whites and the Japanese although she had not known of such a marriage personally. However, Eddy knew of a Chinese owner of a curio shop and his white wife who used to be an employee in the shop. Eddy depicted this Chinese-white couple as the union of a white girl in economic need and a Chinese drug seller. Eddy thought that the white wife was “not of a very desirable type” and that she married a Chinese man “for his money.” Regarding this couple’s four children, Eddy said that they were “very bad looking” and that “the bad in both races has come out.”<sup>81</sup>

Even successful marriages between a white woman and a Chinese or Japanese man could receive cold and aloof responses from whites. In June 1922, Emma Fong Kuno related her marriages to two “Oriental husbands” to the *San Francisco Bulletin*.<sup>82</sup> Kuno stated that her marriages were based on love and companionship and emphasized the emotional support that each of her two husbands gave her while she pursued her teaching and writing career. In an opinion piece published in the *Bulletin*, one reader maintained that Kuno’s story was an “exception to the general rule that such alliances commonly end in disappointment, disillusionment, and wreck.” The reader concluded that “intermarriage of Orientals and

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<sup>80</sup> Marion Harrison, “Oriental Bits,” #447, Box 38, SRR.

<sup>81</sup> Marion Harrison, “Oriental Bits,” #447, Box 38, SRR.

<sup>82</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR.

Caucasians...must be bad for the Caucasians in spite of the experience and testimony of the author of 'My Oriental Husbands.'"<sup>83</sup>

White Americans who were sympathetic toward Chinese or Japanese immigrants were often simultaneously pessimistic about the prospect of interracial marriage.<sup>84</sup> While a white superintendent of a lumber company in Washington thought that the Japanese were good workers, he remained skeptical about intermarriage: "Of course assimilation and mixture may come but it will take a long time and will be a hard thing to accomplish."<sup>85</sup> Dr. Julius Soper, an American missionary who lived in Japan for almost forty years, along with his daughter, thought that "from a Japanese, yet American standpoint," intermarriage of the Japanese "should go as slowly and cautiously as any other race would best undertake it." Soper and his daughter objected to the intermarriage of the Japanese to Americans for "psychological" reasons. They held that the Japanese had "such a peculiar racial inheritance that intermarriage with other people, even the Americans might find the parties to the marriage contract incompatible."<sup>86</sup>

Even a white American who disliked the abject racism of the anti-Asian movement tended to take opposition to interracial marriage for granted. Suzanne McKelvy wrote that she found the Japanese "all just human" and that they were "most eager to learn; and under more equitable conditions than are accorded them here, would develop into average citizens." Although she believed that the Japanese might be fit to be citizens, McKelvy opposed marriage between the

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<sup>83</sup> "Why Japanese and Americans Should Not Intermarry," San Francisco Bulletin, June 15, 1922, #255, Box 35, SRR.

<sup>84</sup> R.L. Olson, "Eatonville Lumber Co., Eatonville, Washington," #204, Box 28, SRR; Lois M. Winkler, "Study of the Native Traits of Japanese," #341, Box 32, SRR.

<sup>85</sup> R.L. Olson, "Eatonville Lumber Co., Eatonville, Washington," #204, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>86</sup> Lois M. Winkler, "Study of the Native Traits of Japanese," #341, Box 32, SRR.

Japanese and whites: “And I must add this, there is one thing that can never be undone...we cannot undo the mixing of the races. To this I am unalterably opposed.”<sup>87</sup>

Whites who opposed interracial marriage seldom felt compelled to explain their deep-seated feelings. Investigating the “Causes of Anti-Japanese prejudice in California,” Lillian R. Thielen distributed a questionnaire to 108 white Americans in Los Angeles, asking them to “state briefly your feelings toward the Japanese race as a result of your contact [with the Japanese]” and to identify “what argument against the Japanese as residents or citizens of California is well found.” Thielen classified answers expressing opposition to interracial marriage as “emotional” prejudice toward the Japanese (“There can be no natural mixing of the races of men”) or as ones “that seemed to belong to no particular classification” (“Intermarriage is not desirable or beneficial, so it is not well to leave the pathway to such temptation open”). Thielen did not attempt to examine how these responses were related to other responses that she classified as anti-Japanese prejudice on “social,” “economic,” “moral,” “political and civic,” “physical,” or “religious” reasons.<sup>88</sup>

In 1924, the Survey of Race Relations critically revealed that white Americans from both ends of the ideological spectrum on Asian immigration legitimized their opposition to interracial marriage based on the eugenicist belief in the biological undesirability of race mixing. It is not surprising, then, that white Americans rarely criticized anti-miscegenation laws. White Americans’ unilateral opposition to interracial marriage was the leading cause of the extremely low prospects of intermarriage with Chinese and Japanese immigrants and their American-born descendants.

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<sup>87</sup> Letter from Suzanne McKelvy to Vaughen MacCaughey, March 12, 1924, #93, Box 34, SRR.

<sup>88</sup> Lillian R. Thielen, “Causes of Anti-Japanese Prejudice in California,” May 1923, #192, Box 34, SRR.

## **Chinese and Japanese Americans' Opinions about Interracial Marriage, 1924**

The Survey of Race Relations included among its original research topics the life histories of Asian immigrants and their American-born descendants. This research on Asian immigrants and their children included a question about interviewees' views on intermarriage: "Are you in favor of intermarriage now or ultimately? If that does not take place, how do you think the race problem is likely to be solved?"<sup>89</sup> The results showed that about half of the total 58 interviewees stated that they were in favor of intermarriage—marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese—as a solution to "the race problem."<sup>90</sup> However, almost all Chinese and Japanese interviewees on each side of the intermarriage argument agreed that due to the racial antagonism of the time, intermarriage would not become commonplace in the U.S. in the foreseeable future. It was uncommon for Chinese and Japanese immigrants to oppose intermarriage for biological reasons or for the purity of the Chinese or Japanese race. Whether or not they were in favor of interracial marriage, Chinese and Japanese Americans disapproved of anti-miscegenation laws.

Some Chinese and Japanese Americans attributed their lack of support for intermarriage to whites' opposition to it. A Chinese interpreter in British Columbia stated that intermarriage between "the Chinese and the whites" would not happen in North America: "This continent is like an island and the people have a very strong idea that they must have people of their own kind."<sup>91</sup> A Japanese worker at a lumber company in Washington stated, "I think people in this

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<sup>89</sup> The full text of this questionnaire can be found in the following document. #325 and #340, Box 35, SRR.

<sup>90</sup> There were ten Chinese interviewees and forty-eight Japanese interviewees who expressed their opinions about intermarriage.

<sup>91</sup> "Interview: Mr. Lambert Sung," February 4, 1924, #3, Box 24, SRR.

country don't like the Japanese because they think the races can't mix. But Americans never give the races a chance to come together so that they can mix.”<sup>92</sup>

Some supporters of intermarriage contended that it might be the only way to solve “the race problem.” A Japanese man in Santa Paula, California, said, “The solution to the racial problem would be...impossible unless inter-racial marriage be allowed.” A Japanese student who identified himself as a believer of “amalgamation” stated that “no inter-racial peace will descend to the earth even after the elimination of racial prejudice until inter-racial amalgamation be [*sic*] allowed.”<sup>93</sup>

Some interviewees criticized anti-miscegenation laws although they differed in their opinions about interracial marriage. Hideo Oyama, a Japanese student of economics and sociology at the University of Southern California, stated, “Intermarriage is the essence of social interaction and of eternal peace. It is no use to prohibit it by law, because love is sacred.”<sup>94</sup> T. Kimoto, also a Japanese student of economics and sociology at the University of Southern California, explained that he did not “encourage intermarriage” while he did not find “any good reason to prohibit [it] by law.” Kimoto’s opposition to anti-miscegenation laws was grounded on his Christian belief: “Love is sacred...You may have no right prohibit (doing) love, if you have Christian spirit.”<sup>95</sup> Shigeru Okada, a Japanese student at Occidental College in Los Angeles, identified the tone of white superiority embedded in anti-miscegenation laws: “Americans object [to] intermarriage because only the white race is superior, so that they claim that it must be kept pure in blood.” The bolder part of Okada’s criticism of anti-miscegenation laws was that

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<sup>92</sup> R.L. Olson, “Eatonville Lumber Co., Eatonville, Washington,” #204, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>93</sup> “The History As a Social Document,” #323 (16-20), Box 31, SRR.

<sup>94</sup> Hideo Oyama, “The Life History as a Social Document,” June 5, 1924, #60, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>95</sup> William C. Smith, “My Life History: Kimoto, T..” August 1924, #43, Box 34, SRR.

marriage was a matter of an individual contract and human freedom: “This matter of intermarriage, I think, is a foolish thing to argue, since marriage is an individual matter which others cannot enter into. If it would be prohibited by law, undoubted it would be against human liberty.”<sup>96</sup>

Chinese and Japanese immigrants tended to understand differences between races in a cultural sense, not in biological or physical terms. Their opinions about intermarriage depended on whether or not they viewed the mix of two different cultures through marriage as desirable. Hung Kei Lei, a Chinese student pursuing a doctoral degree and an owner of a Chinese art shop in Santa Ana, California, considered intermarriage to be a “fine thing” because it would make people “exchange the knowledge of different races.”<sup>97</sup> Most Chinese and Japanese immigrants, however, thought that intermarriage was less desirable when cultural differences between different races seemed stark. T. Kimoto said, “At present, the character of culture is very different among different races, but it is probable that as time goes on, the standard of living will close nearer and nearer, and the time will come when the mingling of races will not cause much trouble economically and mentally.”<sup>98</sup>

Some interviewees’ opposition to intermarriage stemmed from their belief that one should marry within one’s own race. Chin Yen, a second-generation Chinese American who was married to a native-born Chinese woman, stated that he thought that “Chinese should marry their own race and then everything would be much better.” Yen did not consider marrying an American woman because she belonged to “a different race.” Such a union was “just like if [an]

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<sup>96</sup> Shigeru Okada, “Autobiography,” August 3, 1925, #429, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>97</sup> “The Life History of Hung Kei Lei,” #347, Box 32, SRR.

<sup>98</sup> William C. Smith, “My Life History: Kimoto, T.,” August 1924, #43, Box 34, SRR.

American girl marry [*sic*] [a] colored man,” which he did not “like to see.”<sup>99</sup> Masami Suzuki, a Japanese student, opposed intermarriage in order to keep each race pure: “racially speaking, I think race intermarriage would deteriorate the races as a whole....we must preserve the purest race to gain the highest and intellectual efficiency.”<sup>100</sup>

Yen’s and Suzuki’s opposition to intermarriage and claims of racial purity might be understood as a reaction to white supremacy and segregation. When asked about his experiences with discrimination against the Chinese, Yen replied, “I always appreciate the way the Americans treat me.” However, Yen stated that “sometime the American people feel a little different regarding race—maybe they feel they would rather have white race than Oriental race.”<sup>101</sup> Suzuki recalled that there had been occasions when he had been denied service at restaurants, and he was often insulted on the streets by white passers-by. Even his white friends who acted “intimate and very friendly” to him at church and school pretended not to know him in public. “To me,” Suzuki stated, “these are the characteristics of the average Americans, they are ashamed to meet Orientals because they are yellow.”<sup>102</sup>

The Survey of Race Relations revealed that Chinese and Japanese Americans viewed interracial marriage in much the same way that African Americans did at the time. Neither the Asian American nor the African American communities believed that interracial marriage could improve race relations.<sup>103</sup> However, the Asian American community was more likely to support

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<sup>99</sup> C. H. Burnett, “Life History as a Social Document of Mr. Chin Yen,” August 24, 1924, #186, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>100</sup> “A Social Document by Masami Suzuki,” #349, Box 32, SRR.

<sup>101</sup> C. H. Burnett, “Life History as a Social Document of Mr. Chin Yen,” August 24, 1924, #186, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>102</sup> “A Social Document by Masami Suzuki,” #349, Box 32, SRR.

<sup>103</sup> In the 1910s and 1920s, the NAACP had to approach its opposition to anti-miscegenation law carefully due to the African American community’s opposition to interracial marriage and the emergence of Marcus Garvey’s program for black racial purity. Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 183.

interracial marriage as a natural consequence of human contacts while the African American community was less likely to endorse its members' marriage to whites. Both communities opposed anti-miscegenation laws but for different reasons. The Asian American community viewed anti-miscegenation laws as inhumane legislation hindering love and individual decisions to choose one's marital partner. The NAACP and the African American community opposed anti-miscegenation laws mainly because such laws allowed white men to exploit black women sexually without taking responsibility for the relationship.<sup>104</sup>

The western style of miscegenation law was integral to the political program of nativist and anti-Asian politics in the American West. Although Western states' anti-miscegenation laws failed to articulate the race identity of different peoples from Asia, these laws contributed to the perpetuation of the belief in racial difference between whites and Asian peoples. Therefore, Western states' anti-miscegenation laws provided the legal precedent for the connection between race and Asians' ineligibility for citizenship, a concept that was used to justify a wave of immigration laws that promoted Asian exclusion in the early twentieth century.

Anti-miscegenation laws rarely encountered criticism from white Americans, except for more left-leaning progressives. In general, white society took opposition to interracial marriage for granted. Between the 1870s and 1910s, anti-miscegenation laws were rationalized based on the social and moral stigmatization of interracial relationships between Asian men and white women. Toward 1920s, white Americans legitimized their opposition to intermarriage between whites and Asians based on the eugenicist belief in the biological undesirability of race mixing.

Anti-miscegenation laws in the U.S. West were reflected American society's attempt to establish racial differences between peoples from Asia and whites as a fact and to define the

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<sup>104</sup> Regarding views about interracial marriage among African Americans between the 1910s and 1930s, see Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 173–191.

status of Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian Americans as closely related to that of blacks.

Nonetheless, as Chapter 3 reveals, the theories of eugenics, which lay behind this legal and social construction of Asians and blacks as an “inferior” race, met challenges from four distinguished progressive intellectuals—Franz Boas, W. E. B. Du Bois, Sidney Gulick, and Robert Park.

Between 1907 and 1935, these four progressives criticized anti-miscegenation laws and nativist politics and attacked the eugenicist belief in pure races and the inferiority of mixed race individuals.

CHAPTER 3  
CULTURAL PLURALIST DEFENSE OF INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE AND MIXED RACE,  
1907–1937

In 1909, Franz Boas, the German-born Jewish American anthropologist and a professor of anthropology at Columbia University, criticized anti-miscegenation laws in the South.<sup>1</sup> It was half a century before Hannah Arendt, the German-born Jewish American political theorist, argued, in response to the incident in Little Rock in 1957, that anti-miscegenation laws in 29 out of the 49 states “constitute a much more flagrant breach of letter and spirit of the Constitution than segregation of schools.”<sup>2</sup> While Arendt regarded anti-miscegenation laws as a violation of civil rights of black citizens in 1959, what Boas was concerned more about the laws in 1909 was that they reinforced a eugenic myth of racial hierarchy and white racial purity. Boas lamented that “the policy of many of our Southern States that try to prevent all racial intermixture is based on an erroneous view of the process involved.” It was clear to Boas that anti-miscegenation laws’ rationale was “the necessity of protecting the white race against the infusion of Negro blood.”<sup>3</sup>

Franz Boas was among leading progressive intellectuals who introduced physical and cultural anthropological criticism of pseudo-scientific beliefs in race as unchangeable biological facts.<sup>4</sup> This chapter examines the ways that Boas and another three progressive intellectuals—the black civil rights leader W. E. B. Du Bois, the white American missionary Sidney Gulick, and

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<sup>1</sup> Franz Boas, “Race Problems in America,” *Science* 29 (1909): 839–849. This essay was compiled in Boas’s anthology, which was a collection of his lectures delivered between 1910 and 1911 and first published in 1911. Franz Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” in Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York, 1922), 251–278.

<sup>2</sup> Hanna Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock,” in Werner Sollors, ed., *Interracialism: Black-White Inter-marriage in American History, Literature, and Law* (New York, 2000), 492. Arendt’s essay originally appears in *Dissent*. Hanna Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock,” *Dissent* 6 (Winter 1959): 45–56.

<sup>3</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 276.

<sup>4</sup> Very recently the historian Nell Irvin Painter has mentioned that Boas spread “the radical germ of cultural relativism” by “downplaying anatomical differences between races” and by looking to “environment and culture rather than to race as shapers of people’s bodies and psyches.” Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York, 2010), 231.

the white Chicago sociologist Robert Park—used cultural anthropological understandings of race and culture in defeating myths about the biological undesirability of racial intermarriage between whites and non-whites. These four progressives’ attack on social Darwinism and the eugenics movement was centered on the criticism of anti-miscegenation laws among other segregation and anti-Asian policies. In this way, Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park contributed to the formation of cultural pluralist critique of American racial politics.

Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park all witnessed the emergence of turn-of-the-century anthropological understandings of race and culture outside the U.S. and devoted their professional careers to the study of non-white racial groups in America. After earning his Ph.D. in physics from the University of Kiel in 1881, Boas started his professional career as an anthropologist of Native American culture and language in Canada. In 1885, Boas immigrated to the U.S. Since he became a professor of anthropology at Columbia in 1899, Boas showed critical interests in blacks’ social and racial experiences in America. Between 1891 and 1893, Du Bois studied in the doctoral program in the University of Berlin in Germany, where he came to see blacks’ racial inequality in America from an international perspective. While studying philosophy at Harvard, Park went to Germany in 1899 and earned his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Heidelberg in 1903. Returning from Germany, between 1905 and 1912, Park accepted the director of Public Relations at Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute. During his seven years in Tuskegee, Park gathered life histories of many hundreds of blacks and later published several essays on the “racial assimilation” of blacks.<sup>5</sup> Gulick, a third-generation missionary from a New England family, spent 25 years in Japan between 1888 and 1912, teaching theology in the Japanese language at universities. After

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<sup>5</sup> Winifred Raushenbush, *Robert E. Park: Biography of a Sociologist* (Durham, N.C., 1979), 43–50.

returning from Japan, Gulick was dismayed at the anti-Japanese movement on the West Coast and began to publish books, which addressed the Japanese assimilability.

Existing literature on Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park has tended to lose sight of the degree to which the subject of interracial marriage mattered in their writings<sup>6</sup> or to view their interest in interracial marriage as a more or less passing focus.<sup>7</sup> This chapter argues that the subject of interracial marriage was central to their challenge to American racial politics, even though mainstream progressives avoided expressing overt support for interracial marriage due to the volatile nature of the subject. For instance, historian Peggy Pascoe reveals that while Du Bois persistently addressed his opposition to anti-miscegenation laws in the early years of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 1910 to 1912, other officials of the organization “treated Du Bois’s outburst as a statement of individual opinion.”<sup>8</sup>

Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park inherited the unfinished goal of the political and moral defense of interracial marriage from abolitionists and Radical Republicans. These progressives resumed the political and moral criticism of legal bans on interracial marriage that was earlier expressed by white abolitionists in the 1830s and 1840s and Radical Republicans in the Reconstruction South. In the 1830s, William Lloyd Garrison and Lydia Maria Child endorsed intermarriage between free blacks and whites as a means to promote the assimilation of free blacks in the North and proposed the repeal of the Massachusetts law that forbade interracial marriage.<sup>9</sup> Garrison and Child also espoused a moral critique of slavery for permitting Southern

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<sup>6</sup> Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 230–232.

<sup>7</sup> Yu, *Thinking Orientals*.

<sup>8</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 169.

<sup>9</sup> Leslie M. Harris, “From Abolitionist Amalgamators to ‘Rulers of the Five Points’: the Discourse of Interracial Sex and Reform in Antebellum New York City,” in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in Northern American History* (New York, 1999), 193–195. See also Cott, *Public Vows*, 43–44. Although the state of

white men to make black women their concubines. In the 1870s, black and white Radical Republicans urged state legislatures in the South to legalize interracial marriage to make white men take economic and social responsibility for their relationships with black women and the mixed race children they fathered.<sup>10</sup>

Garrison, Child, and the Radical Republicans failed to gain support for the agenda of legal recognition of interracial marriage, not only across the political aisle but even among mainstream abolitionists and congressional Republicans. As historian Leslie Harris concludes, “amalgamation became the rallying cry for anti-abolitionists” who led race riots in New York City in the 1830s.<sup>11</sup> Mainstream abolitionists did not wish to extend their anti-slavery stance to the highly volatile subject of interracial marriage, which was equated with the recognition of black men’s right to marry white women. Southern states that in the 1860s repealed laws prohibiting interracial marriage reinstated these laws after the end of Reconstruction.<sup>12</sup>

In the early twentieth century, support for interracial marriage as a means to foster the “social” equality of blacks remained not only elusive but also unpopular among mainstream civil rights leaders. Meanwhile, anti-miscegenation laws in the Jim Crow South were used to monger the fear of interracial sex between black men and white women on the one hand, and on the other, to allow white men to have sex with black women without the fear of prosecution or any

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New York never had laws prohibiting interracial marriage, white Northerners in general strongly opposed interracial marriage. In 1853, a mob of several hundred armed white men threatened William Allen, a black professor of the Greek and German languages at New York Central College in McGrawville, New York, who was engaged to Mary King, a student at the college and a daughter of a white abolitionist minister. Allen and King escaped the town, married in New York City, and fled to England and Ireland. In the same year, Allen published a pamphlet recording his love story and the mob activity that threatened his and his wife’s lives in London. William G. Allen, *The American Prejudice against Color* in Sarah Elbert, ed., *The American Prejudice against Color* (Boston, 2002), 35–92.

<sup>10</sup> Cott, *Public Vows*, 98–102; John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago, 1997), 106–107; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 173.

<sup>11</sup> Harris, “From Abolitionist Amalgamators to ‘Rulers of the Five Points,’” 195.

<sup>12</sup> Cott, *Public Vows*, 99.

financial and moral responsibility.<sup>13</sup> In the North, Du Bois and the NAACP continued the moral criticism of anti-miscegenation laws of their Victorian precedents when they fought against the tide of anti-miscegenation bills introduced in northern states between 1913 and 1927. Northern whites' opposition to interracial marriage targeted marriage between black men and white women as shown in the 1912 scandal over the marriage of black heavyweight boxer Jack Johnson to Lucile Cameron, a white woman, in Chicago. In the West, proponents of anti-Asian sentiment were centered on the prevention of interracial marriage between Asian men and white women. Arguing for the potential of Asian immigrants to be assimilated, Gulick recommended the intermarriage of Asian men and white women as a means of hastening the cultural assimilation of Asian immigrants.

While antebellum abolitionists put forth a moral opposition to the legal prohibition of interracial marriage and slavery, Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park found it necessary to defeat social Darwinist ideas of race that reinforced, in Pascoe's words, "the belief that interracial marriage was unnatural."<sup>14</sup> This belief in the unnaturalness of interracial marriage first appeared in the 1860s among Democrats who accused abolitionists of promoting the right of black men to marry white women. These Democrats also coined the term "miscegenation" by combining two Latin words *miscere* (mix) and *genus* (race) to refer to interracial sex and marriage. Pascoe argues that the term "miscegenation" provided "the rhetorical means of channeling the belief that interracial marriage was unnatural into the foundation of post-Civil War white supremacy."<sup>15</sup> White supremacy, conjoined with social Darwinism and the eugenics movement, legitimized

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<sup>13</sup> Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*.

<sup>14</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 1–2.

anti-miscegenation laws and promulgated the belief that interracial marriage should be prevented to protect the racial purity of whites.

Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park repudiated eugenicist beliefs in racial purity and racial hierarchy and called for adopting cultural anthropological views of race. Arguing against the view that the character of race was determined by unchangeable biological heredity, these four progressives maintained that no races in history had kept their original biological characteristics. They also stressed that the character of race was determined by environmental and cultural factors. From their perspective, “mulattoes” and “Eurasians” in the U.S. were racial and cultural types that existed only in the U.S. because the physical and cultural characteristics of these racial mixtures were determined by the physical and social environment of the U.S. These four progressives argued against the belief in the inferiority of race mixture in part because there had been no scientific evidence documenting such inferiority and in part because they found that there were no intrinsic or biological factors that made non-white races “inferior.”

While they were in sync in debunking the belief in racial purity, Boas, Du Bois, Gulick, and Park had somewhat differing opinions regarding the extent to which race relations in the U.S. might change if interracial marriage were permitted. More specifically, they differed in assessing the biological effect of interracial sex and marriage. Boas and Gulick anticipated that if whites and blacks or whites and “Orientals” continued to intermarry over generations, the biological absorption of the racial markers of blacks and “Orientals” would occur and “problems” caused by the racial distinctiveness of blacks and “Orientals” from whites would disappear. By contrast, Du Bois and Park believed that the biological absorption or assimilation of non-whites would not automatically solve the so-called “race problems” as long as race remained a determining factor of one’s social class in the U.S.

## Franz Boas and “the Questions of Race-Mixture”<sup>16</sup>

Between 1909 and 1911, Franz Boas published essays and delivered lectures on “the Negro problem” in the U.S.<sup>17</sup> He suggested that “the most important practical questions relating to the Negro problem” had “reference to the mulattoes and other mixed bloods.”<sup>18</sup> His essays and lectures analyzed the ways that the belief in the inferiority of blacks and “mulattoes” justified anti-miscegenation laws. According to him, the belief that all race mixture led to inferior offspring was “erroneous.”<sup>19</sup>

Boas criticized two assumptions of the belief in black racial inferiority. First, this alleged inferiority was grounded upon the physiological and anatomical difference between blacks and whites, which was construed as evidence of the two races’ allegedly different mental ability, without any scientific proof. According to Boas, “There was nothing at all that could be interpreted as suggesting any material difference in the mental capacity of the bulk of the Negro population as compared to the bulk of the white population.”<sup>20</sup> Second, the idea of a racial hierarchy asserted that the physical and mental traits of a race were hereditary and were immune to changes in environment and social conditions. Boas argued against the idea of “hereditary racial traits” by pointing to the anthropological finding that “the traits of African culture as observed in the aboriginal home of the Negro are those of a healthy primitive people.”<sup>21</sup> Boas

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<sup>16</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 274. While Boas tended to use the term “Negro” in lower case, I make it upper case.

<sup>17</sup> Boas gave a speech on the scientific evidence that disprove the alleged “inferiority” of blacks at the Second Negro National Conference in May 1910. The transcript of this speech appears in Boas, “The Real Race Problem,” *Crisis* (December 1910): 22–25.

<sup>18</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 277.

<sup>19</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 276.

<sup>20</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 268.

<sup>21</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 271.

maintained that “There is nothing to prove that licentiousness, shiftless laziness, [and] lack of initiative, are fundamental characteristics of the [Negro] race.” Boas claimed that blacks in the U.S. did not have opportunity to develop their cultural sensitivity because of their displacement and “social conditions” in the U.S. that made them suffer “the dependency of slavery” and “a severe economic struggle against heavy odds [after the Civil War and Reconstruction].” Boas argued that “there is every reason to believe that the Negro, when given facility and opportunity, will be perfectly able to fulfill the duties of citizenship as well as his white neighbor.”<sup>22</sup>

Addressing segregation policies, Boas argued against the ways that anti-miscegenation laws served to perpetuate the belief in black inferiority and to justify the lower social status of blacks in the U.S. He observed that anti-miscegenation laws lacked scientific and factual justification. First, Boas debunked the assertion that anti-miscegenation laws dictated the “‘race instinct’ of the whites” to “avoid race-mixture.” According to him, “the size of our mulatto population” proved that “there is no racial sexual antipathy [between whites and blacks].” Second, Boas argued against the belief that anti-miscegenation laws were necessary because “the mixed type” showed “an excessively high mortality and lack of fertility” compared to “the pure type.” For this matter, Boas commented that there has been no scientific proof supporting this belief and that it was necessary to conduct the “scientific study” of the characteristics of “the mulattoes and other mixed bloods”—“their physical types, their mental and moral qualities, and their vitality.”<sup>23</sup>

Boas believed that interracial unions of white men and black women and those of black men and white women had different impacts on the biological characteristics of either race.

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<sup>22</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 271–273.

<sup>23</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 273–276.

Because “the number of women” determined “the increase of races,” Boas argued that the unions of white men and black women did not result in the “infusion of Negro blood into the white race.” He noted that existing cases of unions between whites and blacks were those of white men and black women “with very few exceptions [of black men and white women].” His prescription was that “if a considerable number of their [black women’s] children are those of white fathers, the race as a whole must necessarily lose its pure Negro type.” In this vein, Boas repudiated the assertion that anti-miscegenation laws were required due to “the necessity of protecting the white race against the infusion of Negro blood.” As a result of the unions between white men and black women, Boas believed, there would be “a continued increase of the amounts of white blood in the Negro community” and the process of “lightening the Negro race without corresponding admixture in the white race” because “no such infusion of Negro blood into the white race through the maternal line occurs.”<sup>24</sup>

Boas anticipated that “the process of lightening the Negro race” through the unions of white men and black women might erase the physical distinction between whites and blacks and even ease racial tensions. “The relative proportion of Negro blood in the following mixed generation becomes less,” Boas wrote, “and that therefore a gradually increasing similarity of the two racial types may develop.”<sup>25</sup> If unions between whites and blacks continued to occur mainly between white men and black women and if there were no further influx of immigrants from Africa, Boas considered that “the most distinctive type of Negro” would disappear in the U.S. and that would “again tend to alleviate the acuteness of race feeling.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 277.

<sup>25</sup> Boas, “The Real Race Problem,” 25.

<sup>26</sup> Boas, “The Real Race Problem.”

Boas tended to see the physical difference between blacks and whites in terms of appearance as the major source of the belief in black inferiority or “the Negro problem.” He believed that whites’ antipathy toward blacks would disappear if the unions of white men and black women resulted in a gradual reduction in their physical differences. In the 1930s, Du Bois and Park expressed their skepticism toward the possibility that the biological absorption of blacks via interracial unions would solve racial tensions. Du Bois and Park maintained that racial prejudice against blacks would exist unless “social” equality of blacks, in terms of education and upward mobility, was achieved.

Nonetheless, Boas remarkably noted that anti-miscegenation laws played a critical role in maintaining the racial and sexual hierarchy between whites and blacks. The laws did not punish white men who had sex with black women and offspring born of these unions were still bound by the myth of the alleged inferiority of “the mulattoes.” This was why Boas called for the scientific investigation of the desirability of “race-mixture” for “the welfare of millions of Negroes.”<sup>27</sup>

The historian Mia Bay has revealed that African American scholars of the early twentieth century were among “the first to embrace and publicize Boas’s work” a quarter century before cultural relativism became popular in postwar America.<sup>28</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois was one of those African American scholars. In May 1910, Boas was invited to deliver a lecture on the repudiation of the belief in black inferiority at the Second National Negro Conference organized

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<sup>27</sup> Boas, “Race Problems in the United States,” 278.

<sup>28</sup> Mia Bay, *The White Image in the Black Mind: African-American Ideas about White People, 1830–1925* (New York, 2000), 187–188.

by the NAACP.<sup>29</sup> Boas had a significant influence upon W.E.B. Du Bois's criticism of anti-miscegenation laws.

### **W.E.B. Du Bois and "the Real Problem of Miscegenation in America"**<sup>30</sup>

Between 1907 and 1935, W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the founders of the NAACP, critically analyzed the ways that anti-miscegenation laws and social Darwinism kept the racial caste system intact after the abolition of slavery. Regarding the social Darwinist belief in a racial hierarchy, he targeted the argument's lack of scientific grounding by relying on cultural anthropological findings about modern races. He urged American society to get facts about interracial unions between blacks and whites. One of the facts that Du Bois highlighted was the actual number of "mulattoes" born of the long history of sexual unions between white men and black women in the South. He showed consistent interest in the analysis of discrepancies in and the underrepresentation of the "mulatto" population in the U.S. Census between 1850 and 1920. Like Boas, Du Bois called for a scientific study of the physical and mental characteristics of "mulattoes" in the U.S. to debunk the myth about the supposed infertility and weakness of racially mixed offspring. In line with antebellum abolitionists and Reconstruction-era Radical Republicans, Du Bois articulated the ways that anti-miscegenation laws reinforced the racial and sexual stereotypes of black men and women on the one hand, while the laws allowed white men to sexually exploit black women without fear of prosecution on the other hand.

Du Bois analyzed the ways that social Darwinism was used to plant the belief in racial hierarchy and to restrict the political and social equality of blacks. In a paper presented at the National Negro Conference held in New York in 1909, Du Bois lamented that "the splendid

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<sup>29</sup> Boas, "The Real Race Problem."

<sup>30</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois, "Miscegenation," in Werner Sollors, ed., *Interracialism: Black-White Inter-marriage in American History, Literature, and Law* (New York, 2000), 470.

scientific work of Darwin, Weissman, Galton, and others” had been “interpreted as meaning that there is such essential and inevitable inequality among men and the races of men.” This interpretation accompanied “the silent assumption that the white European stock represents the strong survival peoples and that the swarthy, yellow and black peoples are the ones rightly doomed to eventual extinction.” Southern whites predicted that freed blacks would “retrograde and die” based on the belief in black inferiority. Du Bois argued that the progress of freed blacks disproved white Southerners’ prediction. “In forty years, [the freedmen did] get rid of the large part of their illiteracy,” he wrote, “accumulate half a billion of property in small homesteads and gained now and then respectful attention in the world’s ears and eyes.” He argued that “the black race in America” did not deserve any laws that put “the rule of inferiority” against them.<sup>31</sup>

After returning from his trip to the First Universal Races Congress held in London, England, in July 1911, Du Bois wrote an essay summarizing the modern scientific criticism of social Darwinism for the August 1911 issue of the *Crisis*. In this essay, he argued that the U.S. was “fifty years behind the scientific world in its racial philosophy.” He repudiated the social Darwinist argument that the physical and mental characteristics of the so-called race were interconnected and unchangeable. Instead, he argued that especially the mental characteristics of a race or “people” could be “materially transformed” in a generation or two by “marked improvements in mass education, in public sentiment, and in environment generally.” The physical characteristics of a people, “excluding the skin color,” were “to no small extent the direct result of the physical and social environment under which it is living at any moment, and hence these characteristics differ measurably both in history and in the different social strata of one and the same people.” Claiming that there was “no fair proof of some races being

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<sup>31</sup> Du Bois, “Evolution of the Race Problem,” in *Proceedings of the National Negro Conference* (New York, 1909), [retrieved 15 November 2010], available from <http://www.webdubois.org/dbEvolOfRaceProb.html>.

substantially superior to others in inborn capacity,” Du Bois attributed “the belief in racial or national superiority” to “unenlightened psychological repulsion and underestimation of the dynamic or [of] environmental factors.”<sup>32</sup>

Du Bois revealed that American society avoided facing facts about the long history of interracial unions between blacks and whites since the time of slavery by distorting the actual number of “mulattoes” among the Black population. By comparing the census records to a few local studies on the number of “mulattoes,” Du Bois revealed that the U.S. Census was inconsistent in defining the category “mulatto”<sup>33</sup> and underrepresented the number and percentage of “mulattoes” among the entire black population. For example, the census records of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1890 showed that “mulattoes” comprised 11–15% of “the total Negro population.” Du Bois claimed that these figures were “of doubtful validity” and “officially acknowledged to be misleading” in 1911. By Du Bois’s estimate, “from observation and local studies in all parts of the United States,” about one third of blacks had “distinctive traces of white blood” and there was “a large amount of Negro blood in the white population.”<sup>34</sup> In 1935, Du Bois disclosed that the U.S. Census lacked any scientific method distinguishing “mulatto” from “black” and that the job of “ascertaining the presence of Negro and white blood” was “left

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<sup>32</sup> Du Bois, “Races,” *Crisis* (August 1911): 157–158.

<sup>33</sup> In 1850 and 1860, the categories of “mulatto” and “black” existed but there was no attempt to define these categories. In the 1870, 1910, and 1920 censuses, the term “black” was defined as “all full-blooded Negroes” and the term “mulatto” as “all Negroes having some proportion of white blood.” No count of “mulatto” persons was made in the 1880 and 1900 censuses. The 1890 census classified all persons “having three-fourths or more black blood” as “black” and other persons with degrees of “Negro blood” as “mulattoes,” “quadroons,” or “octoroons.” Regarding the 1890 census and its historical significance as “the first and only U.S. census to divide people of African descent into four categories,” see Martha Hodes, “Fractions and Fictions in the United States Census of 1890,” in Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, N.C., 2006), 240–270.

<sup>34</sup> Du Bois, “The Negro Race in the United States of America,” in Gustav Spiller, ed., *Papers on Inter-Racial Problems, Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress held at the University of London, July 26–29, 1911* (London, 1911), 350, [retrieved 12 November 2010], available from <http://www.archive.org/details/papaersoninterrac00univiala>.

almost entirely to the judgment of the enumerator.”<sup>35</sup> According to the results of individual scholars’ research in the 1920s that Du Bois mentioned in his 1935 essay, blacks in the U.S. consisted of mainly “mixed bloods” of “white” and/or “Indian blood” and “a minority of full-bloods.”<sup>36</sup>

Du Bois advocated for the desirability of interracial marriage and race mixture. His support of interracial marriage and race mixture evolved over time. In fact, his interest in the question of the desirability of racial mixture appeared as early as 1907. At the time he expressed an opinion that racial mixture between blacks and whites might lead to the blend of the greatness of both races. When he gave a speech to the Society for Ethical Culture at Carnegie Hall on February 17, 1907, it was reported that he made the following statement to the audience: “Not only that, but as a subtle and far-reaching blend of blood, you have in many great white men this negro element coming in to color and make wonderful genius which they had.”<sup>37</sup>

In the August 1911 issue of *Crisis*, Du Bois introduced the new ideas that defended the vitality of racial intermixture and that denied the belief in a pure race. Presenting these ideas as the “conclusions of writers who are among the best-known names in modern science,” Du Bois denied the popular belief that intermarriage would lead to the degeneration of a pure race by promoting the births of mixed bloods. “Intermarriage, we find—contrary to popular tenets—improves the vitality and capacity of a people, and cannot, therefore, be objectionable in itself,” Du Bois maintained. According to the writers of “modern science,” he reported, there was nothing intrinsically wrong with intermarriage: “the chief drawback to intermarriage between

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<sup>35</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 468.

<sup>36</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 468–469.

<sup>37</sup> *New York Times*, “Mixed Blood Aided White Geniuses,” February 18, 1907, [retrieved 2 November 2010], available from <http://partners.nytimes.com/books/00/11/05/specials/dubois-mixed.html>.

peoples is the same as the drawback to intermarriage between different social classes—i. e., the different traditions of the partners in marriage.” Du Bois’s advice to “those who dread intermarriage” was that they “should, therefore, reflect both that there is no such thing as purity of race.”<sup>38</sup>

In 1935, Du Bois examined whether or not “race mixture” was desirable in the U.S. by analyzing a small but significant number of studies on the physical and psychological characteristics of “the American Negro” that became available in the late 1920s. Du Bois and the authors of these studies used the term “the American Negro” as a substitute for “mulattoes” because they held the view that the majority of blacks in the U.S. were already “mulattoes” due to “a long system of concubinage of coloured women in slavery days with some legal intermarriage.”<sup>39</sup> These studies on American blacks effectively debunked the assertion of the physical and psychological undesirability of “race mixture” in the U.S. According to these studies, “the American Negro” was identical with other races in terms of bodily characteristics and development. The results of psychological tests of blacks in the U.S. were “indeterminate” and unable to generalize the intellectual ability of blacks as a group. Du Bois also upheld the desirability of “mulattoes” by offering a list of “outstanding Americans of mulattoes” including Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington.<sup>40</sup>

Du Bois criticized anti-miscegenation laws for treating interracial relationships between black men and white women differently from those between white men and black women. In 1909, he described the violence and injustice done to black men and women due to anti-miscegenation laws as follows: “In the southern United States on the contrary it is assumed that

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<sup>38</sup> Du Bois, “Races,” *Crisis* (August 1911): 158.

<sup>39</sup> Du Bois, “The Negro Race in the United States of America,” 350.

<sup>40</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 469–470.

unwise marriage can only be stopped by the degradation of the blacks, the classing of their women with prostitutes, the loading [of] the whole race with every badge of public isolation, degradation and contempt and by burning offenders at the stake.”<sup>41</sup> When Du Bois led a campaign against anti-miscegenation bills in the Northern and Midwestern state legislatures in 1913, he prioritized the goal of protecting black womanhood from white men’s sexual aggression. “The moral reason for opposing laws against intermarriage,” he wrote in 1913, “is the greatest of all: such laws leave the colored girl absolutely helpless before the lust of white men. It reduces colored women in the eyes of the law to the position of dogs.”<sup>42</sup>

Du Bois believed in the idea of individual freedom to choose a marital partner and opposed anti-miscegenation laws for this reason. The question was how to present opposition to anti-miscegenation laws and to support the legalization of interracial marriage without evoking the stigma of interracial sex and marriage between black men and white women. As Pascoe aptly puts it, “when it came to opposing miscegenation laws, the argument for marital freedom of choice ran headlong into the sexual sensationalism that surrounded the race-and-gender pairing of Black men and White women.”<sup>43</sup> Du Bois found it difficult to express his support for the individual freedom to marry when he led the campaign against the introduction of anti-miscegenation bills in the North between 1913 and 1927. Northern state legislatures introduced anti-miscegenation bills mainly because whites in the North showed such a volatile reaction to the Jack Johnson scandal of 1912. The black heavyweight boxer Jack John married Lucile Cameron, a white woman, in Chicago, Illinois, after his first wife, who was also white, committed suicide.

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<sup>41</sup> Du Bois, “Evolution of the Race Problem.”

<sup>42</sup> Du Bois, “Intermarriage,” *Crisis* (Feb. 1913), 180.

<sup>43</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 175.

Du Bois and other NAACP officials put forth a moral criticism of anti-miscegenation laws, arguing that marriage was mocked by white men in the South who were permitted to sleep with black women without marrying due to anti-miscegenation laws.<sup>44</sup> Du Bois and the NAACP referred to Radical Republicans in the 1870s, who hoped that the repeal of anti-miscegenation laws and the regulation of cohabitation would make white men responsible for their black women and the “mulatto” children they fathered.<sup>45</sup> Espousing the Reconstruction-era Radical Republican agenda, the NAACP defended the institution of marriage against illicit sex and assumed the role of protectors of black women. This tactic is demonstrated by Du Bois’s description of anti-miscegenation laws as “anti-marriage laws.”<sup>46</sup>

Most NAACP officials tended to avoid broaching the subject of black men in marital relationships with white women in the North.<sup>47</sup> Du Bois, who showed his approval for the Johnson-Cameron marriage, took a different approach from other NAACP officials, calling for the legal recognition of interracial marriage as a sign of respect for individuals’ decision to marry the partner of their choice. “If two full-grown responsible human beings of any race or color propose to live together as man and wife,” he wrote, “it is only social decency not simply to allow, but to compel them to marry.” He chastised “those people who have yelled themselves purple in the face of Jack Johnson” to “ask themselves this question: Granted that Johnson and Miss Cameron proposed to live together, was it better for them to be legally married or not?” Du Bois stressed that he preferred “the methods of Jack Johnson” to “those of the brother of

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<sup>44</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 178.

<sup>45</sup> D’Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 106–107.

<sup>46</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 471.

<sup>47</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 178–179.

Governor Mann of Virginia,” who would “rather uproot the foundations of decent society than to call the consorts of their brothers, sons, and fathers their legal wives.”<sup>48</sup>

Despite Du Bois’s unilateral advocacy of the legalization of interracial marriage, he was careful not to be seen as endorsing the actual practice of intermarriage mostly because of the worsening situation of segregation politics. In 1913, he already admitted the fact that both black and white society preferred in-group marriage. “So far as the advisability of intermarrying between white and colored people in the United States is concerned,” he wrote, “both races are practically in complete agreement. Colored folk marry colored folk and white marry white, and the exceptions are very few.”<sup>49</sup> In the 1920s, the NAACP’s campaign against anti-miscegenation bills met opposition from Marcus Garvey and his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which supported anti-miscegenation laws as a way to uphold black racial purity.<sup>50</sup> Marcus Garvey and the UNIA aligned with the Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America, a grass-roots white supremacist group in Virginia, and referred to the NAACP as “a New York organization of Mulattoes” and a “Miscegenationist organization.”<sup>51</sup>

By 1927, the NAACP defeated all the legislative attempts to introduce anti-miscegenation laws in the North. However, the NAACP did not cope effectively with the shifting strategy of white supremacist politics in the South, which reinforced existing anti-miscegenation

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<sup>48</sup> Du Bois, “Intermarriage,” 180.

<sup>49</sup> Du Bois, “Intermarriage,” 180.

<sup>50</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 180–185.

<sup>51</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 183. Regarding the coalition of the Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America, a branch of the Klan in Richmond, Virginia, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association led by Garvey, see Barbara Bair, “Remapping the Black/White Body: Sexuality, Nationalism, and Biracial Antimiscegenation Activism in 1920s Virginia,” in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in Northern American History* (New York, 1999), 399–419.

laws by enforcing the definition of a white person as having no trace of black ancestry.<sup>52</sup> The case in point was Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924, which the Anglo-Saxon Clubs of America proposed to the state's legislature. Walter Plecker, head of the Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics and a firm believer in eugenics, suggested the idea of tightening the definition of a "white" person in the state's anti-miscegenation laws. Putting forth the definition of a "white" person as one with no traces of "black" ancestry or one-sixteenth or less Indian ancestry, Plecker and the Anglo-Saxon Clubs intended to prevent anyone with one-drop of "black blood" from passing as "white" and marrying a "white" person in Virginia.<sup>53</sup>

Du Bois's 1935 essay, "Miscegenation," can be read as his response to the more conspicuous impact of the eugenics movement in racial politics in the 1920s. Although he did not directly point to Virginia's Racial Integrity Act, he clearly targeted the entrenched anxiety over white racial purity even among "most thinking Americans" who did not "hate Negroes" or wished to "retard their advance." According to him, those who opposed slavery were hesitant to answer the question of "how far complete social freedom and full economic opportunity for Negroes is going to result in such racial amalgamation as to make America octoroon in blood." The "real fear" of miscegenation and "inherited resentment at its very possibility," he continued, kept "the race problem in America so terribly alive."<sup>54</sup>

Due to this perennial white anxiety over the subject of miscegenation, Du Bois expressed his reservations about the prediction that the physical approximation between blacks and whites through interracial sexual unions might weaken racial tensions. In 1910, Boas anticipated that interracial sex between black women and white men would continue despite anti-miscegenation

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<sup>52</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 182.

<sup>53</sup> For further information on Virginia's Racial Integrity Act, see Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 140–150.

<sup>54</sup> Du Bois, "Miscegenation," 467.

laws and that as a result, the development of “a gradually increasing similarity of the two racial types” might “again tend to alleviate the acuteness of race feeling.”<sup>55</sup> In 1935, Du Bois anticipated that “continued residence of white and black people together in this country over a sufficiently long term of years will inevitably result in complete absorption.”<sup>56</sup> However, he argued that the biological “absorption” of blacks in itself could not be the solution to “the race problem.” “The real problem of miscegenation in America” was, according to Du Bois, “how fast and under what conditions this amalgamation ought to take place.”<sup>57</sup>

Unless blacks and whites could “attain essential equality in well-being and intelligence,” Du Bois argued that the results of “amalgamation” between blacks and whites would be “easily harmful” to both races. In a situation where blacks belonged to the lower social and economic group and whites to the higher one, he warned that the results of racial “amalgamation” would end up repeating the vicious segregation politics of the South at the time. “It [the higher group] will try to protect itself by caste regulations,” he wrote, “and refuse the lower group protection for its women by anti-marriage laws, and in turn lose respect for its own legislation in its fear of the other group.” If there would be no sign of enhancement in equality among races, then, he believed that “separate racial growth over a considerable time” might achieve “better results than quick amalgamation.”<sup>58</sup>

Du Bois remarkably noted that interracial sex—“amalgamation”—and the biological absorption of blacks could not put an end to racial antagonism as long as inequality among blacks and whites kept in place. He supported the legalization of interracial marriage between

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<sup>55</sup> Boas, “The Real Race Problem,” 25.

<sup>56</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 471.

<sup>57</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 471.

<sup>58</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 471.

blacks and whites because he believed that marriage should be based on two individuals' consent. At the same time, Du Bois was sympathetic towards the black community's disapproval of blacks' marriage to whites, and questioned if the actual practice of interracial marriage would correct race prejudice against blacks.

### **Sidney Gulick and “the American Japanese Problem”**

Sidney Gulick, an American missionary, was devoted to rectifying prejudices toward Japan and Japanese immigrants and advocated the capability of Japanese immigrants to be assimilated. The anti-Japanese propaganda that denied Japanese assimilability, according to Gulick, ultimately led to the question of intermarriage: “The final and clinching argument [against Japanese immigration] is the question: ‘Would you let your daughter marry a Jap?’”<sup>59</sup> Gulick believed that intermarriage between Japanese and whites in the U.S. would lead to biologically and culturally desirable results.

Gulick's scholarly interest in the question of Japanese assimilability was closely related to the missionary background of his family and his lifelong devotion to the improvement of U.S.-Japan relations by promoting education in Japanese history, culture, and people among Americans. Gulick, a third-generation missionary, was born in the Marshall Islands, in 1860. From his early childhood, he was exposed to a racially diverse environment. His parents adopted a four-year-old girl who was fathered by one of the “dissolute white sailors” and mothered by “one of those savage women” in the Caroline Islands. Gulick recalled that his sister's biological father was also “a notorious murderer.”<sup>60</sup> His parents raised the girl as their eldest daughter. Gulick noted that his adopted sister was “in every respect one of us” and “absolutely

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<sup>59</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 118.

<sup>60</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 128.

trustworthy.”<sup>61</sup> He did not know that she was an adopted child until she died at age ten. Later in 1914, he used this memory of his adopted sister as evidence that the “biological race difference” of non-whites or individuals of mixed parentage had nothing to do with their ability to assimilate socially.<sup>62</sup> Instead, the environment and culture in which one was raised were the most influential in forming her or his character.

In some sense, Gulick was fascinated by Japanese culture and civilization like other upper-class New England intellectuals before him known as “Japonologists.”<sup>63</sup> He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1883 and later earned a D.D. (Doctor of Divinity) degree at Yale and Oberlin College. After his marriage to Clara Fisher in 1888, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent him and his wife to Japan. While residing in Japan, he mastered the Japanese language and became a professor at Doshisha University and a lecturer at the Imperial University of Kyoto. After he returned to the U.S. from Japan in 1913, he published several books on policies related to Japanese immigration.

In *The American Japanese Problem: a Study of the Racial Relations of the East and the West* (1914), Gulick argued against the so-called Yellow Peril theory that Japan’s defeat of Russia in 1905 and its growing power over other Asian countries posed an economic and military threat to the West and the white race. Denouncing the Yellow Peril as westerners’ racist colonial propaganda, Gulick proposed that it was necessary for Americans to understand the history and culture of Japan and other Asian nations correctly and, more crucially, to be dissuaded from the belief that Japanese and other “Asiatics” were “inferior” races. Like Franz

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<sup>61</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 128.

<sup>62</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 129.

<sup>63</sup> For more information on these New England intellectuals who introduced Japonisme in America, see Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (New York, 2003), 9.

Boas, Gulick viewed whites' opposition to intermarriage and mixed progeny as based on this belief in a racial hierarchy. "It is the white man," Gulick wrote, "that scorns the little brown man and regards him as inherently inferior and intermarriage as utterly obnoxious."<sup>64</sup>

Like Boas and Du Bois, Gulick criticized the lack of scientific grounds for the belief in race purity and the undesirability of racial mixture. White Americans' anti-miscegenation rhetoric, Gulick argued, centered on the assumption that "mixed progeny" was "weak in body and mind and especially in moral character." Such a claim was "not scientifically convincing," he maintained, because it drew a parallel between "the mule, ugly in nature, and hybrid" and "mixed progeny." The claim was also unconvincing because it asserted the existence of racial purity. Leaning on statements from contemporary anthropologists, Gulick stated that "practically all modern peoples spring from vast intermixture of bloods" and "the virile races to-day are the progeny of vast race mixtures." Like "so-called Anglo-Saxons—more truly described as Anglo-Kelts," Gulick asserted that the Japanese were composed of various racial traces: "Malay, Mongolian, Tartar, Caucasian (Aino), and Negro or Negrito elements all entered in." Gulick also stressed that, since "the crossing of whites with Asiatics or with blacks under favorable conditions" rarely occurred, one should not jump to the conclusion that all mixed marriages led to bad results: what mattered more than parentage was culture "in human reproduction."<sup>65</sup>

Gulick believed that it was necessary for the U.S. government to inform the American public of scientific facts about the "biological and social consequences" of the "crossing of white and Asiatic individuals." His proposal of "a new American Oriental policy" included the necessity of establishing "a national commission on biological and social assimilation" that

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<sup>64</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 118.

<sup>65</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 129–132.

consisted of “expert biologists, psychologists, and sociologists of international repute.” He further argued that their findings should be “embodied in national laws concerning (1) the intermarriage of different races, (2) the elimination by sterilization of those whose heredity renders procreation a menace to the nation, and (3) wise methods for Americanizing already compacted unassimilated groups of aliens.” Reflecting the concerns of the eugenics movement about Asian immigrants at the time, Gulick, in fact, targeted the lack of scientific grounds for California’s anti-miscegenation laws and called for “rational national laws” on intermarriage. “It is absurd,” he stated, “for California to have laws forbidding the marriage of whites and Mongolians while Colorado does not.” “If the California law rests on good scientific grounds,” he continued, “then it should be national; if it does not, then California should have no such law.”<sup>66</sup>

Advocating the assimilability of Japanese immigrants and other “Asiatics,” Gulick identified three ways that Japanese assimilation could occur: “biological assimilation through intermarriage, biological assimilation without intermarriage, and social assimilation.”<sup>67</sup> Gulick viewed Japanese-white intermarriage as quickening the process of the “biological assimilation” of the Japanese because of the influence of the “biological heredity” of a white spouse upon mixed progeny. To optimize the biological influence of a white parent upon children, Gulick prescribed intermarriage between a white woman and a Japanese man in the U.S. “While Eurasians born in Asia and especially of Asiatic mothers are conspicuously Asiatic,” he wrote, “Eurasians born in America and especially of American mothers we may expect to be conspicuously American.”<sup>68</sup> His evidence for the latter was the “slightest Japanese appearance”

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<sup>66</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 294–295.

<sup>67</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 139.

<sup>68</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 139–140.

of the children of Mrs. Aoki in Los Angeles, who he identified as an “Anglo-Saxon.” In fact, he recalled that her children were “so Caucasian in appearance.”<sup>69</sup>

Gulick’s advocacy of intermarriage between Japanese and whites came from his belief in the racial affinity between the two races. He shared the views of American writers on Japan who purported that the Japanese had “considerable white blood.”<sup>70</sup> According to Gulick, “the intermarriage of whites and Japanese is not analogous to that of whites and Negroes” since “Caucasians and Japanese are, to begin with, much closer.” This theory of racial similarities between whites and Japanese was apparently confirmed by Gulick’s observation of children of mixed parentage born in Japan. From Gulick’s point of view, the evidence of biological assimilation among children born to a Japanese father and a white mother was clear. He found such children “practically indistinguishable from Caucasians.” Further, Gulick commented on the “striking beauty in Americo-Japanese [*sic*].”<sup>71</sup>

Gulick believed that the “biological assimilation” of Japanese immigrants could occur without intermarriage because these immigrants and their American-born descendants were expected to experience bodily changes conforming to the environment of the U.S. This assumption was modeled on the case study of Franz Boas regarding physical differences between eastern and southern European immigrants to the U.S. and their American-born children, in addition to Maurice Fishberg’s study on physical differences between the Jews in the U.S. and

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<sup>69</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 140.

<sup>70</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 153. Gulick apparently referred to the writings of Arthur May Knapp and William Elliot Griffis on the Japanese race as “Aryans” or as “akin to Anglo-Saxons.” The essays of Knapp and Griffis are sampled in Joseph M. Henning, *Outposts of Civilization: Race, Religion, and the Formative Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York, 2000), 159–162.

<sup>71</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 152–153.

their counterparts in Africa or Asia.<sup>72</sup> Gulick understood that Boas and Fishberg emphasized the importance of the environment of the U.S. in making American-born descendants of European immigrants physiologically different from their European-born parents despite their biological inheritance.

Emphasizing the “social assimilation” of Japanese immigrants into American society over their “biological assimilation,” Gulick considered intermarriage as a means of facilitating the former goal more quickly. In building an ideal type of intermarriage as a means of assimilating Orientals, Gulick reified the image of white women as conveyers of Western civilization to non-white men and children of mixed parentage. “The condition most favorable for race assimilation,” he argued, “is that which arises when an alien father enters into the civilization of the mother, is accepted by her kindred, and the child is reared in full parental love with the friendship of kindred. Here the child receives no social disability from the father’s alien blood.”<sup>73</sup>

Promoting “race assimilation” through intermarriage, Gulick viewed intermarriage of a white man and a Japanese woman as less desirable than that of a Japanese man and a white woman because the mother was believed to have more influence on the cultural upbringing of her children. According to Gulick, the Japanese mother would “transmit the Japanese social inheritance” to her children by talking to them in Japanese. Even if a Japanese mother tried to learn English, so long as the family lived in Japan, her efforts would be futile. In such cases,

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<sup>72</sup> Franz Boas, “Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants” (The Immigration Commission, 1912); quoted in Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 135. Maurice Fishberg, *The Jews: a Study of Race and Environment* (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1911), quoted in Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 137. Boas’s article appears in *American Anthropologist* 14, no. 3 (1912):530–562.

<sup>73</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 148.

Gulick prescribed that the family had to take residence in the U.S. for the children to “acquire much from their social surroundings, especially after they begin to attend school.”<sup>74</sup>

Gulick’s moral criticism of white male travelers’ sexual exploitation of non-white women in the East stopped him from imagining that a white man would consider marrying a Japanese woman seriously. “One of the saddest and most discouraging aspects of the white man’s presence in Japan, and in all the East,” Gulick contended, “is the ease with which so many of them take up loose sexual relations.”<sup>75</sup> White men’s immoral sexual behavior was deplorable to Gulick because of their hypocrisy. Although white men were responsible for the misery of non-white women and the mixed progeny they fathered, white men asserted that opposition to intermarriage was “instinctive” for them because of “the existence of strong instinctive shrinking from physical contact with one of another color.”<sup>76</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois expressed a similar view in 1935: “The bitter protest and deepest resentment in the matter of inter-breeding has arisen from the fact that the same white race which today resents race mixture in theory has been chiefly responsible for the systematic misuse and degradation of darker women the world over, and has literally fathered millions of half-castes in Asia, Africa, and America.”<sup>77</sup>

Gulick’s prescription for the ideal intermarriage of whites and Japanese epitomized his belief that the “social assimilation” of the Japanese had nothing to do with their biological hereditary traits. At the same time, he assumed that Japanese immigrants should get rid of what he called the “Japanese social inheritance” in order to be Americanized. In this respect, his argument resembled those of the proponents of the anti-Japanese movement, who rationalized

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<sup>74</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 159–160.

<sup>75</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 131.

<sup>76</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 130.

<sup>77</sup> Du Bois, “Miscegenation,” 466.

Japanese exclusion based on the assertion that the Japanese “race” was fundamentally different from whites socially and culturally. What distinguished Gulick from anti-Japanese propagandists was that he never questioned the capability of the Japanese to be assimilated into American society and culture. The biggest obstacle to Japanese Americans’ efforts to be Americanized was white Americans’ racial prejudice. Intermarriage of Japanese and whites mattered to Gulick not because of its effect on the “biological assimilation” of the Japanese but because of its symbolic significance as a marker of race relations between whites and Japanese.

### **Robert Park and the Question of “Racial Hybrids”**

Beginning in the 1910s, Robert Park spearheaded many sociological topics regarding the study of race relations. After assuming the position of research director of the Survey of Race Relations in 1923, Park’s academic interest focused on the subject of interracial marriage as one of the central topics of a study of race relations between blacks and whites and between Asian immigrants and whites.<sup>78</sup> His research centered on the social and cultural conditions under which interracial marriage occurred and mixed progeny was reared. Park defined “hybrid races” as both “biological” and “cultural hybrids” that played “a role intermediate between the original racial and cultural groups to which” they were “most nearly related.”<sup>79</sup>

Park leaned toward viewing racial hybrids as a research subject requiring a sociological approach rather than a biological one. When he wrote a questionnaire on “Oriental American intermarriage” for the Survey of Race Relations in 1923, more than three-fourths of the total 37 specific questions in the questionnaire were about the “sociological” and “mental” or “psychological” aspects of intermarriage between Asian men and white women and mixed

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<sup>78</sup> Robert Park, “Intermarriage,” #10, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>79</sup> Robert Park, “Intermarriage,” #10, Box 17, SRR.

progeny born to the marriage. For instance, he wondered how a white American woman's marriage to an Asian man affected her relationships with her parents, siblings, friends, and "an American community." He also wondered how the racial and ethnic characteristics of a residential community—"American," "Oriental," and "mixed" communities—where an interracial family lived determined the kinds of social relations that children of part Asian and part white ancestry had. Park gave only a slight nod to the physical characteristics of interracial families. The questionnaire on intermarriage had only four specific questions about the physical appearance of members of interracial families consisting of an "Oriental" husband, his white wife, and their children.

In the essay "Mentality of Racial Hybrids," Park made clear that interracial marriage was "ordinarily one of the incidents of cultural contact." For him, the purpose of a sociological and cultural study of racial hybrids was to determine "the precise condition under which hybridization actually" took place. He also argued that scholars of race relations should be interested in a study of "amalgamation" because it was "one of the indices, perhaps the ultimate index, of the extent to which cultural fusion in any given case" had "actually taken place."<sup>80</sup>

Viewing racial hybrids mainly as evidence of cultural contacts, Park clarified that he was not interested in the biological result of interracial marriage as much as other scholars were. Unlike Boas and Gulick, Park did not show interest in the possibility of the biological assimilation of blacks and Asians through intermarriage with whites. Park believed that it would take a very long time for racial difference between non-whites and whites to disappear. As long

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<sup>80</sup> Park, "Mentality of Racial Hybrids," in Park, *Race and Culture*, 378. This essay originally appears in Robert Park, "Mentality of Racial Hybrids," *American Journal of Sociology* 36 (January 1931): 534–551.

as “physical and racial marks” became “the basis of class or caste consciousness,” Park anticipated that “racial hybrids” would constitute “a distinguishable physical type.”<sup>81</sup>

Park implied that it might be wishful thinking that race mixing could automatically dissolve race prejudice. He explained this point by comparing interracial marriage to interfaith marriage. According to Park, “the mulattoes” of the U.S. did not have “the same freedom of choice [of racial identity]” when compared to offspring born of intermarriage between Jews and Christians, who could be either Jews or Christians. “The mulatto, the name given without distinction to all Negro-white hybrids of the United States,” according to Park, “is not, to be sure, in all cases distinguishable either from the black man, on the one hand, or the white man, on the other.” Despite the difficulty of distinguishing “the mulatto” from either blacks or whites by appearance, Park noted, “mulattoes” were “incontinently classed as Negroes, irrespective of the degree of the racial mixture” or they occupied, “as half-castes and mixed bloods, a position somewhere between the two.”<sup>82</sup>

While Park was skeptical about the possibility that the biological results of interracial marriage would have direct impacts on race relations, he firmly believed in the desirability of racial intermarriage as a medium of accelerating “acculturation” and “civilization.” In 1926, Park wrote that “every civilization had invariably brought about new concentrations of population and a new intermingling of races.”<sup>83</sup> In one of his unpublished papers, he articulated the relationship

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<sup>81</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 380–381.

<sup>82</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 380–381.

<sup>83</sup> Park, “Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 141. This essay originally appeared in Robert Park, “Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific,” *Survey Graphic* 9 (May 1926): 192–196.

between culture and race mixture: “The advantage of race mixture for culture is that wherever you have races mixing, acculturation goes on more rapidly than it otherwise would.”<sup>84</sup>

Park found an example of acculturation in race mixture among “mulattoes” who were known for their great intellectual and political achievements in U.S. history. He claimed that the unique life experiences and racial self-consciousness of “mulattoes” distinguished them from blacks during the period of legalized slavery and thrust them into leadership roles over blacks in post-Civil War America. While other sociologists attributed the superiority of “mulattoes” to their mixed racial origins, Park repudiated any biological explanation of the brilliance of “mulattoes.” In the mid-1920s, sociologists debated over how to interpret the results of intelligence tests that showed that “mulattoes” were intellectually superior to blacks or illiterate whites. Park suggested that these results be interpreted as demonstrating that the intellectual superiority of “the mulattoes” was “due to ‘increased education, greater freedom in social contact, greater incentives, higher economic status,’ rather than to innate and unalterable traits, as other interpreters of the results have contended.”<sup>85</sup>

Park mentioned that the historical example of the “greater freedom in social contact” of “the mulatto” could be found in the social position of “the mulatto” between blacks and whites in the antebellum South and North. Park noted that “the mulatto” was allowed to work as “the house servant” rather than as a field laborer and could acquire “the manners of the superiors with whom he was associated.” “Mulattoes,” who were often fathered by their masters, were also “the first to gain their freedom” both in the South and the North. Some of them obtained “relatively superior education” in port cities in the South and constituted “a colored aristocracy” there. In

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<sup>84</sup> Robert Park, “Culture and Civilization,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 17.

<sup>85</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 383–384.

the North, “mulattoes” such as Frederick Douglass played leadership roles among fugitive slaves.<sup>86</sup>

Park argued that the intellectual superiority of “the mulatto” in the U.S. emanated from the “stimulating influences of his unique environment,” not from that of “heredity.”<sup>87</sup> The “unique environment” of “the mulatto” came from the life experiences of “the mulatto” who tended to be self-conscious about his racial belonging due to “the indubitable evidence in his features and in the color of his skin of his kinship with the dominant white race.”<sup>88</sup> “The mulatto,” Park wrote, “shares more or less completely the life-experiences of two unassimilated races,” and for that reason, “he is not able to identify himself completely with either.”<sup>89</sup> Park explained that “the mulatto” chose to “throw in his fortune with the black and make the Negro’s cause his own” in the course of “his struggle for position and status in the white’s man [white man’s] world.” And this “struggle” was, in Park’s words, “at once an inspiration and a discipline to the mulatto.”<sup>90</sup>

Although Park did not write a comparable piece on mixed progeny born to the marriage of Asian men and white women, he believed that intermarriage between Asians and white Americans would help assimilate Asian immigrants. He also argued that the U.S. should move forward to achieve a cosmopolitan vision by embracing immigrants from the East. Interracial marriage, immigration, assimilation, and racial equality were closely entwined in Park’s ideal image of civilization. “Countries which encourage immigration are usually tolerant in respect to

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<sup>86</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 388–389.

<sup>87</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 390.

<sup>88</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 389.

<sup>89</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 390.

<sup>90</sup> Park, “Mentality of Racial Hybrids,” 392.

miscegenation,” he contended, “and where intermarriage is tolerated, there is ordinarily very little race prejudice.”<sup>91</sup> Federal bans on Asian immigration were deplorable to Park because these laws obviously expressed Americans’ racial prejudice against the peoples of the East. “These laws,” he wrote, “have created on our Western Coast a barrier to immigration that is distinctly racial.”<sup>92</sup> Park maintained that anti-miscegenation laws of Western states should be removed in order to ease racial tensions between Asian immigrants and whites. In 1924, as the research director for the Survey of Race Relations, he suggested a careful examination of “the circumstances under which the legislation forbidding inter-racial marriage came to be passed.” “If the Japanese are not permitted to intermarry in the United States,” he continued, “we will always have a race problem as long as they are here.”<sup>93</sup>

Examining interracial marriage and mixed bloods as an “intimate” and “personal” form of cultural contact, Park offered a framework to study interracial marriage as a sociological subject and left behind the oft-mentioned question of the biological desirability of mixed bloods. Park, who held the belief in pure races was the product of bygone era, wrote in 1937 that it was “no longer a secret, even to the layman, that there are not now and probably never have been...any pure races.”<sup>94</sup> Park’s disinterest in the biological characteristics of mixed bloods also reflects the way that he viewed the relationship between mind/cultural traits and body/biological heritage. He wrote that “every individual” was “the inheritor of a double inheritance, physical and moral, racial and cultural.” “These individuals” became “the bearers of their cultural

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<sup>91</sup> Park, “The Race Relations Cycle in Hawaii,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 193–194. This essay was originally published as the introduction to Romanzo Adams, *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii* (New York, 1937), vii–xiv.

<sup>92</sup> Park, “Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 139.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from Park to Davis, April 29, 1924, #7, Box 11, SRR.

<sup>94</sup> Park, “The Race Relations Cycle in Hawaii,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 189.

heritage,” he continued, “by association, by education and, fundamentally, by communication.”<sup>95</sup>

Park reasoned that the varied positions of mixed bloods in different societies validated his understanding of individuals as “the bearers of their cultural heritage” regardless of their biological inheritance.

Boas, Gulick, Du Bois, and Park continued the legacy of “amalgamationist” abolitionists and Radical Republicans during the Reconstruction era, defending interracial marriage as pertinent to the equality of black men and to the moral protection of black womanhood. More importantly, these progressive thinkers formulated the ways that Americans in the mid-twentieth century—and even in the twenty-first century—viewed the question of interracial marriage. These progressives’ repudiation of the eugenicist definition of race in the early twentieth century paved the way for the liberal discourse in postwar America, which viewed race as a biological irrelevancy and struck down the eugenicist defense of anti-miscegenation laws.<sup>96</sup>

These progressives’ discussion of interracial marriage and mixed bloods reveals their conundrum of disentangling the biological and racial from the sociological and cultural where interracial marriage is concerned. Boas, Gulick, Du Bois, and Park argued that cultural inheritance and environment, not biological heredity, determined the characteristics of race mixture. However, when it came to the question of mixed bloods, they felt the pressure to explain the relationship between the biological and social “problems” that the subject seemed to pose. These progressive thinkers’ treatment of this question was to reduce the biological categorization of mixed bloods—and races—to that of the skin color and physical appearance, not the quantum of non-white “blood” in mixed bloods. This way, Boas, Gulick, Du Bois, and

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<sup>95</sup> Park, “The Problem of Cultural Difference,” in Park, *Race and Culture*, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*, 84–99.

Park refuted the assertion of white supremacists that even one drop of non-white “blood” made a difference between mixed bloods and “pure whites.”

In Chapter 5, we will see how these two different standards of determining the racial identity of mixed bloods were put to a test during World War II. General John DeWitt and Colonel Karl Bendetsen, who initiated the proposal of Japanese American internment, faced the question of how to determine the race identity of mixed bloods of part white and part Japanese ancestry. DeWitt and Bendetsen insisted that those with 50 or less than 50% Japanese “blood” could be viewed as racially different from “full-blooded” Japanese. However, other government officials considered the physical—“Caucasian”—appearance and cultural upbringing of mixed bloods as more important than the quantum of Japanese “blood” in determining the race identity of individual of part white and part Japanese ancestry.

CHAPTER 4  
INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES AMONG THE FIRST TWO GENERATIONS OF CHINESE  
AND JAPANESE AMERICANS, 1890–1942

Mae Watkins, a native-born white woman of Scottish and Irish descent, first met Tiam Franking, her future husband from China, in a high school in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1907. Despite the social ostracism of interracial relationships in American society and opposition to their relationship from their families and friends, Mae and Tiam were married in September 1912. In July 1914, Mae and her eighteen-month-old son, Nelson, left her hometown, Ann Arbor, Michigan, to join her husband in Shanghai, China.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of the trip, she wrote to her family, “You must know that I miss you all... Yet you must also be glad—as I am glad—that I love My Boy enough to be happy to go to him with no thot [*sic*] of turning back.”<sup>2</sup> Three years later, from Shanghai, Mae wrote to her mother about how special her own marriage was: “I think I have experienced enough to be sure of one thing: There is such a thing in the world as racial intermarriage; but like the art of poetry, people must be born for it. Such people could be content with no other kind of union.”<sup>3</sup>

Mae had two more children with Tiam in China and the Franking family returned to the U.S. in 1918, where they were among interracial families consisting of Chinese or Japanese husbands, white wives, and their children. Despite legal and social obstacles to such interracial

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<sup>1</sup> Mae Watkins was pregnant when she married Tiam Franking. Franking’s premarital pregnancy was not mentioned when *Asia: The American Magazine on the Orient*, a monthly magazine, published Mae Franking’s “My Chinese Marriage” in its June, July, August, and September issues of 1921. Seventy years later, Holly Franking, a granddaughter of Mae Franking, corrected discrepancies between “My Chinese Marriage,” which was ghostwritten by Katherine Anne Porter, and actual events in the Franking marriage in the annotated version of Mae Franking’s “My Chinese Marriage.” Porter’s ghostwriting was based on Mae Franking’s manuscript, which has been lost. Instead, Holly Franking included letters written by Tiam and Mae Franking, and Mae Franking’s family members, and newspaper clippings about the Franking marriage in the annotated version of Mae Franking’s “My Chinese Marriage” and restored Porter’s authorship. Holly Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage: an Annotated Edition* (Austin, 1991), xix–xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Mae Franking to her family, July 5, 1914, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Mae Franking to her family, June 26, 1917, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 103.

marriages, a small number of the first two generations of Chinese and Japanese Americans married whites of various ethnic backgrounds on the West Coast. Overall, due to the lopsided gender ratios in the Chinese and Japanese American communities, marriages of Chinese and Japanese American men to white women far outnumbered white men's marriages to Chinese and Japanese American women. The experience of interracial marriage between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans varied depending on the gender, class, race, and generation of the spouse. While both white and Asian American society believed that these interracial marriages would be short-lived, most of these marriages lasted a long time despite extensive and severe social ostracism.

This chapter reconstructs marriage and family stories of interracial families by using the archive of the Survey of Race Relations, 1924–1927, that includes interviews with approximately 40 interracial families consisting of Chinese or Japanese immigrant husbands, white wives, and/or their children. Information on Japanese Americans married to whites also comes from the individual case files of Japanese American internees during WWII and published biographies of interracial families.<sup>4</sup> Throughout these records, the voices of white women as wives of first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans and as mothers of biracial children are heard most clearly. These white women unabashedly insisted upon the legitimacy of their marriages to Asian immigrant men and protected their biracial children from social ostracism. Some of these white women were severe critics of the anti-Asian movement at the time while their husbands who had to bear the brunt of racial prejudice were often reticent about expressing opinions about their own marriages.

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<sup>4</sup> Karl Yoneda, *Gambatte: Sixty-Year Struggle of a Kibei Worker* (Los Angeles, 1983); Raineri, *The Red Angel*; Lisa See, *On Gold Mountain: the One-Hundred-Year Odyssey of My Chinese-American Family* (New York, 1995).

Existing literature on interracial intimacy between whites and Asian Americans has addressed sex and prostitution issues more than marriage and family relations between these racial groups.<sup>5</sup> Only recently has historian Mary Ting Yi Lui examined actual cases of interracial marriages involving Chinese men and white women in turn-of-the-century New York by using census surveys, marriage and baptism records in churches, and immigration files.<sup>6</sup> Due to the skewed gender ratios in the Chinese community, Chinese men's marriages to white women occurred more frequently than Chinese men's marriages to Chinese women in New York City's Chinatown between 1870 and 1910. Contrary to whites' perceptions which assumed that lower class white women married well-to-do Chinese merchants, more Chinese laborers than merchants had white wives. It was not surprising because Chinese merchants, who were exempted from the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, could visit China and bring their wives and children to the U.S. White Americans assumed that only white women of stigmatized ethnic origins, such as the Irish, would marry Chinese men. Yet, white wives of Chinese men in New York City's Chinatown actually came from various European ethnic origins including English and German. While it was believed that foreign-born white women would marry Chinese men, most of the white wives of Chinese men in New York City's Chinatown were native-born.

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<sup>5</sup> For general description of this topic, see D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 135; Wild, *Street Meeting*, 122–131. White men's relationships with Japanese women in Japan have been the most popular topic about interracial relationships involving Asians then and now. John Luther Long, *Madame Butterfly* (Boston, 1903). Long's fiction was one of the inspirations for Giacomo Puccini's opera in the same title, which was first shown in public in 1904. For an overview of interracial intimacy between western men and Japanese women in Japan, see Gary P. Leupp, *Interracial Intimacy in Japan: Western Men and Japanese Women, 1543-1900* (London, 2003). Regarding the intervention of the U.S. government and reformers in Chinese and Japanese women's prostitution in California in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see the following articles. Yuji Ichioka, "Ameyuki-San: Japanese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century America," *Amerasia Journal* 4, no.1 (1977): 1–21; Lucie Cheng Hirata, "Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 5 no. 1 (1979): 3–29; Peggy Pascoe, "Gender Systems in Conflict: the Marriages of Mission-Educated Chinese American Women, 1874–1939," *Journal of Social History* 22, no. 4 (1989): 631–652.

<sup>6</sup> Lui, *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery*, 143–174.

In urban areas on the West Coast, where the majority of Chinese and Japanese American populations resided, marriages of Chinese and Japanese Americans to whites showed a similar development to those marriages of Chinese men and white women in New York City. Interracial marriages were more common among Chinese and Japanese laborers although some of the Chinese and Japanese merchants, clergymen, and doctors who had high social standing in their communities were married to middle-class white women. White women married to Chinese and Japanese immigrants were mostly born in the U.S. and came from various ethnic backgrounds.

However, unlike in New York, on the West Coast, interracial marriages comprised only a very small part of all marriages in the Chinese and Japanese American communities. First-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans rarely ventured to marry white women. In 1883, the *San Francisco Call* reported only 3 cases of marriage between Chinese men and white women, and in 1903, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, only 20 white women were married to Chinese men in the city's Chinatown.<sup>7</sup> Marriages between first-generation Japanese Americans and white women were rare. In 1915, H.A. Millis estimated that there were "about fifty instances in the West where Japanese men have married American women."<sup>8</sup>

In 1942, sociologist Constantine Panunzio published an essay that analyzed marriage licenses issued to what he called "the principal ethnic minorities, namely, the Mexicans, Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, American Indians, and Negroes" in Los Angeles between 1924 and 1933. In his essay, Panunzio revealed that Chinese and Japanese Americans were less likely to marry outside their race and ethnicity and that marriages between whites and Chinese and

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<sup>7</sup> Mary Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York, 1909), 441; quoted in Osumi, "Asians and California's Anti-Miscegenation Laws," 8.

<sup>8</sup> H.A. Millis, *The Japanese Problem in the United States* (New York, 1915), 274-275; quoted in Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States*, 218.

Japanese Americans were extremely rare due to the enforcement of anti-miscegenation laws.<sup>9</sup> The Chinese American community, which had suffered the severe lopsided gender ratios, showed extremely low marriage rates. Among approximately 2,000 Chinese men (1,487) and women (394) who were between 15 and 44 in 1930, only 97 persons were recorded as having been issued marriage licenses in Los Angeles. Out of 97, 22 Chinese men and 1 Chinese woman were married to non-Chinese spouses. That Chinese woman was married to a Filipino man. Out of 22 Chinese men married to non-Chinese, 14 were recorded as married to “Japanese” women, 5 to “Negro” women, 2 to “yellow-brown” women, and 1 to a “native-born white” woman.<sup>10</sup>

Panunzio offered intriguing interpretations of the extremely low marriage rates among Chinese Americans in Los Angeles. “The Chinese, a people of seasoned culture and much older as residents of the Los Angeles region,” Panunzio wrote, “seem to have achieved a marked degree of adjustment in the matter of sex life, perhaps through extralegal relationships, prostitution, or other means.”<sup>11</sup> Panunzio might be right about Chinese men’s “extralegal relationships.” In 1897, Fong See, a Chinese man, and Leticie Pruett, a white woman, could not be issued a marriage license in Sacramento, California. Their lawyer came up with an idea of signing the papers for a contract marriage, which was not recognized as a legal marriage by the state but was effective as “a contract between two individuals.”<sup>12</sup> In 1921, the *San Francisco*

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<sup>9</sup> African Americans in Los Angeles were another racial group that showed a low outmarriage rate—11.3%. Native Americans and Filipinos tended to marry outside of their ethnicity and race: 56.9% of the Native Americans married non-Indians, and 70.1% of the Filipinos married non-Filipinos. Constantine Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” *American Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 5 (1942): 690–701.

<sup>10</sup> Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 698. Panunzio used the term “yellow-browns” in denoting persons who belonged to neither white nor black, namely, Mexicans, the Chinese, the Japanese, Filipinos, and American Indians. Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 691.

<sup>11</sup> Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 697.

<sup>12</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 56.

*Call* reported the separation of Mrs. Wong Sun Yue, a white woman, from her Chinese husband. According to the report, Mrs. Wong Sun Yue “denies that there is any legal separation.”<sup>13</sup>

According to Panunzio’s analysis of marriage licenses issued to Japanese residents in Los Angeles, “the Japanese in Los Angeles scarcely intermarried at all.”<sup>14</sup> Besides Americans’ opposition to interracial marriage and California’s anti-miscegenation laws, Panunzio mentioned that the Japanese shunned marriages outside their ethnic boundaries. “The Japanese,” he stated, “are highly loyal to the mother country and possess a high degree of cultural cohesion.”<sup>15</sup> Between 1924 and 1933, the rate of intermarriages among Japanese population was 2.3%: among 1,163 Japanese residents who were married between 1924 and 1933, only 27 marriages were intermarriages. Among 27 Japanese intermarriages, 17 were marriages between Japanese men and non-Japanese women: 7 Japanese men were married to Chinese women, 6 to “white American” women, and 4 to “Negro” women. Panunzio assumed that those 6 “white American” women married to Japanese men were “American-born white females of foreign extraction” while he admitted that “we have occasionally encountered a ‘liberated’ American of ‘old stock’ or of English extraction married to a Japanese.” Among the 10 Japanese women married to non-Japanese men, 7 Japanese women were married to Chinese men, 2 to Filipinos, and 1 to an “American native-born white” man. Given the still skewed gender ratios among Japanese residents in Los Angeles in 1930—125 males to 100 females—Panunzio found the marriages

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<sup>13</sup> “Chinese, White Wife Separate: Mrs. Wong Sun Yue, Sister of Mrs. Howard Gould, ill; Reviews Romance,” *San Francisco Call*, December 21, 1921, #223, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>14</sup> Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 694.

<sup>15</sup> Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 694. Historian Eiichiro Azuma analyzes the ways that first-generation Japanese Americans channeled their objections to marriages between Filipino men and second-generation Japanese women into the belief in the superiority of the Japanese race. Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York, 2005), 187–193.

between Japanese women and non-Japanese men “especially striking.”<sup>16</sup> According to records on Japanese American internees in 1942, among the entire 110,000 Japanese residents on the West Coast, only 5 out of 1,000 married Japanese men had white wives, and that 3 to 5 per 1,000 married American-born Japanese women were married to white men.

The enforcement of anti-miscegenation laws was the most conspicuous reason for the rare occurrence of marriages between Chinese and Japanese Americans and whites on the West Coast. As discussed in Chapter 2, the decades-long existence of anti-miscegenation laws on the West Coast reinforced the tendency of the Chinese and Japanese American communities to avoid marriage outside their race. It is true that only a handful of Chinese and Japanese immigrants found their marital partners among whites. Nonetheless, actual cases of such marriage reveal that there was room for interracial intimacy despite racial segregation on the West Coast in the early twentieth century.

### **Marriages of Chinese and Japanese Immigrants to White Missionaries: Stereotypes and Realities**

Domestic missions drew together both white women and Chinese and Japanese immigrants from various age groups and from different class and education backgrounds. Becoming a missionary was one of the few venues that American women could choose for a lifelong career in turn-of-the-century America. Most white female missionaries were from working- to middle-class families and attended missionary training schools after graduating from high school. Chinese and Japanese immigrants married to white female missionaries came from a range of occupational and educational backgrounds: wealthy merchants, ministers, and laborers. White female missionaries married to first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans were in either

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<sup>16</sup> Panunzio, “Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924–1933,” 695.

their early twenties or mid- to late thirties when they met and married their Chinese or Japanese husband at the domestic mission.

As Mary Ting Yi Lui reveals, white female mission workers dominated the domestic missions in late nineteenth-century New York City and these women's contacts with primarily single Chinese male constituents caused white middle-class New Yorkers' anxiety over interracial relationships between a "heathen" Chinese laborer and a young middle-class white woman. White New Yorkers believed that any young middle-class white woman in a relationship with a Chinese man was related to a Chinese mission, regardless of the facts. A Chinese man in a relationship with a young white female mission worker was also stereotyped as a "heathen Chinaman" who pretended to be a Christian convert to lure a young white woman.<sup>17</sup>

Actual cases of young white female missionaries' marriages to Chinese and Japanese men tell something different than the stereotype of such marriages. Mrs. Yip Quong, a female missionary, came from a New England white middle-class family: she was educated "in a private school for girls near Princeton" and her father was a hotel keeper and a "souse." She met her future Chinese husband at a night school in New York City and they were married in 1900. At the time of her marriage, she was "still under twenty" and he was "considerably older than she" and a "widower." Yip Quong was born in Canada and his family belonged to "one of the three wealthiest families in Vancouver's Chinatown." Although he was much older and widowed, he was financially stable and, as a Canadian-born Chinese, he might have been less "foreign" to her than other Chinese immigrants she met at the Chinese mission in New York City. The couple lived in New York City's Chinatown until they left for Vancouver in 1904.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Lui, *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery*, 111–142.

<sup>18</sup> "Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong," February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

In fact, actual cases of a white female missionary's marrying a Chinese or Japanese man were uncommon because male mission leaders, sensitive to whites' accusation of missions as places encouraging interracial relationship, hired more men and older women missionaries than younger women. These new employees were careful to control coworkers' interactions with Chinese or Japanese members at the mission. Older female missionaries, who described themselves as "on the other side of 30," claimed that they scrutinized young female missionaries' relationships with their students.<sup>19</sup> These changes soon led to another stereotype: an "old" white "maid" becoming attracted to or falling for a Chinese or Japanese man in the missions. In 1924, an interviewer of Grace Shelp Horikoshi, a white woman from Iowa who met her future Japanese immigrant husband when she was a night school teacher in a Japanese mission in Los Angeles, described her first impression of Grace: "I thought she was just some person who had gotten tired of being an old maid and had in despair decided after all that marriage to an Oriental would be better than no marriage at all."<sup>20</sup>

A careful reading of Grace Shelp's marriage to Horikoshi indicates that she might have waited until she became old enough—over 30—to avoid outsiders' attention to her marriage with Horikoshi. Grace Horikoshi stated that she and her husband had known each other for 7 years before their marriage in a Japanese mission. Her career before the marriage included working as a hairdresser after graduating from high school and as a missionary training at the Los Angeles Bible Institute. Considering that regular missionary training took 3 years, Shelp was likely to be in her mid- to late twenties when she began to teach at a night school run by the Japanese Independent Church of Hollywood in Los Angeles, where she met her future Japanese husband,

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<sup>19</sup> Lui, *The Chinatown Trunk Mystery*, 131–136.

<sup>20</sup> E.S.S., "Interview with Mrs. H—," #235, Box 28, SRR.

Horikoshi, who was the secretary of the Church at the time. By the time of her marriage in 1919, she was in her early to mid-thirties. The couple was married in Seattle because they “could be not married in this state [California].” Horikoshi was, then, on the way to Chicago to complete his education at McCormick Theological Seminary. He became the pastor of a Japanese Presbyterian church in Los Angeles. In 1922, Grace Shelp Horikoshi gave birth to a daughter.<sup>21</sup>

Another white female missionary who met her future Japanese husband in her thirties took her time until she decided to get married. In 1930, May Herd, a white missionary born in Indiana, first met her Japanese immigrant husband, Bunji Paul Katayama, in the Seattle’s Japanese Women’s Home, where she had been teaching pre-school age children since 1917 and where Katayama was hired as a cook and a houseman. At the time, Herd was 37 years old and Katayama was 25 years old. Seven years later the couple was married. Their missionary friends praised them for having a “happy well ordered Christian home,” where they “took care of two orphaned Japanese children.”<sup>22</sup>

Christian missions and their auxiliary organizations were one of the public places that allowed Chinese and Japanese Americans to come into close contact with white women. Marriages of white missionary women and Asian immigrants in missions remained a stereotype of interracial intimacy among white women and Asian men and a major target of social control well beyond the 1920s. In fact, actual cases of such marriages comprised only a small part of marriages between white women and Asian immigrants. More marriages of white women and Chinese or Japanese immigrants were likely to occur in everyday settings such as public schools and neighborhoods in urban areas on the West Coast.

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<sup>21</sup> Wm. C. Smith, “Intermarriage of Mr. H—of Hollywood: Interview with Mr. H. Otsubo of Hollywood,” #235, Box 28, SRR; E.S.S., “Interview with Mrs. H—,” #235, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>22</sup> “Individual Record,” December 2, 1942, Bunji Katayama case file, Box 2158, WRACF. “Individual Record,” December 2, 1942; From Gale Seaman to D.S. Myer, May Katayama case file, Box 2161, WRACF.

## **Public Schools, Universities, Workplaces, and Neighborhood as Locations of Interracial Relationships between Chinese and Japanese Immigrants and White Women**

Colleges and universities were one of the venues that first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans who entered the U.S. as students might meet their future white wives. In mid-1890s, Emma, a seventeen-year-old white woman, met her future husband, Walter Ngon Fong, an “upper classman” studying law, in an economics class at Stanford University. Emma described Walter as a “most brilliant foreigner” and recalled that they were attracted to each other “from the first.”<sup>23</sup> Walter was the only Chinese student in Stanford University at the time and was also the pastor of the Methodist Mission of San Jose. Walter and Emma married in Denver, in 1897.<sup>24</sup> In another instance, Dr. H, a Japanese physician, and his white wife from Maine met each other as students of a medical college in California in 1917. Four years later, they were married.<sup>25</sup>

Some Chinese and Japanese immigrants who came to the U.S. in their early teens met their future white spouses at public schools as high school sweethearts. Such interracial relationships occurred in parts of the West and in the Midwest where the segregation of Chinese and Japanese children at public schools was not enforced.<sup>26</sup> In Ann Arbor, Michigan, Tiam Hock Franking, a Chinese student, came to the U.S. in his teens and became close to his future wife, Mae Watkins, in a high school. Franking and Watkins got married while both attended the University of

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<sup>23</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>24</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>25</sup> “Case Study of Race Intermarriage: a Japanese Man and a Native Born American Woman,” #282, Box 30, SRR.

<sup>26</sup> Public school segregation was widely practiced in California, where most of the Chinese and Japanese immigrants took residence. Bell, *Public School Education of Second-Generation Japanese in California*, 7. Regarding the multiethnic and multiracial composition of students in L.A.’s primary schools between the late 1900s and the 1930s, see Wild, *Street Meeting*, 106–112.

Michigan.<sup>27</sup> In Seattle, Washington, Hiromu Nishtani, a son of a Japanese landscaper, had a white girlfriend, Pearl, who lived in his neighborhood and they attended high school together. After graduating from high school, Hiromu and Pearl, who were still under age, were married with permission from both their parents.<sup>28</sup>

At business establishments owned by wealthy Chinese or Japanese immigrants, interracial relationships often occurred between Chinese or Japanese employers and their white female employees. White women often sought employment as stenographers or bookkeepers in small businesses run by Chinese or Japanese men after experiencing difficulties in finding other jobs. In Sacramento, California, Fong See, a Chinese immigrant, ran a garment factory making underwear for prostitutes and sold underwear. See's business thrived due to the spread of prostitution in California. In 1894, See hired Leticie Pruett, an eighteen-year-old native-born white woman, as a bookkeeper and a sales clerk. Pruett had come to California to find a new life after graduating high school in Oregon where she lived with her older brothers and sisters-in-law. Pruett soon found that the most available job for a woman like her was prostitution. At first, See was reluctant to hire Pruett. But Pruett persistently asked for employment by convincing See that she could help his business with white customers—that is, madams—and explained that working under a Chinese merchant was better for her than working under madams. Three years later, See and Pruett were married.<sup>29</sup> In another example, Elizabeth Coote, a white woman of English birth, came to California to make changes to her life after she graduated a private girls school in England. Because teaching and tutoring positions she wanted were so limited, Coote turned to a secretarial job. After dealing with “critical, complaining, impatient” American

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<sup>27</sup> Franking, ed., *Mae Franking's My Chinese Marriage*.

<sup>28</sup> Letter from James E. Seargeant to Dillon Myer, April 22, 1943, Hiromu Nishitani case file, Box 4200, WRACF.

<sup>29</sup> Lisa See, *On Gold Mountain*, 47–58.

employers, Coote was hired by a Japanese businessman, Toyotomi Ujimasa. Working as his secretary and stenographer, Coote was impressed by the kindness of her Japanese employer and they eventually got married.<sup>30</sup>

At workplaces that employed both Chinese or Japanese men and white women, white female employees met and married their Chinese or Japanese co-workers. K. Lentz, a high school teacher, reported to the committee of the Survey of Relations such a case in which one of her former students was involved. Lentz interviewed that student in person. Lentz judged that both spouses matched well in terms of social class and education: both were “from well-to-do middle-class families” and the husband had a college education in Tokyo.<sup>31</sup>

Interracial relationships between Chinese or Japanese immigrants and white women also developed in neighborhoods in urban areas. In such urban areas, these male immigrants worked for whites as landscapers, janitors, and domestic servants. It was not uncommon for these Chinese and Japanese workers to meet their future white wives in the white families’ homes where they worked. Some of these white women were the daughters of the white families that hired Chinese and Japanese immigrants. In the late 1900s, Gunjiro Aoki was a Japanese student who made a living by working as a cook at the home of John Emery, where Aoki met his employer’s daughter and his future wife, Helen Emery.<sup>32</sup> Some couples met each other while both were working in the same family’s home. It was reported that Toyo, a Japanese landscaper,

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<sup>30</sup> L.G. Schroeder, “Case Brief on Anglo-Japanese Marriage,” June 18, 1924, #62, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>31</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>32</sup> For a detailed description of Helen Emery’s marriage to Gunjiro Aoki, see Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 87–91. Early Japanese immigrants were students who were educated by American missionaries in Japan and came to the U.S. for higher education. These Japanese students consisted of those with financial resources and those without. Historian Yuji Ichioka calls the latter group “indigent private students” and classifies them as the “real forerunners” of early Japanese immigration. These indigent students were forced to work and Ichioka calls them “student-laborers.” Gunjiro Aoki appeared to be one of these “student-laborers.” Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: the World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York, 1988), 7–16.

met his white wife when he was hired as a landscaper and his wife as a cook by a white family in Los Angeles.<sup>33</sup> Interracial couples who had met in neighborhoods came under the severe criticism of their relationships and marriages by white neighbors. It was reported that a kiss between Helen Emery and Gunjiro Aoki at a depot in Corte Madera, California, stirred the local residents to demand an explanation for their relationship.<sup>34</sup> The white neighbors of the Toyo family were told to have been “very antagonistic toward the idea of a white woman marrying an Oriental.”<sup>35</sup>

White neighbors condoned an interracial marriage between a Chinese or Japanese immigrant and a white woman in a neighborhood only if an unusual circumstance was involved in the marriage. For example, Tomokichi Yokoyama’s marriage to Rose Smith, a disabled white woman, in Portland, Oregon, was such a case. Yokoyama, a Japanese laborer, first came to the U.S. in 1908 at age 20. Yokoyama had been employed by two local jewelry shops as a janitor for 26 years until the internment of Japanese Americans forced him to evacuate.<sup>36</sup> In the meantime, Yokoyama “was befriended by a certain white woman who had a hopelessly paralyzed and crippled daughter.”<sup>37</sup> This white woman’s name was Smith and she had a daughter, Rose Smith, who had a serious injury that made her “paralyzed from [the] hip down,” when she turned 22 around 1916.<sup>38</sup> David Robinson recalled in 1943 that Yokoyama had “felt a solemn obligation to take care of this orphaned cripple” when Rose Smith’s mother died sometime around 1920.

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<sup>33</sup> E.K., “Japanese-American Intermarriage,” #420, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>34</sup> “Progeny of Jap-White Union Amaze,” *San Francisco Examiner*, November 11, 1922, #222, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>35</sup> E.K., “Japanese-American Intermarriage,” #420, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>36</sup> This summary of Yokoyama’s biography comes from the following source. “Individual Record,” September 29, 1942, Tomokichi Yokoyama case file, WRACF.

<sup>37</sup> Letter from David Robinson to Dillon S. Myer, April 26, 1943, Tomokichi Yokoyama case file, WRACF.

<sup>38</sup> “WRA-26: Individual Records,” November 6, 1942, Rose Yokoyama case file, Box 7135, WRACF.

“Fearing adverse comments [about his living with Rose Smith],” Robinson stated, Yokoyama “married this woman [Rose Smith] and has devoted his entire life to taking care of her.”<sup>39</sup>

In the U.S. West, interracial marriages between white women and Chinese/Japanese men were more likely to occur in typical public places such as schools and workplaces, not in specific public places like missions.<sup>40</sup> Although such interracial marriages were rare due to miscegenation laws and whites’ hostility toward interracial marriage, marriages between white women and Chinese/Japanese men took place in a typical way that most marriages did at the time. Schools and workplaces often allowed white women and Chinese/Japanese men to know each other for several years before these interracial couples eventually decided to marry. With some exceptions, most of such marriages involved men and women in their late teens or early twenties. White women married to Chinese/Japanese men came from typical working- or middle-class backgrounds and had at least high school education. It is true that these white women were conscious about racial and cultural differences between them and their Chinese/Japanese husbands. However, what accounts for these women’s decisions to marry Chinese/Japanese men was a prospect of having a stable family and a supportive husband.

### **Motivations and Expectations for Marriage involving Chinese and Japanese Immigrants and White Women**

The firsthand voices of white wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants were first recorded in the early 1920s, when parts of white society in the West and the Midwest showed their interest in white women’s experiences of interracial marriage to “Orientals.” Publishers

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<sup>39</sup> Letter from Robinson to Dillon S. Myer, April 26, 1943, Tomokichi Yokoyama case file, WRACF;

<sup>40</sup> Renee Romano reaches a similar conclusion about black-white marriages in the 1940s and the 1950s. Romano argues against the belief that some cultural and political dissidents such as “Beatniks” or “Commies” married across racial lines before miscegenation laws were declared unconstitutional in 1967. “Sustained opportunities for cross-racial intimacy, though rare,” Romano maintains, “did occur in some workplaces and schools, and many interracial couples in postwar America came from typical working- or middle-class backgrounds.” Romano, *Race Mixing*, 110.

looked for stories of interracial marriage told by actual white wives of “Oriental” men. White wives of Chinese immigrant husbands such as Emma Fong Kuno and Mae Franking were requested to publish their marriage stories.<sup>41</sup> The interest that progressive missionaries and scholars participating in the Survey of Race Relations had in interracial marriage between “Orientals” and whites was also centered on the stories of white wives of Asian immigrants. When the staff members of the Survey of Race Relations began to interview interracial couples in 1924, some of them candidly expressed their motivations for marriage.<sup>42</sup> White women married to Chinese and Japanese men did not shy away from confessing that they loved their husbands despite objections from their family and friends. Unlike the popular assumption that a white woman married to a Chinese or Japanese man must be either a neurotic or a romantic,<sup>43</sup> these wives of Chinese and Japanese men emphasized that they had thought about marriage outside their own race carefully prior to actually marrying their husbands. They often mentioned the number of years that they had known their husband before marriage. Arguing for the legitimacy of their marriages, these white women made a point that their marriages were not different from same-race marriages.

The Survey of Race Relations archive includes lengthier details about the marriages between Chinese and Japanese clergymen and students and middle-class white women than other cases of interracial marriage. This was because the Survey committee used their missionary

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<sup>41</sup> Emma Fong Kuno’s “My Oriental Husbands” was originally published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Mae Franking’s “My Chinese Marriage” was related in the *Asia* magazine.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Park’s questionnaire on interracial marriage did not directly ask interracial couples about their motivations for marriage. Instead, the questionnaire assumed that there had been certain bases of physical or psychological attraction between white women and their Oriental husbands. Robert Park, “Intermarriage,” #10, Box 17, SRR.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Park’s questionnaire on racial intermarriage included a question about whether a white woman married to an Oriental man belonged to a certain psychological type such as neurotic and romantic. Park, “Intermarriage,” #10, Box 17, SRR. According to the historian Renee Romano, white women who were married to black men in the late 1940s and 1950s were viewed as neurotic and romantic. Romano, *Race Mixing*, 125.

networks. George Gleason, the executive secretary of the central committee of the Survey, asked for the help of missionaries who had “direct experience with Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese, whether in this country or in Asia.”<sup>44</sup> This was also because progressive missionaries, who influenced the design of the Survey, were interested in marriages between wealthy and educated Asian immigrants and middle-class white women. These missionaries hypothesized that such marriages would be successful because an educated and well-to-do Asian husband would understand his white wife’s lifestyle and be open to western ideas of women’s equality.<sup>45</sup> The underlying notion in missionaries’ support of interracial marriage was that middle-class white women played a significant role in assimilating Asian immigrants.<sup>46</sup>

Some middle-class white women married to well-to-do Chinese and Japanese students or clergymen were familiar with the notion that middle-class Christian white women had a special duty to help immigrants assimilate. Emma Fong Kuno, who identified herself as a native-born white person “of pure English stock,” stated that “race prejudice was foreign” to her “nature.” She grew up in San Francisco, the city that she described as “the great cosmopolitan city of the West.” Most of her classmates were “the children of foreigners” and the “struggles” of her classmates to learn English “awakened” her “sympathies.” She had vivid memories of meeting Chinese laborers—“the laundryman, the day worker, and the vegetable huckster.” When she turned 5 years old, she expressed “great indignation at the persecution of the Chinese” after the

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<sup>44</sup> Letter from George Gleason to “Fellow Missionary,” March 3, 1924, #7, Box 7, SRR.

<sup>45</sup> Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, 158. Steiner made a similar point in his dissertation. Jesse Steiner, *The Japanese Invasion* (Chicago, 1917), 154.

<sup>46</sup> Contemporary white leaders of Native American reform organizations such as Richard Pratt had a similar idea and supported marriage between educated Native American men and white women as part of Native American assimilation. Historian Katherine Ellinghaus analyzes how Elaine Goodale Eastman, a leading white female missionary, took the “ideology of assimilation literally” by living among Native Americans in South Dakota and marrying an educated and acculturated Native American man, Charles Eastman. Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart*, 54, 97.

1877 anti-Chinese agitation led by Dennis Kearny, the founder of the California Workingmen's Party. At age 10, she discovered a "Sunday school for Chinese men" in the Mission district and told her Sunday school teacher that she would like to teach "some of those Chinese men" when she grew older.<sup>47</sup>

The image of middle-class white women as bearers of gender equality was familiar to some interracial couples consisting of well-to-do Chinese and Japanese immigrants and college-educated white women. Some of these white women did not remain housewives after they were married. For example, Emma Fong Kuno continued her undergraduate work after she married Walter Fong.<sup>48</sup> Before Mae Watkins Franking moved to Shanghai, China, her Chinese husband, Tiam, planned to arrange for her to teach English and history in high schools and colleges there: "your Latin & German & English education [at the University of Michigan] will hold good in China, if you wish to use them."<sup>49</sup> From China, Mae wrote to her parents and sister in Ann Arbor: "I am having a 'splendiferous' time teaching....I begin to feel quite intelligent again and as tho [*sic*] I amounted to something."<sup>50</sup> She also helped her husband, who practiced and taught law in Shanghai, publish articles and books in English. The wife of Yip Quong, a wealthy Chinese merchant born in Vancouver, B.C., worked as a "maternity nurse" in Vancouver's Chinatown and had a good reputation among the Chinese people there.<sup>51</sup> Mae Franking and Mrs. Quong built their professional careers upon the wealth and social standing of their Chinese

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<sup>47</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, "My Oriental Husbands," #53, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>48</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, "My Oriental Husbands," #53, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from Tiam Franking to Mae Franking, February 12, 1914, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking's My Chinese Marriage*, 80.

<sup>50</sup> Letters from Mae Franking to her parents and sister, January 15, 1915, January 21, 1915, and April 15, 1915, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking's My Chinese Marriage*, 92–93.

<sup>51</sup> "Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong," February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

husbands. The high social standing of the Franking family allowed them to hire a nurse and three servants for their children, which freed Mae from housework and babysitting duties.<sup>52</sup>

Some middle-class white women who met their husbands via the Christian missions and in colleges stated that the race of their husbands did not matter to them when they decided to marry their husbands. These women argued that Christianity did not permit one race to discriminate against another. About her Chinese husband, Walter Fong, who was a pastor and a student, Emma Fong Kuno stated that she had become “enamored with his visions of service.” Walter’s proposal to marry before his graduation from Stanford University was “sudden and unexpected” to Emma, and she “took indefinite time to think about it, much to his discomfort.” And she reached a conclusion that “there was no reasonable ground for one member of the human family to regard himself as superior to another no matter what the race or the color of the skin of that individual might be.” Finally, she realized that she “loved this young Chinese graduate to the exclusion of all others” and that it would be “cowardly” for her to “break his heart and blight his future” because she “feared to face popular opinion.”<sup>53</sup> Grace Shelp Horikoshi, a night school teacher and missionary, stated that she made a careful decision about her marriage to her Japanese husband. Horikoshi said, “I knew him for seven years before we were married. I felt convinced that it was all in God’s plan that we should marry.” Against her friends’ objections, she argued that the race of her husband should not matter to her because she thought that “God made of one blood all nations.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Letters from Mae Franking to her parents and sister, July 24, 1914, January 15, 1915, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 86–88, 92.

<sup>53</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, “My Oriental Husbands,” #53, Box 25, SRR, 2–3.

<sup>54</sup> E.S.S., “Interview with Mrs. H....,” #235, Box 28, SRR, 3.

In turn-of-the-century urban America, a few of the upper- to middle-class white women who were interested in Japanese art and culture married Japanese artists or writers.<sup>55</sup> The marriage of Yone Noguchi, a Japanese poet, and Léonie Gilmour, a white writer whom Noguchi hired as an editorial assistant, in 1904, was such a case.<sup>56</sup> In the late 1910s, Frances Fitzpatrick, a “New Yorker” and the daughter of a “noted architect,” married Shoji Osato, a Japanese photographer. When Frances first met Osato, she was a seventeen-year-old “society girl of Omaha.” She stated that she was “simply bored to death with the social position in Omaha which my parents brought to me.” She recalled that the relationship was not “a case of love at first sight.” It was “mutual interest in Oriental art” that brought her husband and her together. While working together on the same project of decorating hotel rooms in Chicago, she “gradually” fell in love with Osato. Yet she was away from him in New York for a year before she decided to get married. At 19, Frances became the wife of Shoji.<sup>57</sup>

White women who were married to a Japanese husband while in their teens attributed their early marriage to their urge to be independent from their controlling or neglectful parents. In such cases, their husbands were usually much older than them. Mrs. Toyo stated that she was married “very young, fifteen” and her Japanese husband was 12 years older than her.<sup>58</sup> According to the interviewer of Mrs. Toyo, her parents were “religious fanatics.”<sup>59</sup> Mrs. Toyo’s father was a preacher who thought that the only way to keep his daughter “in the straight and

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<sup>55</sup> Yoshihara, *Embracing the East*.

<sup>56</sup> Before he married Léonie Gilmour, Yone Noguchi had proposed marriage to another white journalist, Ethel Armes. Noguchi is also known for having close friendship with a much older white male writer, Charles Warren Stoddard. Amy Sueyoshi, “Intimate Inequalities: Interracial Affection and Same-Sex Love in the ‘Heterosexual’ Life of Yone Noguchi, 1897–1909,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 29, no. 4 (2010): 22–44.

<sup>57</sup> “Doesn’t Want Flappers,” *San Francisco Examiner*, March 20, 1923, #224, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>58</sup> E.S.S., “Intermarriage: Interview with Mrs. Toyo,” #420, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>59</sup> E.K., “Japanese-American Intermarriage,” #420, Box 37, SRR.

narrow path” was “by puritanical parental control.”<sup>60</sup> In another case, Nelsiena Maxine was 15 years old when she married Toyosaburo Horimoto, who was 31 years older than her. Despite their age difference, Maxine decided to marry Horimoto since he gave her “much attention” and “the home she had always wanted.”<sup>61</sup> She ascribed her early marriage to Horimoto to her “unsettled” childhood in which her parents were “entertainers [and] who travelled...in various towns along the Coast.”<sup>62</sup> Since she never knew “a permanent home in any one locality,” she wanted “a home and children” and decided not to “obey the advice of parents.”<sup>63</sup>

Some white wives of a Chinese or Japanese immigrant defied prejudice toward interracial relationships by claiming that marriage was a personal matter. A white wife of a Japanese man stated that she had her “own life to live” and that “in so vital a step as marriage” her “own wishes [were] to be considered first.”<sup>64</sup> In another case, Mae Watkins was criticized by her family and friends because of her burgeoning romance in high school with her future Chinese husband, Tiam Franking. About “lectures” by her relatives and friends on “my duty to my parents, my country, my flag and—yes, even to my future children,” Mae wrote, “I am deeply sensible of my duty in all cases.”<sup>65</sup> However, Mae underlined that she also recognized a “duty to myself and to him [Tiam Franking],” which her relatives and friends “will not, or cannot see.”<sup>66</sup> Mae decided not to care about opposition to her interracial romance from her relatives and friends: “what they

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<sup>60</sup> E.K., “Japanese-American Intermarriage,” #420, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>61</sup> “Relocation Summary,” Toyosaburo Horimoto case file, Box 1289, WRACF.

<sup>62</sup> “Relocation Summary,” Toyosaburo Horimoto case file, Box 1289, WRACF.

<sup>63</sup> “Relocation Summary,” Toyosaburo Horimoto case file, Box 1289, WRACF.

<sup>64</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>65</sup> Letter that Mae Watkins wrote to one of her aunts, October 26, 1910, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 64.

<sup>66</sup> Letter that Mae Watkins wrote to one of her aunts, October 26, 1910, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 64.

think and say and do does not bother me for I will prepare myself...and accept that which does come as right.”<sup>67</sup>

Some white wives of Japanese men thought that their Japanese husbands were better than men of their own race and nationality. A white American woman who met her future Japanese husband in a Japanese firm where she was employed as a stenographer said that her husband was a “finer type than the American men whom she knew.”<sup>68</sup> Grace Shelp Horikoshi appreciated Japanese men’s lack of indulgence in smoking and drinking—unlike American men: “I had to have a clean man and Mr. H. never smoked or used liquor. The Japanese do not practice these habits as much as Americans.”<sup>69</sup> Mrs. Sasabe, a German-born white woman who was married to a Japanese man, said to her interviewer that her husband was “so kind and considerate”: “He does so many things that a German man would never think of doing...If I so much as have a headache, my husband tiptoes across the room and makes the children do the same, but a German man would just clump, clump along.”<sup>70</sup>

Most Chinese and Japanese men married to white women were more reticent than their wives about expressing their personal motives behind their marriages. Only a few of them were willing to discuss their motivations for interracial marriage with interviewers from the Survey of Race Relations. Some Japanese husbands of white women mentioned the physical attraction of white women as one of the reasons for their decision to marry across racial lines. One of these

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<sup>67</sup> Letter that Mae Watkins wrote to one of her aunts, October 26, 1910, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 64.

<sup>68</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>69</sup> E.S.S., “Interview with Mrs. H—,” #235, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>70</sup> “Interview with Mrs. S. Sasabe,” May 28, 1924, #174, Box 27, SRR.

Japanese men stated that he had planned to come to the U.S. to marry a “foreign” woman because “foreign women” were of “better physique” than Japanese women.<sup>71</sup>

Some interracially married Chinese and Japanese immigrants understood their marriage in connection with their personal goals of immigration, which was to obtain a higher education in the U.S. and to learn the “new” western civilization. Most Chinese and Japanese immigrants who had a college education in the U.S. often identified themselves as “cosmopolitans” and “internationalists.” A Japanese physician who practiced in a community near Los Angeles described himself as an “internationalist through my marriage to an American woman.”<sup>72</sup>

Some Chinese and Japanese immigrants believed that interracial marriage would help Americans understand China and Japan and their people. Dr. F.T. Nakaya, who identified himself as an “internationalist” and a “cosmopolitan,” believed that a wide occurrence of interracial marriage would solve the “race problem.”<sup>73</sup> According to Nakaya, his marriage was a vindication of his belief in interracial marriage and internationalism. He thought of his “American wife” as evidence of his “intimate” relations with Americans.<sup>74</sup> For his wife’s part, he explained, their marriage made her understand Japanese people: “I think it was very hard for her at first because she did not understand the Japanese people, but she understands them now and enjoys them.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>72</sup> “Case Study of Race Intermarriage: a Japanese Man and a Native Born American Woman,” #282, Box 30, SRR.

<sup>73</sup> Catherine Holt, “Interview with Dr. F.T. Nakaya, Japanese Physician,” September 21, 28, 1924, #247, Box 28, SRR, 11–13.

<sup>74</sup> Catherine Holt, “Interview with Dr. F.T. Nakaya, Japanese Physician,” September 21, 28, 1924, #247, Box 28, SRR, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Catherine Holt, “Interview with Dr. F.T. Nakaya, Japanese Physician,” September 21, 28, 1924, #247, Box 28, SRR, 12.

Compatibility in terms of education, class, and character were major reasons for marriages of Chinese and Japanese immigrants and middle-class white women. In most of the cases, spouses in such marriages were quite open to the idea of interracial marriage. Nonetheless, most of the native-born white women who married Chinese and Japanese immigrants expressed how difficult it was for them to bear the brunt of transgressing a social norm of marrying within one's own race when they faced objections to their marriage from their family. What drove these women to eventually marry a Chinese or Japanese immigrant was the belief that marriage was a personal and private matter.

### **Interracial Couples' Relationships with Their Parents**

When white women decided to marry Chinese and Japanese men, most of them had to face opposition from their parents, siblings, relatives, and friends. Some white American middle-class parents showed apprehension about their daughters' relationships with wealthy, educated, and Christianized men of Chinese or Japanese nationality at first but finally consented to their daughters' decision to marry these men. Emma Fong Kuno's parents, whom she described as "not narrow-minded," did not feel "quite comfortable" about her "going with Mr. Fong" because of the "fear" that "there might be unfavorable comment." In the end, Emma's parents gave their consent, and her relatives living in the Midwest and the East sent her a "telegram of congratulation" and a wedding gift.<sup>76</sup> Mae Watkins's parents consented to their daughter's marriage to Tiam Franking, a Chinese student, because "personality counts more than does race."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Emma Fong Kuno, "My Oriental Husbands," #53, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>77</sup> "An American Girl Became Bride of Chinaman Who Formerly Lived in Grand Rapids; Friends Peeved," *Grand Rapids Herald*, September 13, 1912, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking's My Chinese Marriage*, 72.

Some white parents opposed their daughters' decision to marry Chinese or Japanese immigrants and did not see their daughters until they gave birth to a child. A middle-class white wife of a Japanese man, whom she met in a Japanese firm, recalled that her parents were "violently" opposed to the marriage and that they did "everything they could to persuade her not to marry the Japanese man." She was told that her mother did not want to see her grandchildren. However, when she had a daughter, her mother came to the hospital to see the baby and "has softened enough since then to pay a little attention to the baby."<sup>78</sup> The father of Mrs. Toyo "promptly" disowned his fifteen-year-old daughter when she insisted on marrying a Japanese man. Although he "refused to even go and visit her" after she was married, he visited his daughter once when her first child was born.<sup>79</sup>

Japanese parents in Japan tended to agree with their son's decision to marry white women and recognized their white daughters-in-law. Mrs. Sasabe, a German wife of a Japanese man, stated that her Japanese mother-in-law supported the marriage. According to Mrs. Sasabe, her mother-in-law once said, "if he was sure he could make me happy and could support me that it was alright."<sup>80</sup> Grace Shelp Horikoshi mentioned that her in-law family in Japan was "very nice about everything," and that her parents-in-law thought that their son's marriage "elevates" him.<sup>81</sup>

Some Japanese parents did not show immediate approval of their son's marriage to a white woman in the U.S. A white American wife of a Japanese man, who was the first son in his family, said that it "must have been a great disappointment to his parents when he marries me"

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<sup>78</sup> K. Lentz, "Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz," #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>79</sup> E.K., "Japanese-American Intermarriage," #420, Box 37, SRR.

<sup>80</sup> "Interview with Mrs. S. Sasabe," May 28, 1924, #174, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>81</sup> E.S.S., "Interview with Mrs. H—," #235, Box 28, SRR.

although they never made “any trouble over it [the marriage].” But her Japanese parents-in-law only wanted her to teach her children “a little of the Buddha with the Christian.”<sup>82</sup>

White women married to wealthy Chinese men closely witnessed the practice of polygamous marriages within the families of their in-laws. These women did not openly criticize this practice—unlike middle-class white Americans at the time who believed in what the historian Nancy Cott calls the ideal of monogamous Christian-modeled marriage.<sup>83</sup> Instead, these white wives of Chinese men tried to respect this Chinese tradition. Yip Quong’s father, Mr. Yip, had six wives and thirty-four children and Mr. and Mrs. Quong lived together with them in the same building in Vancouver’s Chinatown. Mrs. Quong stated that her sisters-in-law tried to “regulate her conduct” and she had “given up a whole lot to know my husband’s people and it took a long time to win their confidence.” Mrs. Quong also mentioned what her husband had gone through: “But Mr. Quong has given up a lot, too. Oh, I tell you it was often distressing.”<sup>84</sup>

Mae Watkins Franking personally experienced the way that the practice of polygamy in Chinese families could complicate her own marriage. Mae’s Chinese parents-in-law insisted that Tiam, their eldest son, should have a “Chinese secondary wife” to stay with his parents to fulfill his filial duty. Tiam was strongly opposed to his father’s attempt to arrange his marriage to a Chinese woman, arguing that he “would never have any wife but” Mae. Tiam’s parents eventually gave up arranging his marriage to a Chinese woman.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

<sup>83</sup> Cott, *Public Vows*, 38.

<sup>84</sup> “Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong,” February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

<sup>85</sup> These quotes are from Katherine Porter’s ghostwritten version of Mae Franking’s marriage story, not from Mae and Tiam Franking’s personal letters. Porter, “Mae Franking’s ‘My Chinese Marriage,’” in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 28.

When Fong and Leticie See and their two sons first made a trip to China in 1901, Leticie came to know of the existence of her husband's Chinese wife, Yong, who had been looking after his parents in his hometown in China ever since he left for the U.S. in 1871 at age 15.<sup>86</sup> Fong thought that his marriage to Yong, which was never consummated, was not a marriage at all in an American sense.<sup>87</sup> Hence, Fong See made sure that Leticie was his "true wife" and "American wife" who gave him two sons. At first, Leticie was shaken by the fact that she was only a "concubine by tradition." But when Leticie met Yong, who was over 40 at the time, she assured herself that she was the "real" wife of Fong and promised Yong financial support until her death. Her father-in-law also confirmed that Leticie was his "true daughter-in-law."<sup>88</sup>

White wives of Chinese and Japanese clergymen, professionals, and merchants sometimes learned the language of their husbands in order to know their husband's family. Grace Shelp Horikoshi learned Japanese to be prepared for her travel to Japan to meet her parents-in-law. Grace said, "I will feel much better when I can speak Japanese."<sup>89</sup> And Mae Watkins Franking learned Chinese in Shanghai after her parents-in-law fully approved of her as their daughter-in-law. "You ask me how my Chinese is progressing," Franking wrote to her mother, "but I should rather say I could give a more satisfactory account of the progress your Chinese son [Tiam Franking] is making in the Scotch dialect [at the time, Tiam was teaching English

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<sup>86</sup> Lisa See, the great granddaughter of Fong and Leticie See, writes that no one in her family agrees on the year that Fong See was born and first arrived in the U.S. Based on his immigration documents, Lisa See estimates that he first entered the U.S. in 1871. See, *On Gold Mountain*, 25–26.

<sup>87</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 55.

<sup>88</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 69–71.

<sup>89</sup> E.S.S., "Interview with Mrs. H—," #235, Box 28, SRR.

literature].”<sup>90</sup> Since Mrs. Yip Quong arrived in Vancouver with her husband in 1904, she learned Chinese in a Chinese school and Chinese became her daily language. When Mrs. Quong was interviewed for the Survey of Race Relations in 1924, she even asked her interviewer if her interviewer could understand her English. Mrs. Quong said that she had been “talking Chinese so much” that she “wasn’t sure of it [English] any more.”<sup>91</sup>

Overall white American parents were more likely to oppose a daughter’s decision to marry a Chinese or Japanese immigrant. A few middle-class white American parents tended to recognize their daughter’s wish to marry a Chinese or Japanese man as long as their future son-in-law met class, wealth, and education standards. Most middle- to lower-class white parents opposed their daughters’ interracial marriage or even disowned their daughters. Chinese and Japanese parents accepted their son’s marriage to a white woman and wanted their white daughter-in-law to understand the different culture of marriage and family in China and Japan. Most white women married to Chinese and Japanese immigrants showed respect to the concerns of their parents-in-law and were willing to be assimilated into their husband’s culture and language.

### **Interracial Families’ Relationships with the White and Asian Communities**

Interracial couples consisting of a Chinese or Japanese immigrant husband and a white woman mostly lived in cities and experienced housing segregation in some way or other. Like other Chinese immigrants, Chinese men married to white women rarely lived outside the Chinese community. Fong and Lettie See kept living above their curio shop, which was only six blocks

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<sup>90</sup> Letter from Mae Franking to her family, November 9, 1916, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 100.

<sup>91</sup> “Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong,” February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

from L.A.'s Chinatown.<sup>92</sup> In Vancouver, B.C., the Quongs lived “about ten blocks from Chinatown in an old three story house on the edge of the Japanese section.”<sup>93</sup>

White women married to Chinese men had close ties with Chinese neighbors and were respected by the Chinese community while they almost completely lost ties to white society. Leticie See felt lonely because “no Caucasian women would speak to her.”<sup>94</sup> However, she had good relationships with Chinese laborers working under Fong See before she was married to him.<sup>95</sup> She especially sympathized with the hardship of Chinese mothers in Chinatown, who never had a midwife to look after them and had to go back to work right after childbirth. Whenever a neighbor gave birth, she was usually “one of the first to arrive with the traditional Chinese ‘baby soup’ of peanuts, pork, whiskey, and ginger.”<sup>96</sup> In Vancouver’s Chinatown, Mrs. Yip Quong was a well-known “maternity nurse” working closely with the Chinese Benevolent Association and was given a “medal bearing a Chinese inscription in appreciation of her services.” She was also active in the “Ladies Auxiliary, an organization of Christian Chinese women.” Even though Chinese residents in the city suspected white women married to Chinese men as being prostitutes, they spoke “kindly” of Mrs. Quong. According to the interviewer of Mrs. Quong, she unabashedly showed her assimilation into Chinese people and culture when she visited her mother in Boston with her stepson. In Boston, she “stayed at least part of the time, not with her mother, but in Chinatown.”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 64, 109, 129.

<sup>93</sup> “Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong,” February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

<sup>94</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 64–65.

<sup>95</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 54–55.

<sup>96</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 86.

<sup>97</sup> “Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong,” February 26, 1924, #11, Box 24, SRR.

Residence of families consisting of Japanese—both first and second generation—husbands, white wives, and/or their children was concentrated in major cities in California. Records on Japanese American internees tell us that by 1942, 105 out of 125 interracial families consisting of Japanese husbands, white wives, and/or their children lived in California. Sixty-two out of 105 Japanese-white families living in California had their residence in Los Angeles, and 8 families each in San Francisco and Sacramento. And the remaining 27 other families scattered in other parts of California.

In Los Angeles, Japanese men married to white women were less likely to take residence in the Japanese ethnic enclave known as Little Tokyo and lived in parts of multiethnic neighborhoods in the city from the mid 1920s on. The records on Japanese American internees reveal that right before 1942, 31 out of 36 Japanese-white families had their last permanent residence in 3 to 6 miles east or south of Little Tokyo. And the remaining 5 Japanese-white families had their homes in areas about 1 mile from Little Tokyo, the center of the Japanese community on First, Second, and Third Streets, L.A. This distribution of Japanese-white families in L.A. corresponds with the ways in which Japanese residents of the city migrated within the city. As early as 1920s, Japanese residents moved out of Little Tokyo and Downtown and found homes to the east across the Los Angeles River. There they mixed with other ethnic groups—Italian Americans, African Americans, Jewish Americans, Mexican Americans, and so on.<sup>98</sup> By 1940, Little Tokyo retained its identity as one of commercial and cultural centers of L.A. while only 29–36% of Japanese population still had their residence there.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Wild, *Street Meeting*, 27–31.

<sup>99</sup> Wild, *Street Meeting*, 25.

In the 1920s, Japanese men married to white women were among the first groups of Japanese Americans who resided in non-Japanese neighborhoods. At the time, three-quarters of Japanese population in Los Angeles lived on the Little Tokyo area.<sup>100</sup> The tendency to avoid the Japanese ethnic enclave as a residential area among interracial couples and some Japanese residents of the city is understandable because middle-class whites often viewed L.A.'s Little Tokyo and other non-white ethnic enclaves as the center of prostitution and gambling.<sup>101</sup> In 1924, the interviewer of Toyotomi Ujimasa and his British-born white wife, Elizabeth Coote, indicated that the couple lived among white neighbors by describing their neighborhood as a "respectable community in the city of Los Angeles."<sup>102</sup> K. Lentz, who interviewed her former student married to a Japanese immigrant, also noted that the couple lived in a "very good neighborhood."<sup>103</sup>

In San Francisco, which had been notorious for segregating Chinese and Japanese within public schools, Japanese men married to white women took residence with other Japanese residents of the city in the Japanese ethnic ghetto known as Japantown. For example, Mary Doceu Carrey Kimura, the Portuguese-born white wife of Takeji Kimura, lived in San Francisco's Japantown from 1922 until 1942, and ran a house cleaning business for whites. One of Mary's white customers sympathized with her being "estranged in the Japanese quarter of San Francisco."<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Gretchen Tuthill, "Japanese in the City of Los Angeles" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1924), #70, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>101</sup> Chinese and Japanese community leaders blamed white patrons of brothels, opium parlors, and gambling houses for their tainting the fame of Chinatown and Little Tokyo by arranging the "slumming parties." Wild, *Street Meeting*, 133.

<sup>102</sup> L.G. Schroeder, "Case Brief on Anglo-Japanese Marriage," June 18, 1924, #62, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>103</sup> K. Lentz, "Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz," #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>104</sup> Letter from Mr. McDough to D.S. Myer, January 10, 1943, Mary Kimura case file, Box 2428, WRACF.

The fact that interracial families lived among white neighbors in Los Angeles in the early 1920s does not indicate that whites in the city were more tolerant of interracial couples than whites in other western cities. A white American woman married to a Japanese immigrant worried that they “would have difficulty in getting another place” if they had to give up their lease.<sup>105</sup> A staff member of the Survey of Race Relations stated that she had a “disgusting” conversation with a white man who “besmirched” the character of his white neighbor because she was married to a Japanese man.<sup>106</sup> A native-born white wife of a Japanese immigrant told her interviewer that she and her husband had endured their white neighbors’ anti-Japanese remarks since they bought their house in 1911. This woman said, “The man who owns the house here on the corner used to be one of the strongest against the Japanese. He never said anything to [my husband] but when I would go by he would make insulting remarks.” She also brought up a conversation she had with one of her white neighbors, who said, “I think they [the Japanese] ought to live in a place to themselves, don’t you?” She replied to this neighbor, “that is a funny question to ask me when you know my husband is a Japanese. But I don’t see why they should.”<sup>107</sup>

White women married to Japanese immigrants felt that their marriage affected their social relationships with other white women. A white American wife of a Japanese immigrant said, “in such a marriage as her own, the husband and wife must expect some isolation.”<sup>108</sup> Although many of her former friends who had opposed her marriage became friendly with her again, “not

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<sup>105</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>106</sup> “A Case of Inter-marriage—Japanese-American,” #262, Box 29, SRR.

<sup>107</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

<sup>108</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

all” of them visited her after her marriage.<sup>109</sup> Another white American wife of a Japanese immigrant stated that she had isolated herself from other white women: “If anyone shows an inclination to be friendly I meet them half way, but if they do not I let them strictly alone.” The interviewer of this white woman wrote, “Though she spoke of different American women she knows and visits with still, I had a feeling that she seldom had an opportunity to visit with anyone who was not antagonistic.” This woman, in fact, had experienced social ostracism due to her marriage to a Japanese man. One mother whom she had befriended in her daughter’s dancing class said nothing to her when the teacher of the dancing class mentioned that her daughter’s father was Japanese.<sup>110</sup>

Compared to white women married to Chinese immigrants, white women married to Japanese immigrants had distant relationships with the Japanese community. Mr. Otsubo, who was one of the neighbors of the Horikoshis and a member of the Japanese Church where Horikoshi served as a minister, said that Grace, the minister’s wife, was “very much closed in.”<sup>111</sup> A research staff member of the Survey of Race Relations observed that her interviewee, a white wife of a Japanese man living in Hollywood in Los Angeles, did not even know a Japanese family that had lived for eleven years on the same street where she lived.<sup>112</sup>

White wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants responded to social isolation from the white community somewhat differently. White wives of Chinese immigrants accepted the fact that they had already severed ties to white society. These women chose to live in Chinatown and

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<sup>109</sup> K. Lentz, “Inter-marriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>110</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

<sup>111</sup> E.S.S., “Interview with Mrs. H—,” #235, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>112</sup> “A Case of Inter-marriage—Japanese-American,” #262, Box 29, SRR.

tried to be assimilated into the Chinese community. White women married to Japanese immigrants often selected to live in white or multiethnic neighborhoods. However, these women felt frustrated at their white neighbors' anti-Japanese sentiment while they kept a distance from the Japanese community.

### **Home Life of Interracial Families Consisting of Asian Immigrant Husbands and White Women**

Interracial couples' decision on childrearing markedly revealed the way these couples differentiated their cultural and racial identity from the outside world. Some interracial couples consisting of Japanese immigrant husbands and their white wives tried to teach their biracial children the culture and language of each of their parents. Elizabeth Coote Ujimasa, the English wife of Toyotomi Ujimasa, was proficient in Japanese, German, and French, and let her children study these languages. She emphasized the importance of the Japanese language and kept "instruction in the Japanese language for [her] children," while her Japanese husband was "inclined to boohoo" this idea.<sup>113</sup> Grace Shelp Horikoshi said to her interviewer that she wanted her daughter to "have the best that both races can offer."<sup>114</sup>

Some white wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants chose to raise their children in their husband's home country. Frances Patrick Osato, the white American wife of a Japanese photographer, and her two children left the U.S. for Japan in 1923. Osato said to a reporter from the *San Francisco Examiner*, "My marriage to an Oriental" has not made a gulf between me and my people, but there is demureness and modesty about the Japanese that are prevalent in no other race. I want my little girls, reared in such an environment."<sup>115</sup> While staying with her Chinese

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<sup>113</sup> L.G. Schroeder, "Case Brief on Anglo-Japanese Marriage," June 18, 1924, #62, Box 25, SRR.

<sup>114</sup> E.S.S., "Interview with Mrs. H—," #235, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>115</sup> "Doesn't Want Flappers," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 20, 1923, #224, Box 28, SRR.

parents-in-law in South China, Mae Watkins Franking wrote to her mother in Ann Arbor that she should not expect her grandson to be willing to write a letter in English because he was a “Chinese boy going to a Chinese school.”<sup>116</sup>

The anti-Japanese movement in the early 1920s made some Japanese-white families plan to leave the West Coast for safer environments for their children. In 1924, a white mother of two biracial children told her interviewer from the Survey of Race Relations that she and her Japanese husband seriously “talked some of going to Japan or to South America” when “things were looking rather serious for the Japanese people [in the U.S.]”<sup>117</sup> A white wife of a Japanese immigrant felt that “if racial prejudice were to overcome there is no fundamental objection to intermarriage of races.” She and her Japanese husband did not “plan to live on the Pacific Coast permanently” because children born of a marriage like hers would have to “endure much” because of the “prejudice against the Japanese.”<sup>118</sup>

Some white women married to Chinese and Japanese immigrants believed that their children should remain mostly as American because they were born in the U.S. Before having their first child, a white American woman married to a Japanese immigrant persuaded her husband that she did not want to register their children with the Japanese government. “I don’t see any use of doing it,” she said to her husband, “Our children will be born in the United States and Japan will mean nothing to them.”<sup>119</sup> Lettie and Fong See disagreed with each other over whether or not their children should learn the Chinese language. While Fong wanted to send the

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<sup>116</sup> Letter from Mae Franking to her family, March 20, 1918, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 110.

<sup>117</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

<sup>118</sup> K. Lentz, “Intermarriage: a Case Study by Miss K. Lentz,” #173, Box 27, SRR.

<sup>119</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

children to the Methodist Chinese-language school run by a Chinese woman, Leticie did not see any reason that her children should learn Chinese: “Our children are American. They must learn the ways of our country.” In the end, Leticie sent all her children to “American schools,” where they were the only Chinese.<sup>120</sup>

White wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants taught their children that they were Chinese or Japanese due to the race—“nationality”—of their father when their children began to raise questions about their physiological difference from their own mothers. When Mae Franking’s first child, Nelson, was 3 years old, he asked her if she had “Chinese eyes.” Mae answered, “No,” and Nelson said, “I got Chinese eyes.” Mae said nothing to her son, worrying that he might be “down-trodden.”<sup>121</sup> A white woman married to a Japanese immigrant said that their daughter did not seem to notice the “difference between herself and the other [white] children” until she was 5 years old. One day this mother saw her daughter “beginning to study her face in the mirror.” Another day she said to her mother, “I think blue eyes are much nicer than black eyes. Isn’t it funny you didn’t have a little girl like yourself who had blue eyes?” The mother answered, “Yes, but you know your papa is a Japanese and he has black eyes. You have black eyes because you are a little Japanese girl.” Her daughter said, “But I don’t want to be a Japanese.” According to this mother, by 1924, her daughter, who then was 12 years old, did not seem to “mind being Japanese any more.” When her eleven-year-old son was asked about his “nationality” by a stranger, he answered, “I belong to the three greatest nations in the world. I

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<sup>120</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 90, 101.

<sup>121</sup> Letter from Mae Franking to her family, July 25, 1916, in Franking, ed., *Mae Franking’s My Chinese Marriage*, 98.

was born in America, my mother is English [she was born in the U.S. to English parents], and my father is Japanese.”<sup>122</sup>

White mothers of biracial children chose to raise the children as American citizens and as racially Chinese or Japanese. These mothers must have heard of terms such as a “Eurasian,” a “mixed blood,” a “half caste,” or a “half breed.”<sup>123</sup> As long as these mothers were also cognizant of the stigma attached to those terms, they might not want to call their children by such labels. These mothers might not want their children to go through the process of racial passing although white society thought that “Eurasians” could easily pass for “Spanish” or “Mexican.” The interviewer of a white woman who had a daughter with her Japanese husband saw the daughter as “not especially Oriental looking,” reporting that one “would be puzzled as to her nationality, probably deciding she was French, Spanish, or some such nationality.”<sup>124</sup>

The stigmatized social status of biracial persons and the anti-Asian sentiment affected a few interracial couples’ decision on whether or not to have children. Dr. H, a Japanese physician, and his white American wife, also a physician, did not have children. The interviewer of this couple was told by this couple’s “mutual friends” that the subject of having children was “very objectionable to them both.” Although the interviewer tried to avoid the subject, he noticed that

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<sup>122</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

<sup>123</sup> Edith and Winnifred Eaton, journalists and writers of half Chinese half white ancestry, wrote essays on mixed race individuals of part Chinese or Japanese ancestry. The Eaton sisters, who were born to an English father and a Chinese mother in England, built their literary careers in the U.S. and constituted part of early Asian American literature. Edith Eaton, who identified herself as Chinese, chose Sui Sin Far as her pen name. Winnifred Eaton fashioned her identity as Japanese and used a Japanese-sounding pen name, Onoto Watanna. Sui Sin Far, “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” in Amy Ling and Annette White-Parks, eds., *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings* (Urbana, Ill., 1995), 218–230. This essay originally appeared in *Independent*, January 21, 1909. Onoto Watanna, “The Half Caste,” in Linda Trinh Moser and Elizabeth Rooney, eds., *“A Half Caste” and Other Writings* (Urbana, Ill., 2003), 149–153. This essay originally appeared in *Conkey’s Home Journal*, November 1898.

<sup>124</sup> Chloe Holt, “Account of a Visit with a White Woman Married to a Japanese,” August 14, 1924, #104, Box 26, SRR.

“every question dealing with a possibility of children and their problems were carefully avoided in their answers.”<sup>125</sup> Mrs. Yip Quong did not have her own children and instead raised stepchildren born to Yip’s deceased wife. Mrs. Quong had regretted not having children “deeply for a long time” but after 24 years of marriage, she thought that “it [not having her own children] was probably for the best.”<sup>126</sup> Fong and Lettie See’s first son, Milton, who was also married to a white woman, did not have children. Although Milton was half white and half Chinese, he chose—or was forced—to identify himself as Chinese. Milton told only a few close friends that it was his decision that he and his wife did not have children: “I don’t want them to go through what I’ve been through...It’s not easy to be Chinese in this country.”<sup>127</sup>

Although most marriages of first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans and white women lasted a long time,<sup>128</sup> some marriages ended in divorce or separation. The white wives of Chinese immigrants often did not remarry nor leave the Chinese community after their divorce. Mrs. Wong Sun Yue was reported to keep living in her “Chinese tea room and curio shop” in San Francisco’s Chinatown after her Chinese husband left to go to China for good. A newspaper reported that the reason for divorce was that the husband “prefers his own country” and that the wife “prefers hers.” According to this report, Mrs. Wong Sun Yue was the sister of “one of the wealthiest American women” and had already forsaken the “social position that she could have maintained” when she “cast her lot with her Chinese husband.” With no prospect of returning to the “most exclusive social circles” that she used to have and of having her Chinese husband

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<sup>125</sup> “Case Study of Race Intermarriage: a Japanese Man and a Native Born American Woman,”#282, Box 30, SRR.

<sup>126</sup> “Interview with Mrs. Yip Quong,” February 26, 1924,#11, Box 24, SRR.

<sup>127</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 166.

<sup>128</sup> According to the records on Japanese American internees in 1942, it is estimated that there were 57 marriages involving first-generation Japanese American men and their white wives, 3 cases of separation, and 4 cases of divorce. There were also 7 widowers. RJAR.

back, Mrs. Wong Sun Yue was “content with life as a white member of the local Chinese community.” Although her former husband was no longer in San Francisco, she was respected by “his countrymen” in the city’s Chinatown.<sup>129</sup> The marriage of Leticie to Fong See ended in 1924 because Fong had taken a third wife in China in 1921.<sup>130</sup> After separating from Fong See, Leticie raised her children as Chinese and kept a Chinese diet.<sup>131</sup>

Unlike their Chinese immigrant counterparts, former white wives of Japanese immigrants severed ties to the Japanese community and raised their children as non-Japanese. In 1930, Stella Sowka, a white woman of Polish birth, separated from her Japanese immigrant husband, Nakamichi, after 15 years of marriage.<sup>132</sup> She was not allowed to obtain a divorce because of her Catholic religion and so could never remarry.<sup>133</sup> After separation, she took custody of her five children and let them carry her maiden name.<sup>134</sup> Marjorie, Stella’s first child and daughter, stated that her mother “raised” her children “like Americans.”<sup>135</sup> And John, Stella’s second child and first son, recalled that they did not grow up having “the Japanese food.”<sup>136</sup>

The marriage between a Japanese immigrant, T. Torikai, and, a white missionary, Mina Minthorn, ended up in a divorce and a resulting serious custody battle over their only child and

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<sup>129</sup> “Chinese, White Wife Separate: Mrs. Wong Sun Yue, Sister of Mrs. Howard Gould, ill; Reviews Romance,” *San Francisco Call*, December 21, 1921, #223, Box 28, SRR.

<sup>130</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 143.

<sup>131</sup> See, *On Gold Mountain*, 154.

<sup>132</sup> “Individual Record,” July 1, 1942; Herman Goebel, Jr. to all Peace Officers, July 28, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF.

<sup>133</sup> Letter by John Sowka, July 8, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF.

<sup>134</sup> Letter from Marjorie and Stella Sowka to Manzanar camp, June 10, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF.

<sup>135</sup> Letter by Marjorie Sowka, June 1, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF.

<sup>136</sup> Letter from John Sowka to Nash, May 18, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF.

daughter, Lucile. Torikai attributed the social ostracism of white women married to Japanese men as the main cause of his wife's leaving him. "I guess," Torikai said, "[that] it is very hard for [an] American girl to marry Japanese and be happy unless she is content to find all her happiness in her home. She is considered [an] outcast among most Americans and that is hard." According to Torikai, his wife was told by her white neighbors in Seattle, "If you like Japanese so well why don't you go down into the Japanese section to live where there are more of them?" In 1913, at the time of their divorce, Torikai took custody of Lucile who was then 4 years old. During the next two years, he changed his residence several times and Mina protested to the juvenile court that Torikai did not take good care of Lucile. The court subsequently ruled that Lucile would be placed in the home of a white family and that Torikai was in charge of her monthly financial assistance. Lucile's white foster parents stated that Torikai frequently visited her while Mina "seldom appeared." Although Torikai continued to support Lucile financially and wrote letters to her frequently, it was revealed that she was "ashamed of her Japanese father." Mina resumed her maiden name, Mina Monthorn, two years after the divorce, and was remarried in 1921, although the identity of her second husband was unknown. A priest who had known this family for years feared that Mina had been "forced down in the social scale" due to her former marriage to a Japanese man.<sup>137</sup>

Interracial marriage between white women and Asian Americans hardly bridged the distance between white and Asian American societies. For white women's part, their marriages to Chinese or Japanese American men meant severing ties to white society. White mothers who had children with their Chinese or Japanese husband often racially identified their children as Chinese or Japanese, neither as white nor as biracial. The social ostracism of interracial marriage

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<sup>137</sup> "Interview with Mr. T. Torikai," July 3, 1924, #156, Box 27, SRR.

made it difficult for white women who were separated or divorced from Chinese and Japanese men to return to the white community they once belonged to.

### **First-Generation Japanese American Women's Marriages to White Men**

Beginning in 1890, a very small number of Japanese women entered the U.S. as fiancées or wives of white men. Walter B. Lindsay, an American importer, met his Japanese wife, Tani Himaura, on a business trip to Japan, and they were married in the U.S. in 1907.<sup>138</sup> A young and wealthy man from England, Charles Lennox, visited the “country village” to seek a Japanese bride. Lennox found a Japanese man, who offered Lennox “any one” of his daughters as a bride, and he chose Mon Kamito as his wife.<sup>139</sup> In 1890, Charles Lennox and Mon Kamito, who had changed her name to Katie Lennox, arrived in San Francisco, California, and obtained a marriage license in Seattle, Washington. Interracial relationships between white men and Japanese women also occurred in the Philippines, where William Rheinwald Vetter, an American citizen of German, English, and Scottish descent, met his future Japanese wife, Sode Higashi. At the time, Vetter was employed in the U.S. Postal Service in the Philippines after fighting the Filipino-American war. In 1914, Vetter and Higashi left for San Francisco and were married “on the high seas aboard the steamer Golden West” by the master of the steamer.<sup>140</sup>

Legal impediments to Japanese women marrying non-Japanese men in Japan were the reasons that Japanese women who wanted to marry white men left for the U.S. Katie Lennox explained that she and her husband came to the U.S. because it “was difficult to secure

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<sup>138</sup> Letter by Shirrell, June 30, 1942, Tani Lindsay case file, Box 2946, WRACF.

<sup>139</sup> “Case record,” May 15, 1943, Katie Lennox case file, Box 2946, WRACF.

<sup>140</sup> Letter by Yuri Vetter, September 28, 1942, Sode Vetter case file, Box 6572, WRACF.

permission from the Japanese government for mixed marriages.”<sup>141</sup> However, white men married to Japanese women could meet legal obstructions to their marriages in the U.S. William Vetter came to know that his marriage to Sode Vetter on the high seas in 1914 was not recognized as legal, in 1930, when he found a way to secure a widow’s pension for his wife and children. William and Sode Vetter went to Tijuana, Mexico, and obtained a marriage license in the same year. In 1933, William died “still in absolute belief that the 1914 marriage was legal, and that his wife and children would be taken care of by the Veteran’s Widow’s Pension.” Sode Vetter applied for the widow’s pension as the wife of a Spanish-American War veteran. The Veterans’ Claims Office in Washington D.C., which could not judge whether or not her 1914 marriage was valid, turned this question to Congress. In 1937, Sode Vetter received a notice that her 1914 marriage was not legal and she was not eligible for the pension.<sup>142</sup>

Japanese women’s marriages to white men can be characterized as Japanese assimilation: these Japanese wives of white men assimilated into their husbands’ culture, religion, and language. During the internment of Japanese Americans, Japanese immigrant wives and their children often wrote letters to the government authority administering internment camps, appealing their Americanization in order to be exempted from evacuation orders. Yuri Vetter wrote that her mother, Sode Vetter, was “very Americanized in habit” and “never spoke Japanese to me or my father.”<sup>143</sup> The wife of Dr. H. Warashina, who employed Take Wilson’s married daughter, Elsie Nomura, as an assistant at his dental office in Spokane, Washington, spoke

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<sup>141</sup> “Case Record,” May 15, 1943, Katie Lennox case file, Box 2946, WRACF. In fact, the Japanese government recognized a Japanese woman’s cohabitation with an alien as marriage since 1873. However, such a woman lost her nationality upon her marriage to an alien while such a restriction on nationality rights was not imposed on a Japanese man marrying an alien. Leupp, *Interracial Intimacy in Japan*, 196–197.

<sup>142</sup> Letter from Yuri Frances Vetter to Nell Findley, September 28, 1942, Sode Vetter case file, Box 6572, WRACF.

<sup>143</sup> Letter from Yuri Frances Vetter to Nell Findley, September 28, 1942, Sode Vetter case file, Box 6572, WRACF.

highly of Take Wilson's Americanization: "As for Americanization, I can truthfully say that if she was not given the color of the skin she has, she would have been a citizen ages ago. She speaks English as well as any other European aliens who determine to live & stay & bring up their children as a respected American citizen."<sup>144</sup> Towa Moyer came to the U.S. from Japan in 1912 at age 18. Towa married William Moyer in Hoquiam, Washington, and had five children with him. Moyer stated that she found it "very difficult" to write or speak Japanese and the children were never taught to write or speak the Japanese language.<sup>145</sup> It should be noted that these letters were written by the members of white-Japanese families or by Japanese acquaintances of such families. Obviously, these letters emphasized the efforts of Japanese American wives of white men to Americanize themselves. At the same time, they unwittingly revealed that the Japanese immigrant wives of white men might not be allowed to speak their native language and to bring Japanese ways of childrearing to an American home.

Interracial families consisting of white husbands, Japanese wives, and/or their children often lived among white neighbors and had little contact with Japanese Americans. On the part of Japanese wives, their lack of connections to the Japanese American community also contributed to their willingness to assimilate. Yuri Vetter, the daughter of Sode Vetter, emphasized that she and her brother had never communicated with "the Japanese race, outside of mother" before they entered an internment camp in 1942.<sup>146</sup> M.B. Taylor, the sheriff of Grays

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<sup>144</sup> Letter from Mrs. H. Warashina to D.S. Myer, May 1, 1943, Take Wilson case file, Box 6684, WRACF.

<sup>145</sup> Letter from Mrs. Moyer and children to Mrs. Halle, July 8, 1942, Towa Moyer case file, WRACF.

<sup>146</sup> Letter from Yuri Frances Vetter to Miss Nell Findley, September 28, 1942, Sode Vetter case file, Box 6572, WRACF.

Harbor County, Washington, wrote that “Mrs. Moyer has not corresponded or spoken to any Japanese in the last twenty years.”<sup>147</sup>

The stories of these Japanese immigrant wives of white men are somewhat similar to the experiences of interracial marriage that white wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants had. As a result of marriages across national boundaries and racial lines, both groups of women lost their citizenship and sometimes became stateless in the early twentieth century. As wives, both groups of women went through a process of assimilation to their husbands’ culture and language.

### **Interracial Relationships and Marriages involving Second-Generation Japanese Americans in the U.S. West before WWII**

Second-generation Japanese Americans were more open to the idea of interracial marriage than their first-generation counterparts. The rate of interracial marriage among second-generation Japanese Americans was more than twice that of the marriage rate among their first-generation counterparts.<sup>148</sup> The meetings of second-generation Japanese Americans and whites occurred in settings such as public schools, universities, neighborhoods, and workplaces in urban areas in the West, which became increasingly multiethnic beginning in the late 1920s. In most of the cases, white men and women married to second-generation Japanese Americans were also American-born and even most of their parents were born in the U.S. Interracial couples consisting of second-generation Japanese Americans and their white spouses viewed their marriage as a marriage between two Americans. Both parents of the Japanese and white spouses rarely opposed their children’s decision to marry outside their race and ethnicity.

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<sup>147</sup> Letter from M.B. Taylor to Elmer L. Shirrell, August 5, 1942, Towa Moyer case file, WRACF.

<sup>148</sup> The records on Japanese American internees tell that by 1942, Nisei men married to white women comprised 1% of married Nisei men (54/5,470) while Issei men married to whites 0.4% (68/17,707). It is estimated that Issei women married to whites consisted of 0.08% of married Issei women (11/14,655) while Nisei women married to whites 0.5% of married Nisei women (41/8,213). RJAR.

The emergence of multiethnic working-class neighborhoods in western cities allowed second-generation Japanese Americans and their future spouses to meet each other. Alma Shigeko Collier, born Sakamoto, was born and grew up in Fresno, California, in 1910. Graduating from high school, she had operated her own beauty shop named “Alma’s Beauty Salon” in the city until she was sent to an internment camp in 1942. Her husband, Vincent James Collier, born to an “Italian-American” father and native Italian mother in 1915, was also a native of Fresno. Vincent dropped out of high school to support his widowed mother and worked “as a farm laborer, manager of a radio repair shop,” and as a shoe repairman in the shoe shop that he and his brother owned.<sup>149</sup>

The white community frowned at but condoned interracial dating and cohabitation involving second-generation Japanese American men and white women. Raymond Kaname Nakamoto, born and grew up in Penryn, California, in 1909, and worked as a trucker and a farm laborer. Nakamoto’s record during the internment of Japanese Americans revealed that he had a “common-law” white wife, Edna Pickard, in Penryn for several months before the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast.<sup>150</sup> The white community, which had known that Nakamoto wanted to marry a white woman and that he had been “around with white girls,” did not pay much attention to his cohabitation with a white woman.<sup>151</sup>

A few American-born Japanese American workers who were active in the labor movement of the 1930s were married to white women. Mac Takeo Matsumoto, a Hawaiian-born Japanese American, was a seasonal farm laborer in various rural areas in California and worked in an

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<sup>149</sup> This information on the Colliers is found in the different versions of reports on Alma Collier as recorded in the Colorado River War Relocation Center. For the latest version, see “Family relocation summary: Collier, Alma and James,” May 29, 1944, Alma Collier case file, Box 300, WRACF.

<sup>150</sup> Letter from Elmer Shirrell to E.R. Fryer, July 3, 1942, Raymond Nakamoto case file, Box 3789, WRACF.

<sup>151</sup> Letter from E.V. Saladana to War Relocation Authority, Raymond Nakamoto case file, Box 3789, WRACF.

Alaska cannery since 1935. As a cannery worker, Matsumoto was a “member of C.I.O. [Congress of Industrial Organizations] Cannery branch.” In 1939, Matsumoto got married to Sally Ryan.<sup>152</sup> Karl Yoneda, a second-generation Japanese American, and Elaine Buchman, an American-born white woman of Russian Jewish ancestry, met each other while both were active members of the Communist Party. They became closer in early 1933. Elaine recalled that she had not been sure about “whether or not I was prepared to fight on another front—mixed marriage—and whether it was the right thing to do.”<sup>153</sup> They lived together for two and half years and then legalized their marriage in Seattle, Washington, on November 5, 1935.

Young middle-class white women devoted to Christian missions married second-generation Japanese Americans. Charlotte Douglas, who married a second-generation Japanese American pastor, Royden Susu-Mago, was such a case. Charlotte graduated from the University of Southern California and visited Japan with her mother in 1927. This trip inspired her to become a missionary. Between 1931 and 1936, she revisited Japan as a missionary with an appointment to the Methodist Protestant Mission Board in Baltimore, Maryland. While in Japan, she adopted a Japanese name, Chieko. Back in California, she worked as a stenographer a while and reconnected herself to the Christian missions by becoming an “Americanization teacher” for Los Angeles schools beginning in 1939. And, in 1940, she married Royden Susu-Mago, a second-generation Japanese American of Hawaiian-birth, who had been an active member of Japanese American churches in Los Angeles.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> A handwritten report on Mac Matsumoto, January 19, 1943, Mac Matsumoto case file, WRACF.

<sup>153</sup> Raineri, *Red Angel*, 47.

<sup>154</sup> “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance,” March 3, 1943, Charlotte Susu-Mago case file, Box 5544, WRACF. “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance,” November 13, 1943, Royden Susu-Mago case file, Box 5544, WRACF.

Interracial marriage bore different meanings for second-generation Japanese Americans and their white spouses. For example, these interracial couples reacted to the stigmatization of interracial relationships in a different way that first-generation Japanese Americans and their white spouses did. First-generation Japanese Americans and their white spouses legalized their marriage before they lived together. It was not uncommon, however, for second-generation Japanese Americans and white women to live together before marriage. The fact that the white community did not respond to interracial cohabitation between Japanese men and white women violently in the 1930s does not mean that white society came to tolerate interracial relationships. White society in the West still held unfavorable opinions about interracial marriage and anti-miscegenation laws were enforced. It can be construed, however, that white society paid less attention to marriages between Japanese Americans and white women by the 1930s. It was a time when the frenzy of the anti-Japanese movement was subsided as a result of a ban on Japanese immigration in 1924. It can also be interpreted that white society changed their target from interracial unions between Japanese men and white women to those between Filipino men and white women by the 1930s, when Filipino laborers entered the U.S. in large numbers to fill the vacancy of Japanese laborers.

Interracial families consisting of first-generation Chinese and Japanese Americans, their white wives, and children bore the brunt of anti-Asian hysteria on the West Coast like other Chinese and Japanese Americans in the first quarter of the twentieth century. White wives of Chinese and Japanese immigrants experienced social isolation from their family and friends, and from the larger white community. White mothers of biracial children tried to raise the children as Americans and at the same time they identified their children as racially Chinese or Japanese.

By the early 1930s, interracial marriage between second-generation Japanese Americans and whites occurred more frequently than marriage between first-generation Japanese Americans and whites. The emergence of multiethnic working-class neighborhoods served as a major background for interracial marriages involving second-generation Japanese Americans and whites. Both the white and Japanese American communities reacted to such interracial marriage in a less volatile way. However, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the internment of Japanese Americans shattered a fragile, yet increasing harmony among different races in the multiethnic West. Chapter 5 examines how the internment of Japanese Americans threatened the unity of the most common form of an interracial family involving Japanese Americans—families consisting of Japanese husbands, white wives, and their children.

## CHAPTER 5

### GENDERING THE “CAUCASIAN ENVIRONMENT” OF INTERRACIAL FAMILIES: THE MIXED MARRIAGE POLICY DURING THE INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS, 1942–1945

In December 1943, two years after Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor, Congressman Warren Magnuson from Seattle, Washington, sent a telegram to the Western Defense Command and the Fourth Army (WDC), which was in charge of the internment of Japanese Americans. Magnuson asked for the WDC’s official explanation about the news that the WDC had released “certain Japanese Americans in mixed marriage status” from internment camps and returned them to West Coast areas. “Vast majority coast residents,” Magnuson continued, “violently opposed to this procedure and feel that all Japanese for security reasons should be barred from West Coast areas for the duration.”<sup>1</sup> In response to Magnuson’s request, on December 13, 1943, the WDC issued a press release stating that it had released a “very small” number of “members of so-called mixed-marriage families, as a full-blooded Japanese wife of a non-Japanese husband, and their children, and various other breakdowns for mixed marriage families, particularly where their environment has been Caucasian.” General Delos Emmons, the commander of the WDC, made sure that those members of mixed marriage families who were allowed to return to their homes on the West Coast were “wives or children of persons of unquestionable loyalty” and that “none” threatened “in any way national security.”<sup>2</sup>

Emmons’s press release included an overview of the WDC’s policy on Japanese Americans who married non-Japanese persons and “mixed blood” individuals of part Japanese ancestry. As Emmons indicated, the number of mixed marriage families was “very small.” Members of these mixed marriage families comprised less than 1%—600 to 800—of the

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<sup>1</sup> Telegram from Warren Magnuson to Colonel Moffitt, December 3, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>2</sup> “WDC press release, Japs return to coastal area,” December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

approximately 110,000 Japanese Americans who were forced to evacuate from their homes on the West Coast.<sup>3</sup> Despite the very small number of mixed marriage families, the ramifications of their existence in internment camps and of the WDC's policies on these families cannot be dismissed. The introduction of the mixed marriage policy unwittingly unfolded a hidden history of marriages between Japanese Americans and non-Japanese racial and ethnic groups.<sup>4</sup> More significantly, the mixed marriage policy revealed that different levels of government officials and politicians, and members of mixed marriage families expressed varying opinions about the racial and cultural identity of mixed marriage families and children of part Japanese ancestry.

The official purpose of the mixed marriage policy was to release "mixed blood" children of 50 or less than 50% Japanese "blood," who had not lived among Japanese Americans before the war, from the "Japanese environment" of internment camps and to return those children to the "Caucasian environment" that they came from. A deeper analysis of the conditions under which the children of part Japanese ancestry could be allowed to return home shows that the policy was implemented in order to uphold the patriarchal prerogative of a "Caucasian" or other non-Japanese man to preside over his family. The priority of the mixed marriage policy was, as Emmons indicated, to bring half Japanese children and their "full-blooded" Japanese mothers

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<sup>3</sup> Depending on the extant sources, the number of members of mixed marriage families comes within the range of 600 to 800. These numbers are based on the database on Japanese American internees and on reports on mixed marriage permits appearing in the mixed marriage file of the WDC. It is estimated that there were approximately 607 members of mixed marriage families in relocation centers. This number includes 63 white wives of Japanese husbands, 3 white husbands of Japanese wives, 4 non-Japanese and non-white husbands of Japanese wives, and 23 non-Japanese and non-white wives of Japanese husbands. RJAR. These 93 members of mixed marriage families were likely to be omitted from official reports on mixed marriage permits issued by the WDC because the WDC only counted permits issued to "mixed blood" individuals and Japanese wives of white and other non-Japanese husbands. One report in the mixed marriage file, dated March 22, 1944, indicated that around 587 permits to return to the West Coast had been issued under the mixed marriage policy. This report also noted that "a great number of these permittees" had never evacuated. Memorandum from Peter Crosby to Director, Civil Affairs Division, "Reprocessing of Exemptees," March 22, 1944, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Spickard is so far the only historian who has examined the mixed marriage policy during the internment of Japanese Americans. Paul Spickard, "Injustice Compounded."

back to the white or other non-Japanese fathers of these children if the “environment” of such a family had been “Caucasian.” As a result of the mixed marriage policy, Japanese women who had half Japanese children with their non-Japanese husbands became the only group of Japanese Americans who could return to West Coast areas while other Japanese Americans were never allowed to enter West Coast areas for the duration of the war against Japan.

The WDC determined the preexisting condition of a “Caucasian environment” in a mixed marriage family based on the race/nationality of a male head of a mixed marriage family. A white or other non-Japanese man could provide a “Caucasian environment” for his Japanese wife and their “mixed blood” children. The largest group of mixed marriage families consisted of a “full-blooded” Japanese husband, a white wife, and their half Japanese, half white children. According to the mixed marriage policy, such mixed marriage families were considered as having a “Japanese environment” due to the race of the male heads of the families. The WDC grudgingly acknowledged that a white woman who had “mixed blood” children with her Japanese husband could be seen as a source of a “Caucasian environment” for her “mixed blood” children only if she severed ties with her Japanese husband. As a result of the white/non-Japanese patriarchal definition of a “Caucasian environment,” a “full-blooded” Japanese man who had half Japanese children with his white wife was barred from returning to his home on the West Coast during World War II.

According to the WDC’s interpretation of the term “Caucasian environment,” Chinese or Filipino men could become providers of a “Caucasian environment” for their half Japanese children whom they had with their Japanese wives. The mixed marriage policy ended up drawing lines between “non-Japanese” and “Japanese” in identifying the “environment” of mixed marriage families. The official rationale for allowing Japanese wives of Chinese or Filipino

husbands to take residence on the West Coast was to keep friendly relations with China and the Philippines during the war. However, this change in the mixed marriage policy had factual grounds, too. Japanese women who were married to men of Filipino, Mexican, or Chinese ancestry outnumbered those who were married to white men.<sup>5</sup> Most of the Japanese women who were married to Filipino, Mexican, or Chinese husbands, in fact, were never evacuated from the West Coast in 1942.<sup>6</sup>

The backbone of the mixed marriage policy—the (white) patriarchal definition of a “Caucasian environment” and the rule of maximum 50% Japanese “blood” in a mixed blood individual—became highly controversial among managers of internment camps, officials of the War Department and the Interior Department in Washington, and mixed marriage families. Camp managers and military and non-military officials in Washington believed that all mixed marriage families could be treated equally as long as these families remained loyal to the U.S. This race-and-gender-neutral perspective on mixed marriages challenged the WDC’s equation of a white or non-Japanese man as a provider of a “Caucasian environment” and the rule of maximum quantum of Japanese “blood” in an individual of “mixed blood.”

Government officials and mixed marriage families tended to understand that the existence of any degree of white ancestry in a mixed blood individual could be used to bolster a case for a mixed marriage family’s “Caucasian environment.” From this perspective, the mixed marriage policy did not make sense because the policy allowed a mixed blood individual with no

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<sup>5</sup> One WDC report listed the names of 86 Japanese wives of non-Japanese husbands. Thirty of these women were married to “Filipino” men, 26 to “Caucasian” men, 16 to “Mexican” men, 10 to “Chinese” men, 2 to “Negro” men, and 1 to a “Korean” man. “Exemptions granted from exclusion provisions on public proclamations to persons of Japanese ancestry under mixed marriage policy,” August 1, 1943, MMP, vol. 3. Most of these women do not appear on the records of Japanese American internees.

<sup>6</sup> One report in the mixed marriage file, dated March 22, 1944, indicated that “a great many permittees were never evacuated.” Peter Crosby to Director, Civil Affairs Division, “Reprocessing of Exemptees,” March 22, 1944, MMP, vol. 3.

white “blood”—for example, an individual born to a Chinese father and a Japanese mother—to return to West Coast areas. However, under the policy, a mixed blood individual of one-quarter white “blood” and three-quarters Japanese “blood”—an individual born to a Japanese father and a half white, half Japanese mother—could not return home.

Government officials and members of mixed marriage families commonly interpreted the term “Caucasian environment” as meaning mixed marriage families’ closer relations with white society and the Americanization of a Japanese spouse by way of interracial marriage. The term “Caucasian environment” was understood to refer to a mixed marriage family’s major association with white society, the use of the English language at home, and sending mixed race children to American public schools. The U.S. citizenship of an American-born Japanese husband of a white woman and/or his willingness to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces and to fight against Japan were also considered as constituting a “Caucasian environment” in a mixed marriage family, which consisted of a Japanese husband, his white wife, and their mixed race children.

All of these alternative interpretations of the term “Caucasian environment” and the rule of blood quantum could undermine the racialized and gendered hierarchy among mixed marriage families that the WDC took for granted. From the perspective of the WDC, marriages between white/non-Japanese men and Japanese women and those between Japanese men and white women had different impacts on the racial and cultural identity of “mixed blood” children. Other government officials in Washington and in the War Relocation Authority (WRA) found it less convincing that the mixed marriage policy considered gendered differentials in marriages between white men and Japanese women and marriages between Japanese men and white women. The WDC persistently emphasized its preference for the white/non-Japanese paternity

over maternity and exposed its biased presumption that a white woman married to a Japanese man forsook her white identity. At the same time, the mixed marriage policy upheld a white/non-Japanese man's individual right and racial prerogative to keep his Japanese wife and half Japanese children in his house on the West Coast.

### **From Evacuation Orders to the Mixed Marriage Policy, 1942–1943**

The history of the mixed marriage policy began with Major Karl Bendetsen, who convinced Lieutenant General John DeWitt, commander of the WDC, that Japanese Americans should be evacuated from West Coast areas and supervised by the military in January 1942.<sup>7</sup> After President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, on March 2, 1942, DeWitt declared the western portion of California, Washington, and Oregon, and the southern area of Arizona as Military Area No. 1. Nine days later, DeWitt established the Wartime Civilian Control Administration (WCCA) to execute an evacuation program, appointing Bendetsen to lead the WCCA. On March 18, 1942, Roosevelt appointed Milton Eisenhower as the first director of the War Relocation Authority (WRA), a government agency belonging to the Department of the Interior that would administer permanent internment camps called relocation centers.

Between late March and May 1942, DeWitt issued Civilian Exclusion Orders that required that “all persons of Japanese ancestry, both aliens and non-aliens” be evacuated from Military Area No. 1. Among 110,000 Japanese Americans, almost 80,000 were citizens by birth.<sup>8</sup> DeWitt justified the internment of citizens of Japanese ancestry for racial reasons. “The

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<sup>7</sup> Roger Daniels, *Prisoners without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York, 2004), 38-39.

<sup>8</sup> Daniels, *Prisoners without Trial*, 22-48.

Japanese race,” DeWitt stated, “is an enemy race and while many second and third generation born on United States soil...have become ‘Americanized,’ the racial strains are undiluted.”<sup>9</sup>

Between March and June 1942, before the WDC adopted the mixed marriage policy, DeWitt felt it necessary to define the meaning of the term “persons of Japanese ancestry.” At first, DeWitt believed in the one drop rule. “Any person who has a Japanese ancestor regardless of degree,” DeWitt stated, “is considered a person of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>10</sup> It was reported that Bendetsen, who suggested the introduction of the mixed marriage policy in July 1942, expressed his personal belief in the one drop rule at the time of evacuation. A Maryknoll priest was told to ask Bendetsen about whether or not “half-Japanese” and “one-fourth or less” Japanese children in the orphanage run by the Maryknoll center should be sent to the internment camps. Bendetsen replied, “I am determined that if they have one drop of Japanese blood in them, they must all go to camp.”<sup>11</sup> However, what was actually practiced was a definition of “a person of Japanese ancestry” as anyone with “as little as one-sixteenth Japanese blood.”<sup>12</sup>

However, once mixed marriage families and individuals of part Japanese ancestry started to arrive in assembly centers, Bendetsen changed his mind and suggested to DeWitt that certain members of mixed marriage families should be released. On July 1, 1942, Bendetsen sent DeWitt a memorandum titled “Japanese Mixed Marriage Cases.” On July 3, 1942, DeWitt approved the mixed marriage policy. At this stage, the policy was designed to allow “mixed

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<sup>9</sup> The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, December 1982* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1982), 66.

<sup>10</sup> Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, Office of Commanding General, Presidio of San Francisco, California, “Glossary of Terms,” *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation from the West Coast, 1942* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1943), 514.

<sup>11</sup> Yoneda, *Gambatte*, 130.

<sup>12</sup> Headquarters Western Defense Command, *Final Report*, 145.

blood families” where the “head of the household or an adult individual is of mixed blood and a citizen of the U.S.” to reside within the Military Area on the West Coast as long as their “environment” had been “Caucasian.” Bendetsen put forth three rationales for a mixed marriage policy. First, “a study of these cases” revealed that such “mixed blood families” were “quite Americanized.” Second, these families were “shunned by the Japanese” and resided in “non-Japanese communities.” Third, there were “very few” families bearing “a marked resemblance to the Japanese people.”<sup>13</sup>

On July 12, 1942, the WDC provided managers of assembly and relocation centers with more detailed guidelines for the mixed marriage policy. The WDC instructed the camp managers to investigate whether their camps had internees belonging to the following four categories of mixed marriage cases: 1) families consisting of “a Caucasian husband who is a citizen of the United States, a Japanese wife and mixed blood children”; 2) “adult individuals of mixed blood who are citizens of the United States”; 3) families consisting of “a Japanese husband, Caucasian wife and mixed blood children”; and 4) a couple composed of one Japanese and the other non-Japanese spouses with no “unemancipated [underage] children.”<sup>14</sup>

The July 1942 version of the mixed marriage policy offered temporary prescriptions for each of the four categories of mixed marriage families and “mixed blood” individuals. Regarding the first category, mixed marriage families consisting of a white citizen husband, a Japanese wife, and their children, and the second category, adult citizens of “mixed blood,” the policy stipulated that such families were eligible for residence within the Military Area on the West

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<sup>13</sup> The history of these correspondences between DeWitt and Bendetsen is related in the following document. Memorandum from Claude Washburne to Chief of Staff, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, “Communication from Commanding General, Hawaiian Department, requesting permission for mixed blood individual to reside at Alameda, California,” April 30, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel, Jr. to A.H. Cheney, “Release of mixed marriage families,” July 12, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

Coast as long as their “environment” was “Caucasian.” The third category, mixed marriage families headed by Japanese husbands, could leave the camps but were not allowed to return to the Military area on the West Coast. The fourth category of mixed marriage families without children was not granted exemptions from evacuation orders and should stay in the camps. Bendetsen was considering the adaptation of some provisions in the mixed marriage policy to wartime military and diplomatic needs. Although he stated that the mixed marriage policy was about mixed blood children, Bendetsen considered extending it to include the release of Japanese wives of non-Japanese men who were serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or were employed by defense industry.

The WDC also considered adding a provision that would allow mixed marriage families “composed of Filipino and Chinese husbands, Japanese wives and mixed blood children” to return to the evacuated area because the Philippines and China were allies of the U.S.<sup>15</sup> The mixed marriage policy inscribed the ethnic difference between the Japanese and the Chinese and reflected the fact that American society began to perceive a difference between the Japanese and other peoples from East Asia, following the attack on Pearl Harbor. During the war, it was quite popular among Americans to learn how to decipher the difference between the Japanese and the Chinese in terms of facial features.<sup>16</sup> The U.S. government also found it necessary to resume

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<sup>15</sup> Before the original version of the Mixed Marriage policy was issued on July 12, 1942, there were a few reports of members of mixed Japanese families who had not evacuated from the Western Defense Command areas. According to their family names, they were mostly from families consisting of Filipino or Chinese husbands, Japanese wives, and their children. The WDC decided to let them stay within the Western Defense areas until the mixed marriage policy went into effect, but John DeWitt had opposed the idea from the beginning. Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel, Jr. to Colonel Karl R. Bendetsen, “Temporary Evacuation Deferment for Mixed Marriage Families,” July 8, 1942; Memorandum from General DeWitt to Commanding General, Northern California Sector, “Temporary Deferment from Evacuation for Mixed Marriage Families,” July 9, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>16</sup> “How to tell Japs from the Chinese,” December 22, 1941, *Life Magazine*; quoted in Lawson Fusao Inada, ed., *Only What We Could Carry: the Japanese American Internment Experience* (Berkeley, Calif., 2000), 52. According to this article, a Japanese man had a “heavy beard” and “broader, shorter face” while a “longer, narrower face” and “scant beard” were more characteristic of a Chinese man.

relations with China and took legislative actions to repeal the Chinese exclusion laws. On December 17, 1943, President Roosevelt signed the Magnuson bill. The Magnuson Act enabled Chinese Americans of non-U.S. birth to become naturalized citizens. Nonetheless, the act was not intended to a door to Chinese immigrant: only 105 immigration quotas were allotted to China based on the act.

The July 1942 version of the mixed marriage policy was based on the presumption that mixed marriage families consisting of white husbands and Japanese wives were likely to have a “Caucasian environment” while mixed marriage families composed of Japanese husbands and white wives were not. As the following section reveals, the lack of specific references in the term “Caucasian environment” in the July 1942 version of the mixed marriage policy caused controversies between the WDC and camp managers. Some camp managers assumed that mixed marriage families headed by Japanese husbands and their white wives could also have a “Caucasian environment” like mixed marriage families headed by white husbands and their Japanese wives.

In January 1943, the WDC released a new version of the mixed marriage policy. This revised version included two major changes that emphasized the biological evidence of mixed marriages—the quantum of Japanese “blood” in “mixed blood” children and the existence of one non-Japanese parent—over the evidence of a “Caucasian environment.”<sup>17</sup> First, the mixed marriage policy of January 1943 adopted the rule that in order for a mixed marriage family and a mixed blood individual to be eligible for exemption from evacuation orders and for residence

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<sup>17</sup> Memorandum from Ray Ashworth to Claude Washburne, “Outline of Procedure for Release of Persons of Japanese Ancestry for Residence in Military Area No. 1, and the California Portion of Military Area No. 2, under the Mixed Marriage Policy,” January 23, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

within the Military areas on the West Coast, the maximum quantum of Japanese “blood” in the family or individual should not exceed 50%.

Second, the January 1943 version of the mixed marriage policy weakened the significance of evidence for a pre-war “Caucasian environment” in a mixed marriage family compared to the July 1942 version of the policy, which required a mixed marriage family headed by a white citizen husband to pass the test of a “Caucasian environment.” The January 1943 policy made the requirement of a pre-war “Caucasian environment” pertinent only to the case of adult “mixed blood individuals, who are part Japanese (1/2 or less).” Mixed marriage families that were composed of at least one non-Japanese parent and minor children of part Japanese ancestry were not required to present evidence for their pre-war “Caucasian environment.” The WDC implied that the presence of a non-Japanese parent of part Japanese children automatically represented a “Caucasian environment” for the children.

The January 1943 version of the mixed marriage policy made clear that mixed marriage families that consisted of a Filipino or Chinese husband, a Japanese wife, and children were deemed eligible for residence on the West Coast. The WDC integrated mixed marriage families where the male head was Filipino or Chinese into the existing category of mixed marriage families where the male head was “a Caucasian husband who is a citizen of the United States.” To reflect this change, the January 1943 version of the policy changed the phrase “a Caucasian husband who is a citizen of the United States” in the July 1942 policy into the phrase “[if the head of the family is] a citizen of the United States or of a friendly country, (such as China).”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Memorandum from Ray Ashworth to Claude Washburne, “Outline of Procedure for Release of Persons of Japanese Ancestry for Residence in Military Area No. 1, and the California Portion of Military Area No. 2, under the Mixed Marriage Policy,” January 23, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

Another important change in the January 1943 version of the mixed marriage policy was that it allowed “Caucasian mothers with minor children, sired by a Japanese father,” to return to their homes on the West Coast. In comparison to the previous version of the policy, which did not issue a permit to return to the West Coast to minor children born to a Japanese father and a white mother, the new version of the policy recognized the “Caucasian” mother’s influence on her “mixed blood” children. However, this change was rather deceptive because there were strings attached. The “Caucasian” mother had to prove that the Japanese father of the children was “dead” or had “long since been separated from the family.”<sup>19</sup>

This stipulation on white mothers and their half Japanese children, in fact, was not put into practice as it was written because most of the approximately 63 white women in internment camps entered the camps as wives of their Japanese husbands. According to the records on Japanese American internees, there were only 3 cases of white women internees who were widowed, divorced, or separated from their Japanese husbands at the time of evacuation. The white wives of Japanese men had to deal with temporary separation from their husbands if they wanted to return to their homes on the West Coast with their minor children.

Bendetsen, the creator of the mixed marriage policy, purposefully accommodated the reunion of members of mixed marriage families consisting of a non-Japanese husband, a Japanese wife, and mixed blood children in their homes on the West Coast while the policy never applied the same prescription to mixed marriage families composed of a Japanese husband, a white wife, and “mixed blood” children. The WDC reluctantly recognized the white mothers’ ability to provide a “Caucasian environment” for their half Japanese, half white children.

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<sup>19</sup> Memorandum from Ray Ashworth to Claude Washburne, “Outline of Procedure for Release of Persons of Japanese Ancestry for Residence in Military Area No. 1, and the California Portion of Military Area No. 2, under the Mixed Marriage Policy,” January 23, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

However, unlike the white or other non-Japanese husband of a Japanese wife, the white wife of a Japanese husband was not seen as having influence on the Americanization of her Japanese spouse. Intriguingly, as the rest of this chapter reveals, many managers of assembly centers and relocation centers and even some WDC officials found the gender bias in the mixed marriage policy to be inconsistent.

### **Camp Managers' Understandings about the Racial Categories in the Mixed Marriage Policy, July 1942 to January 1943**

The January 1943 version of the mixed marriage policy partly responded to questions that managers of assembly centers and relocation centers had with the July 12 version of the mixed marriage policy. First and most commonly, these managers of internment camps questioned the meaning of the racial categories, "Caucasian," "Japanese," and "non-Japanese," mentioned in the July 12 version of the policy. Center managers, for example, wondered whether or not they should differentiate "Filipino and Chinese" from "non-Japanese."

Second, camp managers pointed out two specific kinds of "mixed blood" individuals who constituted borderline eligibility for residence on the West Coast. The first type of borderline case was about three-quarters Japanese children born to a Japanese father and a half Japanese, half white mother. The other type of borderline case was about half white, half Japanese individuals born outside the U.S.

Third, and most importantly, camp managers had trouble interpreting the meaning of "Caucasian environment." Most camp managers equated a mixed marriage status with a "Caucasian environment" and did not limit the environment question to a family in which the male head was white or other non-Japanese. Because there were no explanations of what constituted a "Caucasian environment" in the July 1942 version of the mixed marriage policy,

camp managers came up with their own interpretations of the meaning and elements of a “Caucasian environment.”

Camp managers requested that the WDC clarify the meaning of the 5 racial categories in the July 1942 policy—“Caucasian,” “Japanese,” “mixed blood,” “Filipino and Chinese,” and “non-Japanese.” According to reports between the WDC and the Tanforan Assembly Center, the WDC wondered if Frank Davis, the manager of the Tanforan Center, interpreted “non-Japanese” as including “Filipino and Chinese.” On July 31, 1942, Davis replied that he interpreted “non-Japanese” as meaning “races other than Chinese and Filipino.” Davis, however, wanted the WDC to make “a further clarification on this particular point.”<sup>20</sup>

Some camp managers did not find the term “Caucasian” to be self-evident and asked the WDC to explain which kinds of ancestry could be counted as “Caucasian.” Specifically, they wondered whether an individual of “Spanish” or “Mexican” ancestry should be counted as “Caucasian” or “non-Japanese.” On August 12, 1942, Frank Davis, the manager of the Tanforan Assembly Center, reported that an American-born Japanese mother of a biracial infant daughter was interned with her husband, John V. Davilla, “an American citizen of Spanish descent born in the Hawaiian Islands.”<sup>21</sup> The WDC responded that “it appears that the Davilla family comes within” the category of a mixed marriage family whose head of household was Caucasian and a citizen of the United States.<sup>22</sup>

Some camp managers encountered cases where the non-Japanese spouses of Japanese individuals were neither “Caucasian” nor “Filipino and Chinese.” On July 20, 1942, a report

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<sup>20</sup> Memorandum from Frank Davis to Emil Sandquist, July 31, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum from Frank E. Davis to Emil Sandquist, August 12, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel, Jr. to the manager of the Tanforan Assembly Center, August 14, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

from the Puyallup Assembly Center in Washington, pointed out that there were “no provisions covering mixed marriages with native Alaskans and children of such unions.” The report also asked whether such cases would be covered by the existing provisions of mixed marriages or by “the policy under consideration for Filipino and Chinese marriages.”<sup>23</sup> Another case was the Danzuka family at the Tule Lake War Relocation Center. The Danzuka family consisted of a Japanese husband, an “Indian” wife, and their eight children. On August 7, 1942, the project manager reported that the Danzuka children were “Indians to all practical purposes” because they did not speak the Japanese language and were enrolled members of the “local Indian tribe.” The WDC acknowledged this report and allowed the mother and children in the family to “return to the Indian Reservation.”<sup>24</sup>

Camp managers frequently encountered families consisting of a Japanese wife, her Filipino or Chinese husband and their children.<sup>25</sup> In early August 1942, the WDC’s immediate solution to this category of mixed marriage families was to treat them like families consisting of a Japanese husband, his white wife, and their “mixed blood” children. That is, such families could leave the internment camps under the condition that they took residence outside the Military Area on the West Coast.<sup>26</sup> Three weeks later, however, the WDC revised its provision on Filipino-Japanese and Chinese-Japanese families and allowed them to leave the camps and reside within the

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<sup>23</sup> Memorandum from J.J. McGovern to Emil Sandquist, July 20, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum from Karl Bendetsen to Commanding General, WDC, “Release of Certain Mixed Marriage Families,” August 7, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>25</sup> There were three cases of Japanese wives of Filipino men at the Stockton Assembly Center, Stockton, California: Tsuru Panocialman, Toshiko Ramirez, and Alice Supset. Memorandum from Dougherty to Emil Sandquist, July 18, 1942, MMP, vol. 2. The Tanforan Assembly Center listed two of such cases: Vera Halog and Mitsuko Alindugen. Memorandum from Frank E. Davis to Emil Sandquist, July 19, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel, Jr. to the manager of the Stockton Assembly Center, July 22, 1942, Mixed Marriage File, vol. 2; Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel to Manager of the Tanforan Assembly Center, August 3, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

military area on the West Coast “provided the environment has been non-Japanese.”<sup>27</sup> Military and diplomatic strategy prompted this change of provisions, since the Philippines and China were important allies during the United States’ war with Japan. However, it should be noted that the WDC used the term “non-Japanese,” not “Caucasian,” in characterizing the “environment” of families headed by Filipino or Chinese husbands. In this way, the WDC differentiated mixed marriage families headed by white American husbands from those headed by non-white and non-Japanese husbands.

### **Debates over the Meaning of a “Caucasian” Environment between the WDC and Camp Managers, July to December 1942**

Before the final version of the mixed marriage policy was announced in January 1943, the most controversial term in the July 1942 policy was “Caucasian environment.” Camp managers and the WDC had somewhat different understandings about the meaning and measurement of “Caucasian” environment, prompting some camp managers to ask the WDC to clarify the meaning of a “Caucasian” environment in its memorandum. The manager of the Colorado River Relocation Center found significant loopholes in the WDC’s instructions on mixed marriage release. The manager’s report listed nine mixed marriage cases in which eligibility for release could not be “clearly determined because of the variety of interpretations which may be attached to such terms as ‘Caucasian,’ ‘Caucasian environment,’ and ‘unemancipated children.’” The report recommended that these cases “be studied carefully” and that “decisions be made upon these requests as a means of defining and elaborating upon the W.C.C.A. mixed marriage policy.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Memorandum from Herman P. Goebel, Jr. to the manager of the Santa Anita Assembly Center, August 24, 1942, MMP, vol. 2. Emphasis is mine.

<sup>28</sup> Memorandum from E.R. Fryer to M.H. Astrup, “Survey of Mixed Marriage Cases at Colorado River War Relocation Project,” November 14, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

Some camp managers applied their own interpretations of the term “Caucasian environment” to mixed marriage cases especially when they encountered cases that did not exactly fit the categories of exemption described in the July 1942 version of the policy. “Mixed blood” individuals of half or less than half Japanese ancestry who married whites comprised the majority of cases of borderline eligibility. Camp managers tended to assume that the combination of mixed ancestry and mixed marriage made such individuals eligible to be released from the internment camps. The manager of the Colorado River Relocation Center mentioned the case of Eva Tanabe Striplen, who was of “mixed blood.” Born in Hawaii to a Japanese father and a Hawaiian-born mother, Striplen had conceived a daughter with her former white husband. The camp manager asked the WDC whether Striplen and her daughter could be released either on the grounds that Striplen was of “mixed blood” or that she “was married to a Caucasian, from whom she is now divorced.”<sup>29</sup>

The report of the Heart Mountain Relocation Center designated associations, customs, and diet as major indicators of mixed marriage families’ environment.<sup>30</sup> The language spoken at home was often added to the description of the families’ environment. The report also identified the percentage of “Caucasian” or “Japanese” friends each of the mixed marriage families had. Most of the families consisting of a “Caucasian” spouse and a Japanese spouse in the center were reported to have had limited to no contact with the Japanese American community, and they practiced mostly “Caucasian” customs and diet. According to the report, families consisting of a white husband and his Japanese wife answered that their environment was “wholly Caucasian in

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<sup>29</sup> Memorandum from E.R. Fryer to M.H. Astrup, “Survey of Mixed Marriage Cases at Colorado River War Relocation Project,” November 14, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>30</sup> “Summary of Mixed Marriage Families,” MMP, vol. 2. This report does not include any cover letter indicating that it was from the Heart Mountain Relocation Project. After matching the database on Japanese American internees and the internees listed in the report, the author concludes that it came from the Heart Mountain project.

friends, customs, and diet.” Most families composed of a Japanese husband, a white wife, and/or children replied that 70–80% of their friends were “Caucasian.” Regarding customs and diet, Japanese-white families answered that 90–100% of their customs and diet was “Caucasian.”<sup>31</sup> While the report appeared to find somewhat direct connections between the race-and-gender compositions of a mixed marriage family and the family’s environment, those connections were more assumed than documented because the report did not explain what characterized “Japanese” or “Caucasian” customs and diet.

Interestingly, the Heart Mountain camp report considered “Caucasian” customs and diet as relevant only in cases in which one of the spouses was white or both spouses were part white. Therefore, the report did not put Japanese-Mexican families into the frame of a “Caucasian”-versus-“Japanese” environment. The Hirota family in the camp consisted of a Japanese husband, an “American citizen” wife of “Mexican descent,” and four “illegitimate children” from the wife’s former relationships with two Mexican men. The report stated the following about the Hirota family: “They have associated entirely with Caucasians. The children speak only English and Spanish. Their diet is Mexican, and their customs, Mexican-American.” The report also commented on the appearance of the children and grandchildren in the Hirota family who were born of “Mexican” parentage: “Appearance: All Mexican.”<sup>32</sup>

Although the July 1942 policy did not require camp officials to report on the “appearance” of part Japanese individuals, some reports from the camps made repeated references to the non-Japanese appearance of some part Japanese individuals. The Puyallup Assembly Center reported

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<sup>31</sup> “Summary of Mixed Marriage Families,” MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>32</sup> “Summary of Mixed Marriage Families,” MMP, vol. 2.

that half Japanese members of the Sugiura family were “definitely of Caucasian appearance.”<sup>33</sup> When Captain Hugh T. Fullerton of the WCCA wrote to the Chief of L.A. Police about internees returning to the city, he mentioned that Glenn Jiobu, an “American-born Eurasian,” was “definitely Caucasian in appearance.”<sup>34</sup> A report from the Heart Mountain camp did not describe the “appearance” of part Japanese and part white individuals as “Caucasian.” Instead, the report stated that such individuals looked “Italian” or “Spanish” regardless of their actual white European ancestry. For example, Victor Ritchie, who was born to a Portuguese father and a Japanese mother in Japan, was described in the report as appearing “Italian.” The report identified Harry Savage, another internee of mixed ancestry in the Heart Mountain camp, as of “1/8 French and 7/8 Japanese” and recorded that he appeared to be “Spanish.”<sup>35</sup>

While camp managers viewed everyday practices such as language, friends, and diet as pertinent to the “environment” question, some military officials of the WDC headquarters interpreted a “Caucasian environment” as loyalty to the U.S. and the lack of any associations with Japanese organizations. On July 24, 1942, Major Herman Goebel Jr. instructed the manager of the Santa Anita Assembly Center that substantial information on the environment of a member of a mixed marriage family was needed to evaluate his “loyalty to this country and its institutions.” The information, Goebel wrote, should include the “type of communities in which the individual has lived, the schools that he attended, the social organizations which he belonged to and the jobs which he held,” not “the self serving declaration of the individual [as having

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<sup>33</sup> Letter from J.J. McGovern to Emil Sandquist, “Mixed blood citizens of the United States who are seeking release from the Puyallup Assembly Center to remain in the Western Defense Areas,” MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Memorandum from Hugh Fullerton to C.B. Horrall, August 10, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Memorandum from Hugh Fullerton to C.B. Horrall, August 10, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

“Caucasian” associations].”<sup>36</sup> In his memorandum dated November 13, 1942 for Major Ray Ashworth, Wilkie Courter stated that sending mixed marriage families who had a “Caucasian” environment to “a War Relocation Project”<sup>37</sup> would not only expose them to infectious Japanese thought, but would also compel them to live in an environment from which they have sought escape.”<sup>38</sup>

Some military officials interpreted a “Caucasian” environment as evidence of loyalty to the U.S. On November 13, 1942, Wilkie Couter wrote a special report on Matsuyo Regasa who had previously been permitted to return to her Filipino husband with her daughter of Filipino and Japanese ancestry. However, she was about to become ineligible for residence on the West Coast once her daughter was married. It was because the mixed marriage policy allowed only a Japanese mother of “unemancipated”—minor—children of “mixed blood” to return to the West Coast. Courter argued that cancelling Regasa’s permit because of her daughter’s marriage did not fit the purpose of the mixed marriage policy. “If the parties to mixed marriages have successfully discharged their obligation with respect to the rearing of their children in a non-Japanese environment, it seems reasonable to reward them with the privilege of remaining within the excluded area.”<sup>39</sup>

Camp managers and some military officials within the WDC defined a “Caucasian environment” in both cultural and physiological senses. Mixed marriage families were considered to have achieved a “Caucasian environment” if they limited their association with the

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<sup>36</sup> Memorandum from Herman Goebel to the manager of the Santa Anita Assembly Center, July 24, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Relocation centers were also called relocation projects by WRA officials.

<sup>38</sup> Memorandum from Wilkie Courter to Ray Ashworth, “Emancipation of Japanese children, issue of mixed marriages,” November 13, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Memorandum from Wilkie Courter to Ray Ashworth, “Emancipation of Japanese children, issue of mixed marriages,” November 13, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

Japanese community, and Japanese culture and language. The lack of “Japanese appearance” in persons of mixed ancestry was also deemed to be a marker of a “Caucasian environment.” As discussed later in this chapter, Karl Bendetsen and John DeWitt repudiated all of these interpretations of a “Caucasian environment,” asserting that only the existence of a white or other non-Japanese parent—preferably the father—and the quantum of 50 or less than 50% of Japanese “blood” could be a sufficient proof of a “Caucasian environment.”

### **Challenging the Rule of Blood Quantum and Claiming a “Caucasian Environment”: Half Japanese, Half White Mothers of Three-Quarters Japanese Children**

The WDC consistently refused to issue permits for residence on the West Coast to minor children of three-quarters Japanese ancestry because their quantum of Japanese “blood” exceeded the 50% limit. The mixed marriage policy put the half Japanese, half white women who had three-quarters Japanese children with their Japanese husbands in a difficult situation. While these mothers were eligible for residence on the West Coast, they could not bring their children with them. Some of the mothers made requests for a permit for their children to return to the West Coast, claiming that they had raised their children in a “Caucasian environment.” For example, it was reported that Grace Kurata, after divorcing her “full-blooded Japanese” husband, Choichi Kurata, had “always had complete custody” of their son, Freddie Kurata, and had “reared him in a Caucasian atmosphere.” The WDC simply rejected Grace Kurata’s request to make her son eligible for release from the camp and for residence on the West Coast, concluding that Freddie Kurata was not eligible for release because he was “three-quarters Japanese.”<sup>40</sup> The

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<sup>40</sup> Memorandum from L.W. Feader to Emil Sandquist, August 12, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

WDC reached the same conclusion in the case of Edith Ishikawa and her “three-fourths Japanese” children.<sup>41</sup>

Some half Japanese, half white mothers who had three-quarters Japanese children with their American-born Japanese husbands challenged the blood quantum rule in the mixed marriage policy. These mothers believed that a “Caucasian” appearance or upbringing could make their children eligible for residence on the West Coast. Theresa Takayoshi claimed that the “environment” of her family had been “Caucasian” based on the white ancestry in her family and also her husband’s loyalty to the U.S., which was proven by his determination to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. Melba Matsuura, another half Japanese, half white mother of a three-quarters Japanese child, firmly believed that her “Caucasian-looking” son with one-quarter “Caucasian” ancestry should be allowed to reside on the West Coast. The WDC refused to validate these two women’s claims and never made changes to the rule of Japanese “blood” quantum. Theresa Takayoshi luckily garnered support from Eleanor Roosevelt, whom Takayoshi wrote a letter to, and War Department officials in Washington. While Takayoshi was able to return to her home in Seattle, with her two children, Matsuura’s challenge to the blood quantum rule did not lead to the release of her three-quarters Japanese son. However, the manager of the Granada camp where the Matsuura family was interned sympathized deeply with her case and confronted the WDC with the arbitrariness of the blood quantum rule.

Melba Matsuura was born to a Japanese father and a white American mother in 1909 and raised by her white grandmother. Matsuura, her American-born Japanese husband, George, and their son, Walter, age 12, were interned in the Granada Relocation Project in Amache, Colorado. Soon after he became aware of the mixed marriage policy, George decided to volunteer for a

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<sup>41</sup> Memorandum from William A. Boekel to the manager of the Santa Anita Assembly Center, September 22, 1942, MMP, vol. 2.

combat unit consisting of all American-born Japanese soldiers, prompting Melba to think that she could return to her home in L.A. with her son. By 1943, Melba had been interned for close to a year. She was desperate to return to her home in Los Angeles and start work as an assistant in a dentist's office, which would enable her to help take care of her grandmother and aunt, at the age of 80 and 60, respectively. Her aunt was also partly invalid.

James Lindley, the manager of the Granada Relocation Center, sympathized with Melba Matsuura's circumstances and helped her address her case to the WDC and the WRA. The first thing Lindley did was to report Matsuura's case to the WRA. On May 4, 1943, Lindley recommended to the WRA that Matsuura and her son be released because of her white ancestry, the husband's wish to enlist, and, most importantly, the "Caucasian" appearance of Matsuura and her son. "Both Mrs. Matsuura and her son are Caucasian in appearance and talk English with no trace of accent," Lindley reported. He also enclosed "a picture of Mrs. Melba Matsuura and her son, Walter, taken recently on the Granada Relocation Project."<sup>42</sup>

James Lindley faulted the WDC for its inconsistent treatments of the cases of mixed marriage families in the Granada camp. From Lindley's perspective, while the WDC allowed mixed marriage families with no white ancestry—families that consisted of a non-white and non-Japanese husband, his Japanese wife, and their children—to reside on the West Coast, it denied the same to mixed marriage families with white ancestry—families that were composed of a Japanese husband, a half white, half Japanese wife, and their three-quarters Japanese children. Lindley encountered both cases of mixed marriage families in the Granada camp. In addition to Melba Matsuura, there was Betty Tsuruta, another half Japanese, half white mother of a three-quarters Japanese son in the camp. Lindley discovered a case of Kazumi Choy, a "full-blooded"

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<sup>42</sup> Letter from James Lindley to Dillon Myer, May 4, 1943, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

American-born Japanese woman who had a half Japanese half Korean son, Richard, with her Korean husband. In July 1943, the WDC instructed Lindley that only Choy was allowed to return to the evacuated areas with her son, while Tsuruta was not. On August 5, 1943, the WDC decided not to give both Matsuura and her son a permit to return to L.A.<sup>43</sup>

On August 18, 1943, Lindley wrote to the WRA, expressing his opinion that Melba Matsuura deserved “some fair manner of making such determinations by the Army” because she was treated unfairly compared to Kazumi Choi. Lindley found it unconvincing that Matsuura, who was only “half-Japanese,” could not return to California while Choy, who was “a full-blooded Japanese,” could. Lindley also viewed the “environment” of the Matsuura family as “Caucasian” and loyal because Matsuura wanted to return to her “white” grandmother, and her citizen husband of Japanese ancestry was about to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. However, Choy was returning to her Korean husband, who was working “in private enterprise.” For Lindley, the WDC’s action on Tsuruta was “not consistent” with their decision on Choy either because Choy, a “full-blooded Japanese,” could return to California while Tsuruta’s “three-fourths Japanese” son could not.<sup>44</sup>

If James Lindley underscored the existence and quantum of “Caucasian” ancestry in Melba Matsuura and her son, Matsuura believed that she and her son could be eligible to return to L.A. because they appeared “Caucasian.” On August 15, 1943, she wrote to the WRA, pleading that “my son and I show no trace of Oriental ancestry and are considered Caucasians without exception by strangers here—and on the outside.” On October 25, 1944, to Lindley and Matsuura’s disappointment, the WDC did not approve her re-application to return to Los

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<sup>43</sup> Letter from James Lindley to Philip Webster, July 21, 1943; Memorandum from Hugh Fullerton to Philip Webster, “Request of Melba Matsuura and son, Walter, to return to evacuated areas,” August 5, 1943, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from James Lindley to R.B. Cozzens, August 18, 1943, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

Angeles with her son. On November 2, 1943, the next day after George Matsuura left the camp for his service in a Nisei combat unit, Melba Matsuura wrote Lindley to request his assistance. In her letter, Matsuura pointed out that the “full-blooded Japanese Mrs. Choy and her full-blooded Japanese son” and “several other full-blooded Niseis” had returned to the evacuated area. Then Matsuura argued that it seemed “unfair” that her family should be “refused a favorable decision.” She reasoned that her family deserved a “favorable decision” in part because she and her son were “Eurasians” without “the slightest trace of oriental characteristics” in their “appearance,” and in part because the male head of the family had volunteered “his services to this, his country.”<sup>45</sup>

Lindley and the WRA headquarters added a final twist to the Matsuura case. On November 22, 1943, Lindley delivered Matsuura’s letter to the WRA office in San Francisco with his own “confidential” cover letter in which he stated that Matsuura had been “made the object of threats” by other internees since her husband was inducted into the Army.<sup>46</sup> In early December, 1943, the WRA requested that the WDC issue a permit for Matsuura and her son to return to Los Angeles. The WRA explained the grounds for the Matsuura family permit as follows: it was in part because their safety was at risk if they should remain in the camp, and in part because the lack of the “usual characteristics of the Japanese nationality” in Matsuura and her son “might reduce the likelihood of any difficulties arising if they return to the evacuated area.” On January

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<sup>45</sup> Letter from Melba Matsuura to Robert Cozzens, August 15, 1943; Telegram from R.B. Cozzens to James Lindley, October 27, 1943; Letter from Melba Matsuura to James Lindley, November 2, 1943, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from James Lindley to Philip J. Webster, November 22, 1943, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

15, 1944, despite the WRA's request that both Matsuura and her son be allowed to return to L.A., the WDC issued a permit only for Melba Matsuura.<sup>47</sup>

In many ways, Theresa Takayoshi's case was very similar to that of Matsuura. In 1918, Theresa Takayoshi was born to a Japanese father and an Irish mother. Takayoshi married an American-born Japanese man, Tomeu Takayoshi, and had two children with him. When the War Department announced plans to create an all-Nisei military unit in late January 1943, Tomeu Takayoshi volunteered for it. If her husband's application was accepted, Theresa Takayoshi wanted to go back to Seattle with her two young children, so that she could be with her mother. But she found that the children could not reside on the West Coast because they were "of three-quarters Japanese blood."<sup>48</sup>

In May 1943, Takayoshi expressed her frustration with the mixed marriage policy in a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt. "I cannot possibly see what harm there is allowing the children to return as they are too young to be a menace to the public." Takayoshi wrote, "Neither the children nor I speak a word of Japanese, being brought up in a purely American way."<sup>49</sup> Roosevelt read Takayoshi's letter and asked Henry Stimson, the Secretary of War, to allow Takayoshi and her children to return to Seattle. Karl Bendetsen followed an order from Washington while making sure that Takayoshi's case would not be a "precedent" for other cases

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<sup>47</sup> Memorandum from Philips J. Webster to Commanding General, Ninth Service Command, "Request for permit for Mrs. Melba Matsuura and Walter Matsuura," December 3, 1943; Telegram from Philip J. Webster to James Lindley, January 15, 1944, Melba Matsuura case file, Box 3223, WRACF.

<sup>48</sup> Theresa Takayoshi's letter to Eleanor Roosevelt was quoted by Hall. Telephone conversation between Colonel Bendetsen and Captain Hall, May 24, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>49</sup> Theresa Takayoshi's letter to Eleanor Roosevelt was quoted by Hall. Telephone conversation between Colonel Bendetsen and Captain Hall, May 24, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

like hers.<sup>50</sup> Unlike Melba Matsuura, Theresa Takayoshi was allowed to return to her home in Seattle, Washington, with her two children.

Takayoshi's case revealed that officials of the War Department in Washington did not share Bendetsen's definition of what constituted a "Caucasian environment" for a mixed marriage family. Captain John Hall, who worked under John McCloy, the assistant secretary of the War Department, had a telephone conversation with Bendetsen over the case of Theresa Takayoshi. In the conversation, Hall argued that there had been a "Caucasian culture" in the Takayoshi family for three reasons. First, the grandmother was White. Hall described Takayoshi's case as "the so-called fireside equities here where you got a Caucasian mother living in a Caucasian community." Hall asked Bendetsen why it "would be a bad thing for them [Theresa Takayoshi's children] to be subjected to Caucasian culture in the person of the grandmother." Second, the Takayoshi family's loyalty to the U.S. was proven by their father's willingness to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. Hall reminded Bendetsen that he was "palpably dealing with the family of a U.S. soldier." Third, the fact that Takayoshi and her children did not know the Japanese language and culture also revealed that they had lived in a "Caucasian culture."<sup>51</sup>

Bendetsen disagreed with Hall's argument for the "Caucasian culture" of the Takayoshi family. Bendetsen stated that "there is no indication of a Caucasian environment," and "as a matter of fact, I see just the reverse in it." Then Bendetsen repudiated all three points that Hall saw as the elements of a "Caucasian culture" in the Takayoshi family. First of all, Bendetsen asserted that the "Caucasian" grandmother was not to be seen as a provider of a "Caucasian"

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<sup>50</sup> Telephone conversation between Colonel Bendetsen and Captain Hall, May 24, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>51</sup> Telephone conversation between Colonel Bendetsen and Captain Hall, May 24, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

environment because she “married a Japanese, and she embraced the Japanese, the wife goes to the husband.” From Bendetsen’s point of view, the mother’s marital choice influenced her “half-Japanese” daughter to marry “again” a Japanese man. Bendetsen stated that Takayoshi was “a Japanese, pure and simple; she’s had a Japanese environment.”

Second, regarding the question of whether or not the American-born Japanese husband’s service in the U.S. Armed Forces was indicative of the Takayoshi family’s loyalty to the U.S., Bendetsen stated that the “mixed-marriage program was not based on loyalty essentially.” According to Bendetsen, the program considered two things: “Caucasian environment and an intelligence clearance.” He claimed that the Nisei husband’s voluntary military service was “irrelevant” to the issue of the release of the wife and children. Bendetsen also reminded Hall of the fact that the mixed marriage policy did not allow the family members of U.S. soldiers of Japanese ancestry to reside within the Military Area because it only allowed the Japanese wives and/or biracial children of White citizens who were soldiers or employees of the war industry to do so.

Third, Bendetsen addressed both Theresa Takayoshi’s and her children’s lack of proficiency in the Japanese language. “That is not necessarily indicative of what the environment was,” he stated, adding that there were “probably several thousand—many thousand Japanese in centers who don’t speak Japanese.” All in all, from Bendetsen’s perspective, there had “always been a Japanese environment” in the Takayoshi family, which was why this family could not return to Seattle.<sup>52</sup>

Hall and Bendetsen held different views concerning the relationship between the gender of a “Caucasian” parent of biracial individuals and his or her cultural upbringing. Hall thought that

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<sup>52</sup> Telephone conversation between Colonel Bendetsen and Captain Hall, May 24, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

marriages between whites and Japanese would lead to the cultural assimilation of Japanese spouses and biracial children into a “Caucasian culture.” In Hall’s opinion, a “Caucasian” mother embodied a “Caucasian” culture as much as a “Caucasian” father did. Hall implied that the gender of a white parent might not matter in determining the major cultural characteristics of a mixed marriage family. For Bendetsen, it was the paternity of mixed race children that would determine their “environment” because he believed that wives would assume their husbands’ “environment.”

Although Hall was not convinced by Bendetsen’s patriarchal and racial interpretation of what constituted a “Caucasian environment,” Hall decided to respect the bureaucratic procedure that the WDC had already established regarding mixed marriage families. Hall agreed to keep the rule of Japanese “blood” quantum intact when Bendetsen promised to issue Takayoshi’s children a special permit to return to the West Coast. However, as we shall see in the following section, in the War Department’s opinion, the mixed marriage policy was not consistent in deploying the white patriarchal definition of a “Caucasian environment.”

### **Confounding a White Patriarchal Definition of a “Caucasian Environment,” June 1943**

The WDC placed restrictions on the right of a white or non-Japanese patriarch of a mixed marriage family to bring his Japanese wife back home if there were no minor children in the family. In other words, a Japanese wife of a white or non-Japanese husband was not able to return to West Coast areas if there were no minor children in the family. However, if the white or other non-Japanese husband of a Japanese wife was serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or was employed by the war industry, the wife could be released and return to West Coast areas.

War department officials in Washington held that it was logical to remove all the strings attached to the case of mixed marriage families consisting of non-Japanese husbands and Japanese wives. In those Washington officials’ opinion, all Japanese women who were married

to white or other non-Japanese men should be eligible for residence on the West Coast. In June 1943, John McCloy, assistant secretary of war, suggested that a Japanese woman who did not have minor children should be able to return to West Coast areas if there was a “white or Caucasian husband” of the United States or “United Nations citizenship” in the family and if her intelligence records were clear.<sup>53</sup>

McCloy encountered three cases where Japanese women married to white or other non-Japanese husbands were forced to deal with separation from their husbands or prohibited from taking residence on the West Coast because there were no minor children. Two of the three cases involved Japanese women who were married to white American citizens. These Japanese women were evacuated individually and separated from their husbands. Because the Japanese women’s non-Japanese husbands were not deemed to be employed by the war industry, the WDC did not allow the women to leave the camp and to return to their husbands.<sup>54</sup>

The third case that McCloy encountered was about an interracial couple where the non-Japanese husband was a foreigner and his wife was Japanese. The mixed marriage policy severely restricted the mobility of such an interracial couple. R. J. Patell was a “British subject by birth” and his wife, Riyoko R. Patell, was “a British Subject by Marriage but of Japanese ancestry.” Upon the announcement of the evacuation orders, this couple was forced to leave their home in San Anselmo, California, and relocate to Springfield, Illinois, to avoid the wife’s internment. At the news of the mixed marriage policy, Patell contacted the British Embassy in Washington and the Consulate General in San Francisco, California. The two British government agencies requested that the WDC issue a permit for Riyoko Patell to reside in California. The

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<sup>53</sup> Letter from John DeWitt to McCloy, June 16, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from John DeWitt to McCloy, June 16, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

WDC declined the request on the grounds that the Patell family did not meet the requirement of the non-Japanese husband's military service or employment in the war industry.<sup>55</sup>

Patell contacted McCloy and pleaded for a permit to return to the West Coast areas. Though he was British and resided in Japan from 1920 to 1939, Patell argued, he had been a "representative of a large group of very well-known and prominent American manufacturers of Machine and Small Tools." He also underscored his wife's "loyalty to the Cause of the Allied Nations" on the grounds that she contributed to his business dealings with the U.S. Department of Justice in Chicago. To further demonstrate his wife's "loyalty to the Cause of the Allied Nations," he emphasized her associations with Americans. "Our several friends in America," Patell wrote, "men and women in responsible positions, are also willing to vouch for Mrs. Patell's loyalty to our cause."<sup>56</sup>

John DeWitt opposed John McCloy's suggestion for three reasons. First, the mixed marriage policy was introduced for "mixed-blood children," not for Japanese women who were married to white or other non-Japanese men. The purpose of the policy, DeWitt argued, was to offer "mixed-blood children, the product of mixed marriages, who had previously been raised in a non-Japanese environment" an opportunity to "continue their development under conditions as nearly normal as feasible." Second, DeWitt emphasized that the mixed marriage policy had not developed "on a loyalty basis." Third, DeWitt argued that the release of all Japanese women married to white or other non-Japanese men would "lead to the presence of many hundreds of Japanese on the coast" and "impair military security."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Letter from R.L. Patell to John McCloy, May 29, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from R.L. Patell to John McCloy, May 29, 1943, MMP, vol. 2

<sup>57</sup> Letter from John DeWitt to McCloy, June 16, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

However, DeWitt conceded that individual cases that appeared to have an “element of undue hardship” might be considered. DeWitt mentioned that the case of a half Japanese mother and her three-quarters Japanese children, like the Takayoshi family, was treated as an exception to the policy because their release “would in no sense impair the security of the coast.” DeWitt stated that the Patell case could be treated as such. However, the two Japanese women who were separated from their white American husbands could not be seen as having “unusual elements of hardship in them which serve as a basis to distinguish them from many others.” According to DeWitt, the “separation” that these white-Japanese couples were subject to was of a different kind than the one that the Patell family and the Takayoshi family experienced. DeWitt called it a “dislocation, not less burdensome, shared by thousands of other families today.”<sup>58</sup>

McCloy’s interpretation of the mixed marriage policy was that it should accommodate the family unity of mixed marriage families if such families were headed by white or other non-Japanese husbands, regardless of the existence of minor children. From McCloy’s perspective, the mixed marriage policy would have made more sense if it had consistently applied the belief in the patriarchal prerogative of a white man to the case where there were no minor children between the white husband and his Japanese wife. While DeWitt asserted that the mixed marriage policy was about “mixed blood” children, his bigger concern lay elsewhere. If the WDC released more Japanese women under the mixed marriage policy, it would face severe criticism from white Americans on the West Coast. DeWitt never reflected McCloy’s suggestion to issue all Japanese wives of non-Japanese husbands a permit to return to the West Coast in the mixed marriage policy. As a result of the mixed marriage policy, the number of Japanese women who returned to West Coast areas was approximately 100. Nonetheless, in December 1943, West

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<sup>58</sup> Letter from John DeWitt to McCloy, June 16, 1943, MMP, vol. 2.

Coast politicians reacted negatively to the news that the WDC had returned Japanese women in mixed marriage status to the West Coast.

### **Aftermath of the Mixed Marriage Policy, July 1943 to January 1944**

Under the mixed marriage policy, approximately 600 “persons of Japanese ancestry” who were members of mixed marriage families were allowed to return to their homes on the West Coast. A WDC report dated August 16, 1943 stated that 583 permits were issued under the mixed marriage policy through July 31, 1943. Out of the 583 permits, 343 were issued to “mixed blood minors,” 139 to “mixed blood adults,” and 101 to “full-blooded [Japanese] individuals.”<sup>59</sup> Among those 101 “full-blooded” Japanese individuals, 100 were “full-blooded Japanese wives of non-Japanese husbands.” The remaining one “full-blooded” Japanese individual was “Imamoto Kingi,” who was described as “a full-blooded Japanese, married to a Negress, was granted special exemption by reason of honorable discharge from U.S. Navy after 30 years service.”<sup>60</sup>

The case of Imamoto Kingi is notable because no Japanese men who were married to white or other non-Japanese—Mexican, Chinese, Korean, or Native American—women were allowed to return to the West Coast under the mixed marriage policy. In fact, Imamoto Kingi and his children and grandchildren were never registered for evacuation because the U.S. Attorney issued Kingi and his children and grandchildren a “temporary exemption” from the evacuation order “with the permission of the Provost Marshall.”<sup>61</sup> The fact that the WDC did not challenge the U.S. Attorney’s decision on the Kingi family might be relevant to the mixed marriage history

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<sup>59</sup> Memorandum from Peter Crosby to Karl Bendetsen, “Total Number of Mixed Marriage Families, Mixed-blood and Full-blooded Persons Exempted to Date—July 31, 1943,” August 16, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>60</sup> “Exemptions granted from exclusion provisions on public proclamations to persons of Japanese ancestry under mixed marriage policy,” August 1, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>61</sup> Memorandum from Claude Washburne to Commanding General, Western Defense Command, “Full-Blood Japanese in Western Defense Command Area,” December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

in the Kingi family. One WDC report revealed that Kingi and his wife, an “American-born negress,” had six children. Three of the six children were married to black spouses: “One son is married to a Portuguese negress, another is married to a negress and one daughter is married to a Chinese negro.” The Kingi family was reported to have “always lived in the colored neighborhood.”<sup>62</sup> The case of the Kingi family indicates that the WDC apparently viewed a Japanese man’s marriage to a black woman as evidence of his non-Japanese belonging.

The WDC expected that the release of Japanese wives of white or other non-Japanese men would not stimulate anti-Japanese sentiment among West Coast whites because of the small number of such women. To the contrary, West Coast politicians vehemently criticized the WDC’s decision to release Japanese women and children. By early July 1943, Senator Bone of Washington sent a letter to the WDC, asking how “Japanese women of high school age [are] on the streets and in the stores of the city [Seattle]” when “all persons of Japanese ancestry were barred from entering this vital defense area.”<sup>63</sup> Government officials in California took advantage of the news of returning Japanese to perpetuate their anti-Japanese propaganda. In a private conversation, the mayor of San Francisco claimed that there were “400 Japanese in Los Angeles” and yet he changed the number to “4000” at a meeting of the California State Defense Council. According to Gustorf, the actual number of persons with “mixed marriage permits residing in Los Angeles County” by August 1943 was 188: 13 males, 66 females, and 109 minors.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Memorandum from Claude Washburne to Commanding General, Western Defense Command, “Full-Blood Japanese in Western Defense Command Area,” December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Senator Bone’s letter was quoted by Colonel Scobey, “Telephone conversation: Colonel Moffitt and Colonel Scobey,” July 3, 1943, MMP, vol. 3. See also “Telephone conversation: Colonel Bendetsen-Colonel Scobey,” July 3, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>64</sup> “Telephone conversation: Lt. Col. Moffitt-Major Gustorf,” August 14, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

By late November and early December 1943, the presence of Japanese women and children on the West Coast was about to become a political issue with national ramifications. John Costello, “Chairman of the Sub-committee of the Special Committee on Un-American Activities Investigating Japanese Activities,” requested that Dillon Myer, director of the WRA, present a list of internees who had left relocation centers and returned to California.<sup>65</sup> On December 3, 1943, Congressman Warren Magnuson from Seattle sent a telegram to the WDC and asked for an official explanation about the release of Japanese women under the mixed marriage policy.<sup>66</sup>

The WDC did not reveal detailed information on the internees released under the mixed marriage policy because they were concerned that mixed race individuals of Japanese ancestry might be targeted by West Coast residents harboring anti-Japanese sentiments. On December 3, 1943, Delos Emmons, the commander of the WDC, expressed his opinion that he himself—and also “prompted by the desire of the exemptees [*sic*] themselves”—wished to “hold attendant publicity to a minimum.”<sup>67</sup> However, the War Department thought that the WDC had to reveal correct information on the mixed marriage policy because questions raised by Congress were “doubtless stirred up by the wild rumors which the West Coast papers are promoting.”<sup>68</sup>

The WDC decided to assuage the concerns of senators and congressmen by revealing some of the facts about the mixed marriage policy. On December 13, 1943, Delos Emmons announced to the press that the WDC had policies “for many months” that allowed members of mixed

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<sup>65</sup> Letter from John Costello to D.S. Myer, November 30, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>66</sup> Warren Magnuson to Colonel Moffitt, December 3, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>67</sup> Memorandum by Peter Crosby, Jr., “Request for Information Made by Dies Committee to War Relocation Authority,” December 3, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from John Hall to Colonel Cobb, December 9, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

marriage families “where their environment has been Caucasian” along with four other categories of evacuees, to return to the West Coast.<sup>69</sup> He commented that the actual number of permits issued was “very small in relation to the total of 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry evacuated in 1942.” Emmons also stated that most of them were “mixed-blood or mixed marriage cases” and “wives or children of persons of unquestioned loyalty” and that “none” threatened “in any way national security.”<sup>70</sup> Emmons’s press release did not mention the exact number of the internees who had been given permits to return to the West Coast. In order to “prevent unwarranted and improper construction...by certain newspapers,” Emmons classified WDC correspondences with senators and congressmen on the actual number of internees who had returned to the West Coast under the mixed marriage policy as “restricted.”<sup>71</sup>

After releasing information on the mixed marriage policy to the public, the WDC began to worry about the possibility that the public would fear that “the [mixed marriage] policy tended to promote miscegenation.”<sup>72</sup> The WDC shared this fear and considered the prevention of marriage between Japanese women and non-Japanese men as one of the ways to deal with the fear of

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<sup>69</sup> Emmons described the first category of exemption as “members of so-called mixed marriage families, as a full-blooded Japanese wife of a non-Japanese husband, and their children, and various other breakdowns for mixed marriage families, particularly where their environment has been Caucasian.” The second category was described as “members of the Army of the United States on active duty and in uniform, or while on furlough or leave, and wives and minor children of members of the Armed Forces of the United States.” The third, “patients in hospitals, or confined elsewhere, and too ill or incapacitated to be removed therefrom [*sic*] without danger to life; inmates of orphanages and the totally deaf, dumb or blind; inmates of penal institutions as provided by Proclamation [Proclamation No. 5].” The fourth, “a limited number of employees of governmental agencies, including the Federal Communications Commission and Immigration and Naturalization Service, engaged in specialized translation and interpretive work. The fifth category included cases of temporary permits issued where “grave emergency, such as the critical illness of members of the applicant’s family within the area” occurred and “then only with a Caucasian escort.” And temporary permits were issued in order to “give an access to the courts as a principal or witness in legal cases, likewise under escort.” “WDC press release, Japs return to coastal area,” December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>70</sup> “WDC press release, Japs return to coastal area,” December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Memorandum from R.M.B. to CAD (Civil Affairs Division), December 13, 1943, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>72</sup> Memorandum from Claude Washburne to CG, WDC, “Japanese Exemption (Limitation on Mixed marriage Policy),” January 31, 1944, MMP, vol. 3.

miscegenation. The WDC was especially concerned that unmarried Japanese women internees “may contract marriages of convenience with non-Japanese for the sole purpose of gaining exemption,” which would “defeat the primary purpose of the mixed marriage policy, namely, to avoid separation of existing families.” According to the WDC, this scenario had already unfolded on at least one occasion. In order to prevent future instances of “marriages of convenience” between Japanese women and non-Japanese men, the WDC limited mixed marriage permits to marriages contracted prior to January 1, 1944.<sup>73</sup> Other memoranda even suggested that marriages “must have contracted prior to exclusion.”<sup>74</sup>

The WDC might have misjudged about the possibility that anti-miscegenation baiting would target the mixed marriage policy. West Coast politicians’ concerns about the mixed marriage policy were based on the belief that no Japanese Americans should return to West Coast areas for the duration of the war. Japanese wives of non-Japanese husbands were hardly capable of avoiding rampant anti-Japanese sentiment among West Coast whites, who were likely to deny the relationship between interracial marriage and the Americanization of Japanese women. Nonetheless, opposition to interracial marriage in itself was not the focus of West Coast politicians’ anti-Japanese fear-mongering during World War II.

Despite their different views about the mixed marriage policy, the WDC, various levels of government officials and West Coast politicians did not express specific prejudice toward interracial marriage between Japanese Americans and whites. This was a notable change because opposition to interracial marriage was in the center of anti-Asian and segregation politics between the 1870s and the 1920s. Maybe the mixed marriage policy and responses to the policy

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<sup>73</sup> Memorandum from Claude Washburne to CG, WDC, “Japanese Exemption (Limitation on Mixed marriage Policy),” January 31, 1944, MMP, vol. 3.

<sup>74</sup> “Memorandum: For CG-WDC,” January 31, 1944, MMP, vol. 3.

indicate that American society slowly began to separate interracial marriage from other racial issues in the 1940s.

Nonetheless, the WDC's apparent leniency toward the subject of interracial marriage only belied its intention to recognize the prerogative of a white patriarch by promoting the reunion of a white father and the mixed race children that he had fathered with his Japanese wife. The mixed marriage policy prescribed the separation of members of mixed marriage families that included a Japanese husband, a white wife, and their mixed race children. This way, the WDC reenacted the stigmatization of interracial relationships between Asian men and white women.

White wives of Japanese husbands, as we shall see in Chapter 6, were cognizant of the gender bias in the mixed marriage policy. These white women argued against the WDC's assertion that the environment of a mixed marriage family was determined by the race of the male head of the family. These white women not only claimed that their husbands were Americanized and loyal to the U.S., they also maintained that they provided a "Caucasian environment" for their Japanese husbands and mixed race children. These white women pushed for all mixed marriage families to be treated on an equal basis, and requested that their Japanese husbands be allowed to join their families on the West Coast as Japanese wives of white men were allowed to do.

CHAPTER 6  
GUARDING THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF THEIR JAPANESE-AMERICAN FAMILIES: WHITE  
WIVES AND MOTHERS IN MIXED MARRIAGE FAMILIES, 1942–1954

On June 15, 1943, Daisy Kanda, age 57, a white female internee in the Tule Lake camp, wrote a letter to Dillon Myer, director of the War Relocation Authority (WRA), pleading that her husband, Sanichi Kanda, age 63, should be allowed to return home based on the mixed marriage policy. “We have heard just recently,” Daisy wrote, “that Japanese who are married to the Caucasian race might be given leave to go back home.” Their three sons had already returned to their homes in Olympia, Washington, from the camp in 1942. Although she, as a white woman, could return to West Coast areas, Daisy remained in the camp with her husband because she did “not feel right to go and leave my husband here.” In arguing for her husband’s release, Daisy emphasized that their children were raised as loyal citizens and that the environment of her home was American. “Myself, or our children,” she stated, “do not understand the Japanese language.” “Our home life has been the same as any other American home.” More importantly, she defended the Americanization of her husband, maintaining that he had “never belonged to any Japanese association in all the [43] years” he had been in the U.S. and had “a host of friends among the white race in and near Olympia that would guarantee he is not an enemy to the United States.”<sup>1</sup>

Daisy Kanda was one of the approximately 63 white female internees who were evacuated from West Coast areas with their Japanese husbands and/or their half Japanese, half white children in 1942.<sup>2</sup> This chapter reconstructs the ways that white women who were married to Japanese men strived to keep their families intact during and after the internment of Japanese

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<sup>1</sup> Daisy Kanda to Dillon Myer, June 15, 1943, Daisy Kanda case file, Box 2056, WRACF.

<sup>2</sup> According to records on Japanese American internees, there were 65 white female internees in the internment camps. Sixty out of these 65 white women were married to Japanese men: 3 were divorced, separated, widowed; the remaining 2 were married to men of half Japanese, half white ancestry. RJAR.

Americans. Although white spouses of Japanese Americans did not need to follow evacuation orders, more than half of the approximately 105 white women, who were married to Japanese Americans, decided to be evacuated from West Coast areas, primarily because this made it possible for them to remain with their children.<sup>3</sup> In coping with varying government policies on mixed marriage families from evacuation orders to the mixed marriage policy to postwar evacuation claims, these white wives of Japanese Americans persistently defended the Americanization of their husbands and children.

During the war, white wives and mothers of Japanese husbands and half Japanese, half white children played a major role in maintaining the unity of their families although the mixed marriage policy of the Western Defense Command (WDC) prohibited Japanese Americans, who had mixed race children with their white wives, from reuniting their wives and children on the West Coast. White women, who were married to first generation Japanese Americans—Issei—and had adult mixed race children, tended to choose to remain with their husbands in the internment camps after sending their children back to West Coast areas. White women, who were married to second generation Japanese Americans—Nisei—and had minor children, dealt with temporary separation from their husbands to go back to West Coast areas with their children. Mixed marriage families headed by a Japanese man and a white woman suffered the internment of Japanese Americans longer and more severely than other types of mixed marriage families due to the mixed marriage policy. Although their choices varied greatly, all these white women married to Japanese Americans persistently made the case to the WDC and the WRA

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<sup>3</sup> It was recorded that there were 105 Japanese Americans who were married to white women at the time of evacuation. There were also 19 Japanese Americans whose marriages to white women were ended by death, separation, or divorce. RJAR.

that their husbands deserved equal treatment under the mixed marriage policy that permitted a Japanese wife of a non-Japanese husband to return to her husband's home.

This chapter examines the ramifications of government policies that constructed the racial identity of white female internees as quasi-Japanese during the war and as white after the war. When white and other non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans entered the internment camps, they were required to sign a waiver form that they would agree to be treated like "persons of Japanese ancestry" by the military. White women married to Japanese Americans comprised more than half of the non-Japanese internees.<sup>4</sup> Some of those white women suffered internment for the duration of the war because the mixed marriage policy barred their Japanese husbands from returning to West Coast areas.

However, after the war, Congress purposefully ignored the fact that those 65 white female members of mixed marriage families were among the 110,000 internees and that the WDC construed these white women's identity as quasi-Japanese during the war. The Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 disqualified non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans from filing a claim for the loss of their personal belongings due to evacuation.<sup>5</sup> Congress's rationale was that the U.S. government was not responsible for the loss of non-Japanese evacuees' personal belongings because non-Japanese persons were not subject to evacuation orders.

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<sup>4</sup> Records on internees during the internment of Japanese Americans used three racial categories: "white," "Japanese," and "other" for identifying each internee's race. According to these records, there were approximately 113 internees whose race belonged to "white," "other," or "white and other." The majority of them were "white" or "other" wives of Japanese or part Japanese men. Sixty three out of these 113 internees were "white" wives of Japanese men; 27 were "other" wives of Japanese men; 4 were women of "white and other" ancestry who were married to Japanese men; and 2 were "white" wives of half white, half Japanese men. Seventeen "white," "other," or "white and other" husbands of Japanese or part Japanese women were recorded as having entered camps: 5 out of the these 17 husbands of Japanese women were "white"; 2 were "white" husbands of half white, half Japanese wives; 7 were men of "other" ancestry married to Japanese women; and 3 were men of "white and other" ancestry married to Japanese women. RJAR.

<sup>5</sup> For more information about the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, see Daniels, *Prisoners without Trial* (New York, 2004), 89–90; Wendy Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II: a History and Reference Guide* (Westport, Conn., 2002), 99–102.

During the war, most of the white women who joined their Japanese husbands in internment camps identified themselves as racially and culturally white although they agreed to be treated like Japanese Americans in order to be with their family. Some of these white female internees, like Daisy Kanda, claimed persistently that they, as white women, contributed to the Americanization of their Japanese husbands and raised their children as loyal Americans. This way, these white women unwittingly challenged the military's assumption that only white or non-Japanese fathers of mixed race children could make the environment of a mixed marriage family "Caucasian" or "non-Japanese."

In the postwar years, a few white women who had been internees during the war unsuccessfully but courageously countered the U.S. government's manipulation of their racial identity as white and their marital status as wives of Japanese men. This chapter places a particular emphasis on Estelle Ishigo's challenge to the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 between 1952 and 1954. Ishigo claimed that she was entitled to evacuation claims like Japanese Americans because she had been evacuated as a member of a Japanese American family. More significantly, Ishigo argued that federal laws should protect the civil rights of interracial families.

Overall, Americans showed sympathy toward the plight of white women who decided to join their Japanese husbands and their mixed race children in the internment camps. During the war, white Americans on the West Coast, who had personally known individual mixed marriage families headed by Japanese husbands and white wives, believed that a Japanese man showed his willingness to become Americanized by marrying a white woman and that the existence of a white wife and mother made a mixed marriage family an American family. White Americans' appreciation of the role of white women as an Americanizing influence makes quite a contrast with the ways that the WDC emphasized a white patriarch as a more legitimate source of a

“Caucasian environment” for his Japanese wife and mixed race children. However, the U.S. government, postwar liberal politicians and civil rights activists showed lukewarm responses to Estelle Ishigo’s request to correct the unequal treatment of interracial families under the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948. Americans’ sympathy toward the hardship of interracial families headed by Japanese men and white women during the war did not materialize in the form of legal justice in the postwar period.

### **Evacuation of Mixed Marriage Families, Spring 1942**

In March 1942, the WDC issued an evacuation order for “all persons of Japanese ancestry” from the military areas on the West Coast. As discussed in the previous chapter, John DeWitt, the commanding general of the WDC, defined anyone with more than one sixteenth Japanese “blood” as “persons of Japanese ancestry” at the time of evacuation. However, it was reported that the military informed Japanese Americans married to whites that mixed marriage families would not be subject to the evacuation order. Mary Saiki, the white wife of an Issei man, was instructed that “mixed marriages would not be disturbed.” Nonetheless, Saiki recalled, “at the last moment” the military “compelled” her husband “to go into camp.”<sup>6</sup>

Some Japanese Americans married to white women, in fact, did not evacuate until the end of May 1942, at which point they were arrested by the Justice Department. Yukio Matsui recalled that military officials had told his white wife, Laverne Matsui, that “due to her nativity it would not be necessary for Matsui to evacuate.”<sup>7</sup> On June 15, 1942, Royal Nakano was apprehended in Portland, Oregon, and sent to the Assembly Center in the same city. Royal was born to a Japanese father and a white mother and was married to a white woman. When he was

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<sup>6</sup> Letter from Mary Saiki to John DeWitt, September 8, 1942, Ukichi Saiki case file, Box 4841, WRACF.

<sup>7</sup> “Yukio Matui,” January 23, 1943, Yukio Matsui case file, WRACF.

asked why he and his family had not evacuated, Royal stated, “The main reason was that the original order came out to exclude mixed marriages. I thot [*sic*] since my wife was Caucasian I wouldn’t have to evacuate.”<sup>8</sup>

While the WDC applied a blood quantum rule to their definition of the term “persons of Japanese ancestry,” members of mixed marriage families considered that the race of part Japanese individuals was also likely to be defined by physical appearance. Elaine Yoneda, a native-born white woman of Russian Jewish ancestry and a wife of a Nisei man, Karl Yoneda, was concerned about her son’s “Asiatic” appearance. Yoneda attributed her son’s appearance to her Russian ancestry as well as her husband’s Japanese ancestry. Yoneda told a priest assisting the registration of evacuees that her son was “at least fifty percent Japanese” and that he “might even be more ‘Asiatic’” because her parents “had come from a region which had been overrun by Ghengis Khan and his raping hordes.”<sup>9</sup>

Some individuals of half Japanese, half white ancestry unsuccessfully attempted to pass as white to avoid evacuation. On September 17, 1942, Pat Kawasaki, born to an Issei father and an Irish-born mother, was arrested in San Jose, California. At the time he was using two different names. One was Pat Brennan, which was after his mother’s maiden name, and the other was John Gabriel Alva. Kawasaki apparently tried to pass as white or at least as a person of “Spanish” ancestry.<sup>10</sup> Upon his apprehension, Kawasaki admitted that he had intentionally violated the evacuation order, refusing to enter the internment camp in Poston, Arizona, where

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<sup>8</sup> “Leave Clearance Hearing, War Relocation Authority Office-Twin Falls, Idaho,” February 9, 1944, Royal Nakano case file, WRACF.

<sup>9</sup> Yoneda, *Gambatte*, 129.

<sup>10</sup> Pat Kawasaki’s attempt to pass as non-Japanese is similar to the case of the Nisei Fred Korematsu, who filed a suit against the U.S. Government on the constitutionality of the evacuation order in 1943. Fred Korematsu had minor cosmetic surgery to make his appearance less Japanese. When arrested in San Leandro, California, on May 30, 1942, he stated that his name was Clyde Sarah and claimed to be of Spanish-Hawaiian origin. Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II*, 84.

his parents and sister were confined. He even said that he would escape if he had the opportunity.<sup>11</sup>

By late May 1942, when the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast was completed, between 500 and 600 members of more than 300 mixed marriage families were evacuated from the West Coast.<sup>12</sup> Out of 500 to 600 members of mixed marriage families, approximately 114 were non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans. Sixty-six white women who were voluntarily evacuated with their Japanese husbands or their mixed race children comprised more than half of these non-Japanese internees. Most of these white women decided to be interned because of their children.

Whether or not they had children, the non-Japanese—both white and non-white—husbands of Japanese or half Japanese wives tended to stay on the West Coast. It was recorded that 25 Japanese women married to white men were evacuated from the West Coast. Only 5 white men who were married to Japanese women accompanied their wives into camps.<sup>13</sup> The

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<sup>11</sup> “Margaret Kawasaki,” August 11, 1943, Margaret Kawasaki case file, WRACF.

<sup>12</sup> The database on Japanese American internees and the WDC’s reports on mixed marriage families allow us to estimate the number of mixed marriage cases during the war. It appears that there were approximately 319 mixed marriage cases reported during the Internment of Japanese Americans. The most common form of mixed marriages was those between Japanese men and white women. There were 124 mixed marriages between Japanese men and white women including marriages that had been dissolved by separation, divorce, or death. The second most common form of mixed marriages took place between men of “other”—non-white and non-Japanese—ancestry and Japanese women. There were 60 Japanese female internees who were wives of Chinese, Filipino, Black, or Korean man. Most of these 60 Japanese women were married to Chinese or Filipino husbands. There were 48 marriages between white men and Japanese women. Besides 124 marriages between Japanese men and white women, there were 55 mixed marriages involving Japanese men. Twenty-seven out of these 55 Japanese men were married to women of “other” ancestry, 18 to part Japanese, part white women, 6 to women of part Japanese, part “other” ancestry, and 4 to women of part white, part “other” ancestry. There were 8 white men who were married to women of part Japanese ancestry. Five out of the 8 white men were married to women of part Japanese, part white ancestry and 3 to women of part Japanese, part “other” ancestry. There were 14 cases of mixed marriages involving part Japanese, part white men. Six out of these 14 men were married to white women, 6 to Japanese women, and 2 to part Japanese, part white women. Seven men of part Japanese part “other” ancestry were married to Japanese women. Finally, there were 3 Japanese women married to men of part white, part “other” ancestry.

<sup>13</sup> The database on the Japanese American internees compiled by the National Archives in Washington D.C. includes the following white husbands of Japanese or half Japanese wives: James Collier, John Dearing, John Graham, Chester Kilingspore, and Lester Willess. RJAR. In fact, a report of the WDC indicated that there were 15 more Japanese women who were married to white men but did not appear on the records on internees. “Exemptions

records on Japanese American internees indicated that there were 60 Japanese female internees who were married to men of Chinese, Filipino, Mexican, or other non-white ancestry. There were only four male internees whose race was recorded as Chinese, Filipino, Mexican, or other non-white.<sup>14</sup>

According to the database of Japanese American internees, 105 Japanese men were recorded as husbands of white women and there were 63 white female internees who joined their Japanese husbands in camps.<sup>15</sup> Three white women who had been divorced or separated from their Japanese husbands accompanied their part Japanese children or were evacuated on their own to the camps.<sup>16</sup> In the case of Japanese-white families without children, some white wives of Japanese men chose to stay in their homes in order to tend to their property and businesses while awaiting their husbands' return.<sup>17</sup> The white wives of Japanese men without children usually went with their husbands to the camps due to their lack of financial resources to live on their own.

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granted from exclusion provisions on public proclamations to persons of Japanese ancestry under mixed marriage policy," August 1, 1943, MMP, vol. 3. The records on Japanese American internees also indicate that there were 8 Japanese women who had been widowed or separated or divorced from their white husbands. Therefore, the number of mixed marriage families headed by a white man and a Japanese woman was approximately 48. RJAR.

<sup>14</sup> Benjamin Cornejo, Sebsta Dequin, Apronian Eder, and John Young. RJAR.

<sup>15</sup> If the number of Japanese men who were separated and divorced from their white wives or who were widowed is added to this number, the total number of families headed by a Japanese man and a white woman is approximately 124. RJAR.

<sup>16</sup> Adeline Asai, a white American woman of Irish ancestry, was separated and divorced from her Japanese husband in 1924 and in 1931, respectively. Asai was evacuated with her half Japanese, half white daughter, who was married to a Hawaiian-born Japanese American. "Individual Record," July 2, 1942, Adeline Asai case file, WRACF. Stella Sowka, a white woman of Polish birth, was separated from her Issei husband since 1930. Sowka changed the family name of her and her five children whom she had with her separated Japanese husband into her maiden name. Sowka and her five children were evacuated from Los Angeles. Letter from Marjorie Sowka and Stella Sowka to the regional director of the Manzanar camp, June 10, 1942, Stella Sowka case file, Box 5440, WRACF. Ruth Kameda was recorded as separated from her Japanese husband, Gunji Kameda. RJAR.

<sup>17</sup> Ella Ono, wife of Kojiro Ono, was such a case. Letter from Beulah Lewis to L.H. Bennet, October 6, 1944, Kojiro Ono case file, WRACF.

## **“As If I Were a Person of Japanese Ancestry”: the Status of Non-Japanese Evacuees during the War**

In early May 1942, the WDC established a new legal procedure to classify the status of the non-Japanese spouses of “persons of Japanese ancestry” as internees. This procedure underwent important changes in terms of its definition of the status and rights of non-Japanese evacuees. The WDC continued to emphasize the racial or ethnic differences between non-Japanese evacuees and their Japanese American counterparts and did not require non-Japanese evacuees to agree to be treated like “persons of Japanese ancestry.” A non-Japanese evacuee only needed to sign a form that clarified that she or he was a person “not being of Japanese ancestry, but legally married to a person of Japanese ancestry.” According to the form, a non-Japanese spouse of “a person of Japanese ancestry” was required to agree, first, that he or she “voluntarily requested to be evacuated” with his or her family and, second, that he or she would “abide by all the rules and regulations as set forth by the United States Army.”<sup>18</sup>

By the end of May 1942, the WDC introduced WDC Form PM-7, which was titled “request and waiver of non-excluded person.” This form defined the status of a non-Japanese spouse of “a person of Japanese ancestry” as quasi-Japanese during the entire process of evacuation and resettlement in relocation centers. This waiver form required that a non-Japanese evacuee agree that “I will conform in all respects as if I were a person of Japanese ancestry to all rules, regulations and orders issued to me and the members of my family during all stages of such exclusion, evacuation and resettlement.”<sup>19</sup> This statement implied that a non-Japanese evacuee could not claim to be treated differently from Japanese evacuees by the WDC on account of their racial and ethnic difference from the Japanese.

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<sup>18</sup> A statement signed by Hester Shironitta, May 6, 1942, Hester Gray Shironitta case file, Box 5402, WRACF.

<sup>19</sup> “Request and Waiver of Non-excluded Person,” May 20, 1942, Sakuji Matsumra case file, Box 3170, WRACF. Emphasis is mine.

Quite often white women who accompanied their husbands and/or children into camps did not realize that signing the waiver form required them to assume a Japanese identity. Some white wives of Japanese American men believed the rumors that, unlike Japanese American internees, white internees married to Japanese American spouses might move freely between the camps and the evacuated area. An internee of the Tule Lake camp, Dorothy Heart Nakamura, the wife of George Hideo Nakamura, identified herself as “a Caucasian lady married to a Japanese” in her letter to the WRA’s San Francisco office, stating that she wanted to “take advantage of her privileges” if the rumors were right.<sup>20</sup> Estelle Ishigo, an internee of the Heart Mountain camp, realized that she could not leave the camp at any time she wished. Her request of a “military travel permit” to Los Angeles, California was rejected because she had signed “a waiver placing her on the same [restriction] as a Japanese evacuee.” Estelle was advised that the only way that white internees could travel to the evacuated areas was to obtain indefinite leave, which usually took one to several months to process.<sup>21</sup>

It can be surmised that the WDC decided to construct a quasi-Japanese identity for non-Japanese evacuees after it found that the majority of non-Japanese evacuees were white wives of Japanese Americans. It might not be a mere coincidence that the WDC changed the word of the waiver form by the end of May 1942, a time when the evacuation of Japanese Americans was completed. As Chapter 5 examines, Karl Bendetsen, the inventor of the mixed marriage policy, maintained that white women who were married to Japanese Americans forsook their white identity to become Japanese. By rendering the white wives of Japanese men quasi-Japanese, Bendetsen reflected his prejudice toward marriages between white women and Japanese men.

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<sup>20</sup> Letter from Mrs. George Nakamura to C.R. Fryer, November 10, 1942, George Nakamura case file, Box 3806, WRACF.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum from R.B. Cozzens to Guy Robertson, “Mrs. Estelle Ishigo,” March 17, 1943, Estelle Ishigo case file, Box 1653, WRACF.

## **The Mixed Marriage Policy and Interracial Families Consisting of an Issei Husband, a White Wife, and/or Their Children**

The mixed marriage policy offered mixed marriage families composed of Japanese husbands, white wives, and/or their children a limited promise of getting their families together outside the internment camps. The Japanese husbands of non-Japanese wives could not return to the evacuated areas for the duration of the war. Only the white or other non-Japanese wives of Japanese men and their half Japanese children could return to the West Coast. In 1943, the WRA began to permit Japanese American internees to resettle in the Midwest or East, or outside the military areas on the West Coast. Therefore, the only way that mixed marriage families headed by Japanese men and White women could resume their family lives outside the camps was to resettle in the Midwest and East, or outside the military areas on the West Coast.<sup>22</sup>

At the news that the WDC considered the release of mixed marriage families, mixed-marriage families consisting of an Issei husband, a white wife, and/or their children mistakenly believed that a Japanese man who was married to a white woman could be released from the internment camps and return to their homes on the West Coast. Some white wives of Issei husbands requested that the WRA and the WDC consider making their husbands eligible for release under the policy. These white women firmly believed that although their husbands could not become citizens due to their race, their husbands proved their Americanization by staying married to a white American woman for decades and losing ties to Japan.

Edith Morton Nakaya, who identified herself as “an American citizen of Scottish descent,” emphasized that she and her husband, Fusataro Nakaya, had been married for 21 years. She also stressed that her husband was “one of the finest law-abiding, civic minded residents of the

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<sup>22</sup> In 1943, the WRACF began to release certain Japanese American internees from the camps as long as they found employments or sought college education in the Midwest, in the East, or outside the military areas on the West Coast. Nisei college students could attend colleges and universities in the Midwest and East. Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II*, 47–49.

United States.” She held that her Japanese immigrant husband had demonstrated his Americanization in the following ways: he had arrived in the U.S. in “early in his childhood,” was educated in the U.S., and he practiced medicine as a surgeon “exclusively in this country.”<sup>23</sup>

Mary Saiki could not be evacuated with her Issei husband, Ukichi Saiki, because she had to take care of her garden business in Gresham, Oregon. However, it was very difficult for Saiki to send her husband, who had been “partially invalid” due to a “cerebral accident” since 1932, to the internment camps alone.<sup>24</sup> On September 8, 1942, at the news of the release of mixed marriage families, Saiki wrote a letter to John DeWitt, commander of the WDC, requesting the release of her husband based on the mixed marriage policy. She informed him that there had been “much talk about not breaking up homes in the case of Japanese husbands with white wives.” Saiki asked for the WDC’s sympathy for her aging, frail husband, who was over 60 and had “so many physical defects.” She emphasized that she had supported her husband “for the last ten years,” expressing her wish to “continue to do this for the few years he has left to live.”<sup>25</sup>

The WDC and the WRA consistently ignored the requests of white women married to Japanese Americans, who argued that their husbands had a right to be with their families on the West Coast under the mixed marriage policy. Instead of agreeing to return these women’s husbands, however, the WRA advised white wives of Japanese men who had not been evacuated with their husbands to join their husbands in the camps. In response to Mary Saiki’s request, the WRA informed her that she could visit her husband in the Minidoka camp or become a permanent resident of the camp. Further, the WRA reminded Saiki that if she chose to join her

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<sup>23</sup> Letter from Mrs. F.T. Nakaya to War Relocation Authority, October 7, 1942, Fusataro Nakaya case file, Box 4006, WRACF.

<sup>24</sup> “War Relocation Authority: Basic Family Sheet”: Memorandum from Betty Creusere to Mrs. Kimmerling, July 23, 1945, Ukichi Saiki case file, Box 4841, WRACF.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Mary Saiki to John DeWitt, September 8, 1942, Ukichi Saiki case file, Box 4841, WRACF.

husband as an internee, she “must agree to be governed by the same rulings and restrictions” to which she “would be subject if” she “were a person of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>26</sup> In 1943, Saiki entered the Minidoka camp to take care of her ill husband and stayed with him in the camp until they could be released in June 1945.<sup>27</sup>

Some Issei husbands of white women asked the WRA for permission to return to the West Coast. These Issei men married to white women maintained that their marriages to white women made their families white American. Hataji Kobayashi called his family a “Caucasian family” because his wife was a “Caucasian American” and his daughter was also married to “a Caucasian American.”<sup>28</sup>

In addition, some Issei husbands of white women emphasized their cultural and social assimilation and determination to raise their children as Americans. Frank Fukaye, whose wife was a white woman “of Norwegian descent,” argued that he had lived an “American life.” Since his arrival in the U.S. in 1907, he never left the United States, associated with “Japanese societies,” or sent “a single nickel to Japan.” Fukaye also stated that he had raised his children “in a Caucasian atmosphere,” sending them only to “the American public schools,” never to Japanese language schools. He cited his children’s inability to speak the Japanese language as evidence of his efforts to raise them as Americans. Tetsugi Yamashita, who was married to Elizabeth Dhalen, “an American citizen of Swedish extraction,” emphasized that he had never left “American soil” since he entered the U.S. in 1890 and that he had “at all times attempted to

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<sup>26</sup> Letter from Robert Patrie to Mary Saiki, September 16, 1942, Ukichi Saiki case file, Box 4841, WRACF.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Mary Saiki to Miss Cona, June 4, 1943; Memorandum from H.L. Stafford to Harold S. Fistere, July 26, 1945; Memorandum from C.W. Linville to H.L. Stafford, August 6, 1945, Ukichi Saiki case file, Box 4841, WRACF.

<sup>28</sup> Letter by Hataji Kobayashi, February 3, 1943, Hataji Kobayashi case file, Box 2575, WRACF. His daughter, Toshie Giraud, was released and returned to her husband sometime in July or August 1942.

abide by the laws of the United States and to avoid taking any action which would in any way hamper the war effort of this country.” Like Frank Fukaye, Yamashita noted that he had raised his daughter “to be a good American citizen.”<sup>29</sup>

The WDC simply refused to compromise its policy that Japanese men who were married to white women could not reenter portions of the West Coast that the WDC designated as military areas. After unsuccessfully attempting to apply for a permit to return to West Coast areas, mixed marriage families headed by Issei husbands and white wives sought every possible way to keep their family intact. Because of their old age, Issei men who were married to white women did not venture to find a new place to settle outside the West Coast. Some Issei fathers sent their white wives and children back home and sought employment in the parts of western states that did not belong to the military areas designated by the WDC. Their wives and children soon joined them there.<sup>30</sup> Some white women who were married to Issei men returned to their homes on the West Coast with their children, leaving their husbands behind in the camps. Some of these white women alternated their residence between the camps where their husbands were and their homes on the West Coast where their children were.<sup>31</sup> When mixed marriage couples were childless, white wives of Issei men tended to stay with their husbands in the camps for the duration of the war.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Letter from Frank Fukaye to E.R. Smith, August 29, 1942, Frank Fukaye case file, Box 590, WRACF. Letter from Tetsugi Yamashita to Major General Bonesteel, August 18, 1944, Tetsugi Yamashita case file, Box 7002, WRACF.

<sup>30</sup> Arrita Ikegami asked the WRACF to allow her Issei husband, Osamu Ikegami, to be employed in Idaho. Letter from Arrita Edmonds Ikegami to the WCCA, June 26, 1942, Osamu “Ike” Ikegami case file, Box 1456, WRACF.

<sup>31</sup> Anna Eugenie Fukaye, the Norwegian-born wife of an Issei man, Frank Fukaye, is an example. Until her husband was released from Arizona’s Gila Relocation Center in mid-January 1945, she was recorded as having spent “part of the time here in the center with her husband” and “divided her time between the two groups [her husband in the center and children in Los Angeles].” “Family planning discussion,” November 22, 1944; Letter from William Huso to Paul Robertson, January 18, 1945, Frank Fukaye case file, Box 590, WRACF.

<sup>32</sup> Usually such white wives of Issei men were foreign-born and had no other relatives in the U.S. For example, Nellie Ogawa, the wife of Frank Ogawa, was born in England and Josephine Uyeda, the wife of Kotaro Uyeda, was

## **The Mixed Marriage Policy and Interracial Families Consisting of Nisei Husbands, White Wives, and/or Their Children**

When the mixed marriage policy was first introduced, some Nisei husbands of white wives hoped that they could return to the West Coast because of their marriages to white women. However, they soon become disillusioned and decided to adapt themselves to the other options that were available to them. In October, 1942, Harvey Tanaka, a Hawaiian-born Nisei husband of Pualine Tanaka, requested release from the Colorado River camp because his wife was “Caucasian.”<sup>33</sup> Realizing that the WDC would not allow them to return to the evacuated area, the Tanakas decided to relocate elsewhere.

In fact, interracial families headed by Nisei husbands and white wives rarely attempted to question the mixed marriage policy, which did not allow the Japanese male heads of mixed marriage families to return home. Such interracial families knew that it would be futile to challenge the military’s policy and tended to conform to the prescription of the mixed marriage policy. Some interracial families that were composed of Nisei husbands, white wives, and/or their children resettled in the Midwest. In other cases, a Nisei husband applied for enlistment into a Nisei combat unit and his white wife and children returned to their home on the West Coast. If interracial families headed by Nisei husbands and white wives were childless, or if white wives of Nisei husbands did not have financial resources to live on their own on the West Coast, such couples stayed together in camps until the war was over.

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born in Ireland. “Individual Record,” February 3, 1943; “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance,” March 8, 1943, Nellie Ogawa case file, Box 4361, WRACF. “Individual Record,” November 19, 1942; “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance,” February 23, 1943, Josephine Uyeda case file, Box 6516, WRACF. Couples with health issues decided to remain in camps together. Yaokichi Okada was in his late sixties in 1942 and had a heart condition while his American-born White wife was recorded as “completely deaf.” “Individual Record,” September 3, 1942, Mildred Okada case file, Box 4445, WRACF. Letter from Guy Robertson to Dillon Myer, “Re: Okada, Mrs. Yaokichi, #5836,” May 16, 1945, Yaokichi Okada case file, WRACF.

<sup>33</sup> Letter from E.M. Rowalt to Dillon Myer, October 17, 1942, Harvey Tanaka case file, Box 5967, WRACF.

Some interracial families consisting of Nisei husbands and white wives chose to resettle in Midwestern cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, and Denver, where these families found it difficult to deal with financial challenges and felt uprooted. In April 1943, Michio Tom Hata and his American-born wife, Angeline, left the Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas for Chicago, Illinois. Soon after he was settled, Michio Hata wrote a letter to a camp official in the Rohwer center. “While I was in camp,” he recalled, “I wanted to leave so I could settle somewhere in the east. Now I must admit I don’t like it here.” Hata, who had to work long hours to make a living, described the adjustment as extremely difficult. “The high cost of living keeps me on my toes all the time,” he reported. “I work at least 10 hours a day (60 hours a week) to make ends meet.” Hata yearned for the years before the war when he had friends and work in California, concluding “I wish the war was over and I could return to California.”<sup>34</sup>

Some interracial families consisting of Nisei husbands and white wives chose to move to areas that were on the West Coast but still outside the military areas, in order to be close to other members of their families and to start a business in more familiar places. Such interracial families had to face West Coast white society’s hostility toward Japanese Americans. In late October, 1942, Thomas Iseri, who used to reside in Auburn, Washington, wanted to obtain permission to reside somewhere around Spokane, Washington, to join his wife. About a year later, the Iseris found themselves in Ontario, Oregon, at a branch of the company that hired Iseri. On November 27, 1943, Iseri reported to the WRA that somebody had thrown stones at his rented house three times, and that the local police had not been willing to do anything about it.

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<sup>34</sup> Letter from Michio Tom Hata to Mr. Updegraff, April 25, 1943, Michio Hata case file, Box 741, WRACF.

The Iseris decided not to move out of the house because “that may give these fellows the urge to break window in houses of other Japanese-Americans living here so that they will move.”<sup>35</sup>

The white wives of Nisei husbands were equally frustrated as the white wives of Issei husbands at the fact that their husbands could not return to the West Coast. Some white wives of Nisei husbands directly addressed their frustration over the gendered bias of the mixed marriage policy that treated their husbands differently from the Japanese wives of white American husbands. On September 14, 1942, while staying in Los Angeles, Pauline Tanaka, the wife of Harvey Tanaka, wrote a letter to the director of the Colorado River Relocation Center, stating that she and her husband wished to be released in light of the fact that a “Japanese girl, married to American man” had been released from the same center and returned to California a few days before. Pauline Tanaka suggested that she and her husband would be “happy to go to Texas,” if they could not return to their former residence in El Centro, California.

On March 1, 1943, having waited patiently for her husband’s release since late September 1942, Pauline Tanaka wrote to Dillon Myer, the director of the WRA. In her letter, Tanaka complained about a delay in the release of her husband. She underscored her husband’s American birth and associations with white people. “My husband is borned [*sic*] in the Hawaiian Islands,” she wrote, “never has seen Japan.” She stated, “My husband is a good man, lived in the Imperial Valley for 17 years, doing business with American people and everyone loved him.” She also emphasized the century-long history of her white ancestry: “I am a white American girl, my ancestors came to America in the early 1800. My father’s people came about then too.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Letter from Thomas Iseri to Robert Petrie, October 26, 1942; Letter from Thomas Iseri to Mr. Reagon, November 27, 1943, Thomas Iseri case file, Box 188, WRACF.

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Pauline Tanaka to W. Head, September 14, 1942; Letter from Pauline Tanaka to Dillon Myer, March 1, 1943, Harvey Tanaka case file, Box No. 5967, WRACF.

Some of the white mothers of half Japanese children boldly confronted camp officials to ask if the mixed marriage policy was in the way of the release and mobility of their children. According to the policy, the white mothers of half Japanese, half white children had to send a monthly report to the WDC that proved that the children were “in a Caucasian’s custody” after they returned to the West Coast. On December 16, 1942, Elaine Yoneda received a permit for her son, Tommy, to travel to Los Angeles, where Yoneda and Tommy would join her parents. When she read the instructions attached to Tommy’s travel permit, which stated that he “was to always be in a Caucasian’s custody, namely his mother,” Yoneda pointed out problems with this racially charged clause. “If Tommy was to spend weekends...with any of our Chinese, Filipino or Negro friends, would he be in violation of his right to be in Military Area No. 1?” The regional director of the WRA in San Francisco replied, “You always raise unnecessary questions.” Yoneda challenged the director in her reply. “Not unnecessary,” she protested, “I’m just trying to avoid any misunderstandings that might lead to his return to a concentration camp.” The director tore the instruction paper and told Yoneda to report only address changes.<sup>37</sup>

For their children’s safety, some white wives of Nisei husbands took advantage of their racial assets to underscore the part white ancestry of their children. Evelyn Kinoshita directly attacked the mixed marriage policy’s unequal treatment of the “Caucasian” mother of half Japanese children compared to the “Caucasian” foster parents of Japanese children. According to the mixed marriage policy, both half Japanese and even “full-blooded” Japanese minor children were issued a permit to return to the homes of their “Caucasian” foster parents on the West Coast. In July 1943, while her husband, Robert Kinoshita, had been sent temporarily to Pennsylvania as a Reserve Officer Captain in the U.S. Army, Evelyn and her two minor sons had

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<sup>37</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 224–225.

left the Heart Mountain camp and resided in Hillsboro, Oregon. She planned to stay there with her two sons until Robert was assigned to a permanent station. However, her sons were required to leave Oregon by July 15, 1943. On July 11, 1943, determined that she and her children would not move again, Kinoshita registered her complaints about the mixed marriage policy to the WRA office in San Francisco. “I would also like to know why a full-blooded Japanese girl, who has been adopted by a Caucasian family, may live in Portland,” she inquired. “My two boys are not full-blooded Japanese and have been raised as such.”<sup>38</sup>

Overall, white women who were married to Nisei men showed more acute insights into the mixed marriage policy’s race and gender bias than white women who were married to Issei men. The white wives of Nisei husbands accumulated their grievances toward the government’s unequal treatment of mixed-marriage families headed by men of Japanese ancestry. These white women were likely aware of the fact that the WDC questioned their children’s American identity because their part Japanese ancestry came from their fathers. White women who had mixed race children with their Nisei husbands claimed their “Caucasian” influence upon their children and unwittingly challenged the WDC’s assertion of white patriarchy in the mixed marriage policy.

### **Individual White Americans’ Sympathy with the Hardships of Interracial Families Headed by Japanese Husbands and White Wives**

Beginning in 1943, the WRA allowed Japanese American internees to leave the camps for college education, employment, or residence outside the military areas on the West Coast. This process was called leave clearance.<sup>39</sup> Internees were required to list two to five persons who would comment on the extent that these internees were loyal to the U.S. and Americanized through education and upbringing.

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<sup>38</sup> Letter from Robert Kinoshita to Robert Cozzens, July 10, 1943; Letter from Evelyn Kinoshita to R.B. Cozzens, July 11, 1943, Robert Kinoshita case file, Box 2464, WRACF.

<sup>39</sup> Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II*, 55–57.

The WRA tended to prefer reference letters written by whites. Initially, the WRA made clear that “Caucasian references” were the most helpful for the WRA in making decisions on the applicants’ loyalty to the U.S. One of the earlier versions of the WRA form for leave clearance included an item that stated that references “need not be Caucasians, but good Caucasian references may be particularly helpful.”<sup>40</sup> By “good Caucasian references,” the WRA meant references made by middle-class whites. Another earlier version of the form for indefinite leave listed examples of the professions of whites who would make “good Caucasian references”: attorneys, businessmen, church ministers, organization leaders, public officials, school teachers, and others.<sup>41</sup> Later, the WRA replaced the term “Caucasian references” with “preferably persons resident in areas where you formerly resided” in their revised and most widely used form for indefinite leave.<sup>42</sup> Yet, because all Japanese Americans had been evacuated from the West Coast, the phrase “persons resident in areas where you formerly resided” rarely differed from the term “Caucasian references.”

Individual case files of members of interracial families headed by Japanese husbands and white wives include reference letters written by white Americans, who had known such families as friends, neighbors, or business partners before the war broke out. Overall, these white Americans who had known interracial families consisting of Japanese husbands and white wives before the war showed sympathetic responses to the hardships of these families during the war and expressed their belief in these families’ Americanization. Reference letters written by white Americans for Issei husbands of white women reveal that these white Americans considered an

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<sup>40</sup> “Application for leave clearance,” January 11, 1943, Masaru Kamioka case file, Box 2027, WRACF.

<sup>41</sup> “Application for a permit to leave a Relocation Center for private employment,” Saichi Fujimoto case file, Box 505, WRACF.

<sup>42</sup> “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance,” February 12, 1943, Winnie Nakamura case file, WRACF.

Issei man's marriage to a white woman as the most obvious evidence for his Americanization. Regarding Rinyechi Oda, Bill Saltsman stated, "I can give you assurance that he is loyal to the U.S.A. as either of his two sons whose mother is an American."<sup>43</sup> Mildred Commings wrote that, despite Bunji Katayama's education in Japan, he had "become very much Americanized, as evidenced by the fact that he married a Caucasian woman."<sup>44</sup> Regarding Rio Yamane, Don Terpening commented that Yamane's affiliations with Japan had changed due to his marriage and that he had thought of himself as a "very poor Japanese citizen, because of his mixed marriage."<sup>45</sup>

White Americans who had maintained personal relationships with Nisei men married to whites before the war tended to make a somewhat attenuated connection between these Nisei men's marriages to white women and these men's Americanization. The Americanization of such Nisei men was attributed to their associations with white society and American education, not to their marriages to white women. Thos Williams stated that Thomas Iseri's family had had a "fine reputation" among whites, adding that Iseri and his children did not speak Japanese in the home. Recalling that Iseri had held "no ill feelings towards his country because of the evacuation," Williams considered Iseri "a true and loyal American."<sup>46</sup> S.A. Giraud spent his whole two-page letter describing Howard Kobayashi's work experience with whites and his "very little" associations with "people of Japanese race." Giraud concluded, "He [Howard Kobayashi] is very much more American in thought and education than he is Japanese...if there

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<sup>43</sup> Letter from William Saltsman to Dillon Myer, Rinyechi Oda case file, Box 4320, WRACF.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Mildred Commings to Dillon Myer, March 31, 1943, Bunji Katayama case file, Box 2158, WRACF.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Don Terpening to Dillon Myer, February 11, 1943, Rio Yamane case file, Box 6918, WRACF.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Thos Williams to Dillon Myer, March 17, 1943, Thomas Iseri case file, Box 188, WRACF.

is one loyal Japanese, he is the one.”<sup>47</sup> Marty Cauffman, one of George Domoto’s college friends, stated that Domoto was “for the United States for a hundred percent” and “just like one of us.” Edna Lance, another of Domoto’s college friends, reported that he had been raised “in the American way of life,” while bringing up the fact that Domoto had never attended Japanese schools and churches.<sup>48</sup>

As powerful as “Caucasian” references might have been in demonstrating a Nisei man’s Americanization, his marriage to a white American woman further proved his willingness to belong to mainstream American society rather than his ancestral ethnic community. Regarding a Hawaiian-born Nisei, Mickey Masaru Kamioka, Greenwood included Kamioka’s marriage to “a Caucasian woman” in the list of information on his loyalty to the U.S., along with his “fine grasp of our English language and the customs of our education,” and his service in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War I.<sup>49</sup> Geo Frazier related Yukio Matsui’s marriage to “an American white girl” to his associations with whites at school. Matsui, according to Frazier, had associated only with “white kids,” played sports “only on white teams,” and recognized himself as “100% American.”<sup>50</sup> George Hideo Nakamura’s white referees made similar comments. E.J. Wemple, a policeman in Marysville, California, called Nakamura a “good American” because he did not attend the Japanese church or school and also because his first and second wives were white.<sup>51</sup>

K.T. Gregg, a city official in Marysville, California, and another of George Nakamura’s referees,

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<sup>47</sup> Letter from S.A. Giraud to Dillon Myer, January 11, 1943, Howard Kobayashi case file, Box 2577, WRACF.

<sup>48</sup> Letter from Marty Kaufman to Dillon Myer, February 16, 1943; letter from Edna Lance to Dillon Myer, February 10, 1943, George Domoto case file, Box 346, WRACF.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from Wm. Greenwood to Dillon Myer, February 3, 1943, Masaru Kamioka case file, Box 2027, WRACF.

<sup>50</sup> Letter from Geo Frazier to Dillon Myer, December 22, 1942, Yukio Matsui case file, Box 3108, WRACF.

<sup>51</sup> Letter from E.J. Wemple to Dillon Myer, February 5, 1943, George Nakamura case file, Box 3806, WRACF.

stated that he “went American to the extent...of marrying a white girl,” while his “high school training and whole happiness was hypothecated on living as an American.”<sup>52</sup>

When they wrote their reference letters for native-born white women married to Issei men, white Americans stressed that these white wives of Japanese immigrants were like any other American mothers and housewives, despite their marriage to a Japanese man. Elizabeth Morcombe described Daisy Miyata as a “loyal citizen,” a “good mother,” and an “intellectual hardworking individual.”<sup>53</sup> Ellie Feifer noted that Miyata’s childrearing had conformed “in every way to our American traditions.”<sup>54</sup> Oliver Ingersoll commented that Daisy Kanda had raised her children as “good citizens of this country.” Kanda’s two adult children had associated with “the white people” since childhood and they did not speak the Japanese language. Ingersoll also noted that Kanda’s children of “mixed blood” did not “consider themselves as Japaneze [*sic*].”<sup>55</sup>

Ministers and missionaries often wrote reference letters for white women who were formerly missionaries and were married to Japanese immigrants. These ministers and missionaries extended the lens of gender norms in advocating the decision of these white women to be evacuated with their husbands. Their letters reflect their great appreciation for white women who joined their husbands in the camps as faithful and devoted wives. Characterizing Mary Kimura, the Portuguese-born wife of Takeji Kimura, as “honest, thrifty, efficient, and faithfull [*sic*] as a wife and mother,” Reverend Karl Block recalled that she could have remained in San Francisco but “preferred to go with her husband and children.”<sup>56</sup> Regarding Josephine

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<sup>52</sup> Letter from K.T. Gregg to Dillon Myer, February 4, 1943, George Nakamura case file, Box 3806, WRACF.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Mrs. Joe Morcombe (Elizabeth Morcombe) to Dillon Myer, Daisy Miyata case file, Box 3399, WRACF.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from Ellie Feifer to Claude Cornwall, December 10, 1942, Daisy Miyata case file, Box 3399, WRACF.

<sup>55</sup> Letter from Oliver Ingersoll to Dillon Myer, June 8, 1943, Daisy Kanda case file, Box 2056, WRACF.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from Karl Block to Dillon Myer, January 8, 1943, Mary Kimura case file, Box 2428, WRACF.

Uyeda, Father W. Stoeke of St. Francis Favier's Japanese Catholic Mission in San Francisco, stated that "out of loyalty to her husband" she had been "living in the relocation center."<sup>57</sup>

Gertrude S. de Clercq, Secretary of Missions in Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society in New York, wrote that May Katayama was "in one of the camps, of course,... due to the fact that she has wanted to be with her husband, Mr. Katayama," even though she herself was "a Caucasian born in Indiana, of an American mother and an English father."<sup>58</sup>

In most of the cases, West Coast white Americans who had known interracial families headed by Japanese husbands and white wives for years wrote favorable opinions about the Americanization of such families. These white Americans tended to view men of Japanese ancestry who chose to find their wives among whites as vindication of such men's willingness to be Americanized. These white Americans also attributed the Americanization of interracial families, which consisted of Japanese husbands, white wives, and their children, to the existence of white women in these families.

### **Sharing the Hardship of Japanese Americans: White Women Internees' Camp Experience**

Estelle Ishigo, Elaine Yoneda, and Charlotte Susu-Mago were the rare but significant examples of internees who fought against the inadequate living conditions of the camps. For all internees, it was extremely difficult to deal with the poor living conditions of the camps and the horrible weather in desert areas. The organization of the living quarters at the camps resembled army camps of the time. Regardless of the size of a family, each family was assigned to a room that measured just one twenty by sixteen to twenty by twenty-five feet. Four to six rooms constituted a barrack and twelve to fourteen barracks a "block." Barracks were made of planks

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<sup>57</sup> Letter from Father W. Stoeke to Dillon Myer, March 25, 1943, Josephine Uyeda case file, Box 6516, WRACF.

<sup>58</sup> Letter from Gertrude S. de Clercq to Dillon Myer, March 4, 1943, May Katayama case file, Box 2161, WRACF.

and had no interior walls, which allowed dust to seep through into the living area. Rooms had two canvas cots or cotton mattresses with minimal bedding, a stove for coal heating, and a ceiling light bulb. There was no running water and only a bucket in each room. Residents of each block shared toilets, bath and shower facilities, laundry, a communal mess hall, and a recreation hall. The living quarters of white administrative officials were larger and better equipped than internees' barracks.<sup>59</sup>

Estelle Ishigo's drawings from her memoir of camp life in Wyoming's Heart Mountain Relocation Center carefully depicted the ways in which a Japanese family consisting of six to seven members of three generations lived in one room. "For mothers with babies and the very old or sick, living was especially hard," Ishigo recalled, "with day and night trips to the laundry for water, the mess hall and the latrine barracks." Ishigo also noted the lack of privacy in the latrines. The toilets for women in the Heart Mountain Center did not have doors but partitions, while those for men were "fully exposed without even partitions."<sup>60</sup>

Elaine Yoneda and Charlotte Susu-Mago chose to confront camp officials and the WRA directly regarding the need to improve communal facilities. Yoneda focused on the absence of privacy in toilets that lacked partitions and in the shower rooms, where there were no shower curtains. At Manzanar, Yoneda often witnessed teenaged girls' frustrated faces whenever they bumped into her and her toddler son in the toilets. When Yoneda brought this problem to the attention of the service division director of the Manzanar center, she was told that the toilets "came up to Army specifications." Known as a "tiger woman" among her comrades in the Communist Party, Yoneda did not step back. Rather she pounded on the director's desk,

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<sup>59</sup> For a more detailed description of the conditions of the living quarters at the camps, see Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II*, 40–42.

<sup>60</sup> Ishigo, *Lone Heart Mountain*, 25–29.

shouting, “To hell with specifications. If you don’t do something soon, there might be mass hysteria and maybe even some suicides!” Soon partitions, doors, and shower curtains were provided.<sup>61</sup>

Charlotte Susu-Mago went even further than Elaine Yoneda by demanding that the WRA replace the incumbent project manager of the Gila Relocation Project in Arizona, who was indifferent to internees’ needs, with a “sympathetic” and cooperative one. On September 5, 1942, Susu-Mago sent a letter to Dillon Myer, reporting that the project director had been indifferent to the problems of insufficient lights in the living areas and streets, poor toilet and laundry facilities, and the absence of window screens. According to Susu-Mago, the project director had told internees not to expect “these luxuries all at once,” turning a deaf ear to the suggestion that internees be willing to be at work. Susu-Mago argued that Japanese American evacuees were “to be encouraged to make their life in camp conform as possible to democratic living throughout the nation.” She finished her letter to Myer by identifying herself as “the wife of the only Christian citizen pastor as yet in Gila, a one time missionary to Japan, and an accredited teacher of Americanization in the Los Angeles schools.”<sup>62</sup>

Susu-Mago’s persistent requests appeared to work. E.R. Fryer, whom she had criticized for his indifference as the director of the Gila Relocation Project, wrote Dillon Myer about the difficulty he encountered while dealing with her. Fryer called Susu-Mago “a Caucasian problem child” and the “over-religious wife of a super-pious Japanese Methodist minister.” Fryer stated that he would handle the case as best he could, “but I am not too optimistic about the results.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 211.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Charlotte Susu-Mago to Dillon Myer, September 5, 1942, Charlotte Susu-Mago case file, Box 5544, WRACF.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from E.R. Fryer to Dillon Myer, September 23, 1942, Charlotte Susu-Mago case file, Box 5544, WRACF.

Estelle Ishigo and Elaine Yoneda got along well with their Japanese neighbors, yet each of them had distinctive relationships with the Japanese American community in the camps. Estelle Ishigo was particularly enthusiastic about cultural activities in the Heart Mountain Center and was a violin player with the center's Mandolin band.<sup>64</sup> Being part of the Japanese American community in the camp helped alleviate the loneliness Ishigo felt as a result of her estrangement from some of the white friends she left behind in the West Coast after she entered the camp. Lois Hunt was one of Ishigo's white friends who had corresponded more frequently with her until mid 1943.<sup>65</sup> On September 28, 1943, Hunt sent a letter requesting that Ishigo try not to contact her again because she had recently married "an American officer" and realized that her friendship with Ishigo "might be misconstrued to mean that I was disloyal to America." Hunt stated that she needed to take steps to "repair what harm I may have innocently done to myself and to my husband and to prevent anything of the kind in the future."<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless, Ishigo kept in touch with most of her white friends during her internment, while camp life gave her an eye-opening experience of assimilation into the Japanese American culture and community.

For Elaine Yoneda, camp life offered an opportunity to make new friends, too. Yet, Yoneda realized that her equal commitment to her roles as a political activist, mother, and wife did not fit the traditional gender norms for women in the Japanese American community. Yoneda was popular among the young adults and women in the Manzanar camp, and her family was a regular member of a "Sunday deviled egg party." Although she enjoyed socializing with

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<sup>64</sup> *Days of Waiting*, DVD, directed by Steven Okazaki (1990; Berkeley, Calif.: Farallon Films, 2000). Letters from Community Activities Hdq. to Estelle Ishigo, June 10, 1944 and June 17, 1944, #4, Box 77, EIP. Estelle Ishigo's memoir depicted the cultural activities of internees. Ishigo, *Lone Heart Mountain*, 64–72.

<sup>65</sup> Estelle Ishigo and Lois Hunt exchanged correspondences on a weekly basis between 1942 and mid 1943. #3, Box 77, EIP.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Lois Hunt to Estelle Ishigo, September 28, 1943, Estelle Ishigo case file, Box 1653, WRACF.

new Japanese friends, according to Yoneda's biographer, Vivian Raineri, Yoneda was conscious that the equal participation in housework between the partners in her household was a "reversal of the traditional male-female roles in Japanese families." While the whole camp appreciated Yoneda's fight with camp officials to fix bathroom facilities, Raineri contended that Yoneda "walked a line between her propensity for lusty struggle and her awareness of the subdued role of women in many Japanese families."<sup>67</sup>

Estelle Ishigo, Elaine Yoneda, and Charlotte Susu-Mago were among a small contingent of non-Japanese and Japanese internees who resisted the living conditions at the camps. Because "most inmates did not actively resist [the living conditions of the camps]," historian Roger Daniels describes "life behind barbed wire in America's concentration camps" as a story of "survival."<sup>68</sup> Whereas Japanese American internees remained silent and afraid, Ishigo, Yoneda, and Susu-Mago, the white wives of Japanese Americans, recognized themselves as belonging to the larger Japanese American community in the camps and spoke out on behalf of their fellow internees.

### **Addressing the Equal Treatment of Interracial Families: Responses of the White Wives of Japanese Men to the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948**

Between 1948 and 1954, government policies on former internees almost completely ignored the fact that white wives of Japanese husbands were also interned. Sixty three out of the 105 white women who were married to Japanese Americans were temporary or permanent residents of internment camps for the duration of the war. However, the U.S. government excluded these white women from the list of members of Japanese American families who were eligible for postwar evacuation claims. In 1948, President Truman encouraged Congress to pass

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<sup>67</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 217–218.

<sup>68</sup> Daniels, *Prisoners without Trial*, 65.

the Evacuation Claims Act in order to compensate for the loss of “real or personal property” of Japanese Americans. Unfortunately, this act failed to guarantee that former internees would be compensated for more than a small portion of the property loss that they suffered. In 1952, the Department of Justice paid only \$37 million in damages, while former internees had filed 26,568 claims totaling \$148 million.<sup>69</sup> The evacuation claims of mixed-marriage families were further reduced because the non-Japanese spouse of “a person of Japanese ancestry” was deemed ineligible to claim her interest in her family’s evacuation claims.

Most mixed marriage families rarely attempted to confront the government over the exclusion of non-Japanese internees from the coverage of the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act. In 1952, Karl and Elaine Yoneda agreed to settle their “modest loss claim of \$1,355” for \$1,010. Then the Justice Department notified them that the amount was reduced to \$677.50, and that this amount “excludes interest of one spouse deemed ineligible.” The final payment that the Yonedas received was \$460. It took Yoneda almost thirty years to openly address the frustration she had in 1952. At the Los Angeles hearings held by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in 1981, Yoneda described the process of her evacuation claim as an “insult” that was “added to the injury in direct relation to the ‘evacuation.’” At the hearings, Yoneda stated that they could have appealed but decided not to because the appeals process would be a “futile and costly undertaking.” However, she never forgot the injustice done to her and her family by the U.S. government. “Though I had been housed,” Elaine said, “fed the same as all evacuees, and paid the meager sum of \$12.00 or \$16.00 per month for a forty-eight-hour work week, I was denied a share of our joint losses.”<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ng, *Japanese American Internment during World War II*, 100–101.

<sup>70</sup> Elaine Yoneda, “Statement to the Commission,” in Inada, ed., *Only What We Could Carry*, 171.

In 1953, two white wives of Japanese Americans who were former internees requested the Department of Justice to adjudicate their exclusion from their husbands' evacuation claim. Eunice Pearl Down was the white American wife of Julius Down, who was a Japanese citizen of "Eurasian descent" with three-quarters white, one-quarter Japanese ancestry. Down made a request under her husband's name that the Department of Justice review her case, claiming that she had to be evacuated so that she could remain with her daughter, who was only sixteen months old at the time of her initial internment. According to the WDC's policy, Down's daughter, who was of one-eighth Japanese "blood," was required to register for evacuation.<sup>71</sup>

The Justice Department examined whether or not Eunice Down, a white person of no Japanese ancestry, could be seen as meeting the racial qualification for evacuation claims. According to the *Down* ruling, Eunice Down was qualified "as an 'excluded person of Japanese ancestry' within the intendment of the Statute [of the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act]." Although Down was "of Caucasian descent" and had "no Japanese ancestor," the decision ruled that she had become "a person of Japanese ancestry" by "executing the prescribed 'Request and Waiver' form and entering the Assembly Center with her part Japanese child." The *Down* decision reasoned that Down had not had "a real choice" to "remain behind to care for the property" because it was obvious that "the compulsive force of the blood tie would inevitably prescribe avoidance of separation of parent and child and compel the non-Japanese parent to undergo evacuation." Therefore, the ruling concluded that Down had been "forced by the order excluding her part-Japanese child to accept quasi-Japanese ancestry status."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> "Adjudication of the Claim of Julius Down No. 146-35-3593," February 26, 1953, #2, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>72</sup> "Adjudication of the Claim of Julius Down No. 146-35-3593," February 26, 1953, #2, Box 79, EIP.

The Justice Department placed limitations on this treatment of white spouses of Japanese Americans as “persons of Japanese ancestry.” The forced nature of Eunice Down’s evacuation and her quasi-Japanese status as an evacuee were recognized because she was a mother of a toddler at the time of evacuation. In contrast, the childless Estelle Ishigo, the white American wife of a Nisei man, Arthur Ishigo, claimed that she had to be evacuated as a “dependent” and a “wife” who could not support herself, the Department of Justice rejected her claim.<sup>73</sup> According to the Department, the Evacuation Claims Act did not enable non-Japanese spouse of “a person of Japanese ancestry” to file an evacuation claim.<sup>74</sup>

Remarkably, Estelle Ishigo’s three-year-long battle with the U.S. government over evacuation claims revealed the ways that postwar liberal politics almost deliberately dismissed the question of treating non-Japanese members of mixed-marriage families equally under the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948. In March 1952, Ishigo began to challenge the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act by writing letters to Congressman Cecil King and President Truman after she knew that her family’s evacuation claim had been slashed by almost 80%.<sup>75</sup> Estelle and Arthur Ishigo originally reported the loss of \$850 and suggested a compromise settlement of \$506.25. In November 1951, Arthur Ishigo was notified that he would be paid \$102.50 of which the amount excluded the “interest of one spouse deemed ineligible.” In January 1952, Estelle Ishigo learned

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<sup>73</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Warren Burger, October 22, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>74</sup> Letter from Warren Burger to Estelle Ishigo, November 9, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to the President, March 7, 1952; Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Cecil King, March 30, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

that she had been “deemed ineligible to claim under the Evacuation Claims Act” because she was “not a person of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>76</sup>

In her letters to President Truman and Congressman Cecil King, Estelle Ishigo stressed that interracial families were part of the Japanese American families whose civil rights had been denied by the military. She explained that she had chosen to be evacuated with her husband in April 1942 instead of “to remain out” alone in Los Angeles because the latter option would “involve the desertion of my husband in time of distress, changing my name and the finance to move away in order to avoid actions of prejudices by those who found me as the wife of a man of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>77</sup> She also claimed that her family’s case should be covered by the Evacuation Claims Act because it was the WDC that permitted “families that were a combination of Japanese and Caucasian ancestry” to “be taken into camps and deprived their rights of citizenship and held untrustworthy for returning to live and work in military areas until Dec. 18, 1944.”<sup>78</sup>

In April 1952, when Congressman King contacted the Department of Justice regarding Ishigo’s claim, he learned that the Department interpreted it as little more than a complaint.<sup>79</sup> Ishigo disagreed, arguing that the Act discriminated against her family for racial reasons. In a letter to King dated May 14, 1952, Ishigo stated that during the internment, she, “a wife [of a Japanese man] not of Japanese ancestry,” had been “recognized by the government as part of a family unit by marriage, eligible to receive the same prejudice and suspicions, and eligible for

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<sup>76</sup> The Ishigos originally claimed \$1,325 while the Department of Justice reduced the amount of the original claim to \$850. Letter from Robert Morris, Jr. to the Department of Justice, January 3, 1952; Letter from Robert Morris, Jr. to Arthur Ishigo, January 8, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>77</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to the President, March 7, 1952; Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Cecil King, March 30, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>78</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to the President, March 7, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Holmes Baldrige to Cecil King, April 24, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

the same confinement and restrictions as persons of Japanese ancestry.” Ishigo criticized that, after the war, the U.S. government denied her “eligibility” to be included in her family’s evacuation claim because of her race. According to Ishigo, the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act “suggests erroneous judgment in regard to professed Amer[ican] Demo[cratic] race relations” and “also adds a new form to race prejudice and hardship already being endured.”<sup>80</sup> King sympathized with Ishigo’s frustration and found her case convincing. He proposed a bill to “authorize the Attorney General to adjudicate certain claims of the American spouses of persons of Japanese ancestry resulting from evacuation of certain persons of Japanese ancestry under military orders,” although Congress never passed the bill.<sup>81</sup>

In July 1953, five months after the *Down* decision, the Department of Justice advised that Ishigo might be able to submit an affidavit proving that she “did not have a real choice in making a decision to remain outside of a relocation center.” However, the Department doubted that Estelle could win her case, stating that “the enforced separation of husband and wife is a normal consequence of war” and that “such threatened separation can hardly be likened to the threat to separate mother and infant child, as a coercive force.” From the Justice Department’s perspective, “nothing in the *Down* case or the legislative history” of the Evacuation Claims Act indicated that “the emotional ties of marriage alone” were “sufficient to justify a conclusion that the phrase in the Evacuation Claims Act, ‘person of Japanese ancestry,’ was intended to extend to the spouse of such a person who in fact had no such ancestry.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Letter from Holmes Baldrige to Estelle Ishigo, April 9, 1952; Letter from Holmes Baldrige to Cecil King, April 24, 1952; Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Cecil King, May 14, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Cecil King to Estelle Ishigo with a copy of H.R. 8353, June 24, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>82</sup> Letter from Warren Burger, signed by Enoch Ellison, to Estelle Ishigo, July 28, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

On October 22, 1953, Ishigo presented her case to the Department of Justice, focusing on the financial difficulties and racial prejudice toward Japanese American families that she suffered as a white wife of a Japanese American in 1942. She stressed that she had been “a dependent” and “a housewife” who had been “trained only in music and the fine arts.” She could not find jobs to support herself after Pearl Harbor because the surge of the anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast had made even a white wife of a Japanese husband an easy target of unemployment and racial bigotry. Ishigo was told to leave her teaching job at the Hollywood Art Center because the center thought that the students and their parents would “object to her Japanese name.” Although she found employment at a drug store soda fountain that paid her “only twenty five cents per hour,” she felt threatened by her employer, who called anyone who had talked to her husband “a ‘5th columnist.’”<sup>83</sup>

Estelle wanted the Department of Justice to recognize that despite her race, she was acculturated into the Japanese American community, due to her marriage and the fact that the military had constructed her identity as quasi-Japanese during the war. Speaking of herself in the third person, she wrote, “her attempts to plan an adjustment to save herself and her husband from internment in a relocation camp met with failure, and there was nothing possible left for her to do but go with the people of whose ancestry she had become a part.” She also underscored the fact that she had been “classified by the army as of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>84</sup>

The Department of Justice did not recognize any of Ishigo’s reasons for evacuation as coming within the parameters of the *Down* decision and dismissed her affidavit.<sup>85</sup> Ishigo

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<sup>83</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Warren Burger, October 22, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from Warren Burger to Estelle Ishigo, July 28, 1953; Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Warren Burger, October 22, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from Warren Burger to Estelle Ishigo, November 9, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

returned to lawmakers and began to contact the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). By the end of 1953, her lawyer, J. Allan Frankel, contacted Congressman King, and persuaded him to introduce a new bill that would “be of benefit to many other Caucasians who suffered loss of property during the war by the reason of their marriage to a person of Japanese ancestry.”<sup>86</sup> Because Ishigo had moved to another district in Los Angeles, King advised Frankel to contact Congressman Samuel Yorty in her new district.<sup>87</sup> In her letter to Yorty dated February 15, 1954, Ishigo requested that he “use your good offices to make possible the introduction of legislation that will permit more equitable laws, long needed, in instances involving inter-racial marriages.”<sup>88</sup> She also urged the JACL to pay attention to cases like her “evacuation as a Caucasian” with her husband of Japanese ancestry “to an internment camp during World War II,” and to support legislation that would “in the future preclude any further inequalities under the law in specific cases of this nature.”<sup>89</sup>

Although Congressman Yorty and the JACL expressed their interest in Ishigo’s case, they were hesitant to take immediate action and doubtful about the possibility of passing legislation that would benefit her because a case like hers comprised only a small part of the entire evacuation claims. Yorty appeared to give up on proposing a new bill after receiving a reply from the Department of Justice that explained that claims like Ishigo’s were “relatively few in number.”<sup>90</sup> In March, 1954, Mike Masaoka, the representative of the JACL’s Washington office, informed Ishigo that the JACL had failed to convince the Department of Justice that in

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<sup>86</sup> Letter from J. Allan Frankel to Cecil King, December 10, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from Cecil King to J. Allan Frankel, December 21, 1953, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Samuel Yorty, February 15, 1954, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Mike Masaoka, February 15, 1954, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>90</sup> Letter from Geo. Stephen Leonard to Samuel Yorty, July 14, 1954; Letter from Gene Miller to Estelle Ishigo, August 2, 1954, #1, Box 79, EIP.

cases like hers, in which both husband and wife were evacuated, “both parties are entitled to compensation.” Three months later, Masoka wrote Ishigo that the JACL had “not taken a position on this particular matter.”<sup>91</sup> Finally, in November 1954, Ishigo and J. Allen Frankel expected that the Hollings Act, an Amendment to the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act, might “protect the interests” of non-Japanese internees who were married to Japanese Americans. Yet, Frankel’s request to the Chairman of the House Judiciary Sub-Committee went unanswered.<sup>92</sup>

Estelle Ishigo’s legal battle with the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 reveals the significant gap between postwar civil rights groups and her quest to put forth the agenda of interracial families’ equal rights under the law. Liberal politicians and civil rights activists shied away from extending their support for the civil rights of former internees to the white wives of Japanese Americans. Ishigo criticized the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act’s exclusion of white spouses of Japanese Americans as a violation of the civil rights of interracial families. She contended that the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act was an “un-American, un-democratic, and un-Constitutional offense” because it “ignores the Constitution and its Bill of Rights and the California State Law in refusing to recognize the family and its property as a community where intermarriage existed at the time of forced evacuation.”<sup>93</sup>

Ishigo’s criticism of the U.S. government’s unequal treatment of her family led to her emphatic claims that the civil rights of interracial families should be protected by federal laws and that interracial marriage between whites and Japanese Americans was “normal.”<sup>94</sup> In fact, she was well aware that the state of California had anti-miscegenation laws because Estelle and

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<sup>91</sup> Letters from Mike Masaoka to Estelle Ishigo, March 2 and June 28, 1954, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>92</sup> Letter from J. Allan Frankel to Chairman House Judiciary Sub-Committee, November 29, 1954, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>93</sup> Estelle Ishigo’s manuscript dated February 7, 1954, #2, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>94</sup> Estelle Ishigo’s manuscript dated February 7, 1954, #2, Box 79, EIP.

Arthur Ishigo had a wedding ceremony in Mexico in 1929 to avoid California's anti-miscegenation laws.<sup>95</sup> When Estelle asserted that "the California State Law" recognized interracial marriage in 1952, she referred to the fact that California accepted her out-of-state interracial marriage as legal. Born and raised in California, where the absolute majority of Japanese Americans had resided since the early twentieth century, Ishigo considered that it was "normal that there should be friendly community relations and intermarriage [between whites and Japanese Americans]."<sup>96</sup> Although Ishigo did not mention anti-miscegenation laws, her view of interracial marriage as "normal" was similar to the discursive strategy that postwar civil rights advocates used in attacking anti-miscegenation laws as obstructing "natural rights" to interracial marriage.<sup>97</sup>

Although their hardships as former internees were never recognized, Estelle Ishigo and Elaine Yoneda remained devoted to the redress movement of the Japanese American community once it began to emerge in the late 1960s.<sup>98</sup> Elaine and Karl Yoneda became members of the Manzanar Committee and attended pilgrimages to the site of the Manzanar camp with other former internees, starting with its first organized pilgrimage in 1969. Sue Kunitomi Embrey recalled that Elaine Yoneda helped other members of the committee set goals "to educate the American public about the World War II internment, to spread the word about redress legislation."<sup>99</sup> In 1972, Estelle Ishigo donated all her drawings, letters, memos, and documents

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<sup>95</sup> *Days of Waiting*.

<sup>96</sup> Estelle Ishigo's manuscript dated February 7, 1954, #2, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>97</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 205–245.

<sup>98</sup> Mitchell T. Maki, Harry H.L. Kitano, and S. Megan Berthold, *Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress* (Urbana, Ill., 1999).

<sup>99</sup> Raineri, *The Red Angel*, 278–279.

related to her camp life and evacuation claims to the California Historical Society and published her book, *Lone Heart Mountain*.<sup>100</sup>

White women who followed their Japanese American husbands into camps suffered the racist nature of the internment of Japanese Americans and the gendered prejudice toward their own interracial marriage in a form of the mixed marriage policy. To keep their families together, many white wives of Japanese Americans evacuated voluntarily with their husbands and children. These women even agreed to relinquish their white identity and to be treated like “persons of Japanese ancestry” in internment camps. White wives of Japanese Americans placed the interests of their husbands and children ahead of their own, thereby becoming victims of Japanese American internment.

Overall, both mixed marriage families headed by Japanese husbands and white women and white society believed that such mixed marriage families should not be interned because those families had been Americanized. Most white women who were married to Japanese Americans claimed that the environment of their families was “Caucasian.” Arguing against the mixed marriage policy, which stipulated that a Japanese father of half Japanese, half white children should be separated from the children, white wives of Japanese men rarely shied away from claiming their Japanese husbands’ right to be with their family at home and from defending the Americanization of their husbands. Most white Americans, who had personal relations with interracial families headed by Japanese husbands and white wives, considered them to be Americanized due primarily to the existence of a white wife and /or mother in the families.

Estelle Ishigo, Charlotte Susu-Mago, and Elaine Yoneda were representative of the small group of white women married to Japanese Americans who experienced camp life as an

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<sup>100</sup> Ishigo, *Lone Heart Mountain*.

opportunity to become a part of the Japanese American community. While other white female internees isolated themselves from Japanese American neighbors, Ishigo, Susu-Mago, and Yoneda built friendships with their fellow internees. These three white women were not afraid to confront camp officials and address the grievances of their Japanese American neighbors. They came to understand that they experienced the internment of Japanese Americans as members of Japanese American families, whose civil rights were unjustly suspended due to American society's racism, not just as members of mixed-marriage families.

## CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

During the World War II internment of Japanese Americans, the military's policy on mixed marriage families forced more than 60 white women married to Japanese Americans to become internees. The Truman administration and Congress ignored the existence of these white female internees with their symbolic gesture of the 1948 Evacuation Claims Act. Evacuation claims were made under the name of the male heads of Japanese American families. The Act declared internees of non-Japanese ancestry ineligible for evacuation claims because Congress reasoned that persons of non-Japanese ancestry were not subject to evacuation orders in 1942.

On May 14, 1952, Estelle Ishigo, a white woman who had spent three years in the Heart Mountain camp with her Nisei husband during the war, wrote a letter to Congressman Cecil King. In the letter, she clarified that during the war the government recognized her marriage to a man of Japanese ancestry in order to make her "eligible to receive the same prejudice and suspicions, and eligible for the same confinement and restrictions as persons of Japanese ancestry."<sup>1</sup> However, when it came to her Japanese husband's decision to include her in his evacuation claim, the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 dismissed his decision simply because she was not a person of Japanese ancestry. Ishigo interpreted the Act as denying the existence of interracial marriages between whites and Japanese Americans. "In considering over fifty years of migration by people from Japan, who made their homes here in America," Ishigo maintained, "it is normal that there should be friendly community relations and intermarriage."<sup>2</sup>

While the Truman administration and Congress shied away from Estelle Ishigo's call for the recognition of an interracial marriage between a Japanese man and a white woman, they

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Estelle Ishigo to Cecil King, May 14, 1952, #1, Box 79, EIP.

<sup>2</sup> Estelle Ishigo's manuscript dated February 7, 1954, #2, Box 79, EIP.

quickly responded to white servicemen's claim that they should be able to bring their Japanese brides to the U.S. In 1952, the Truman administration and Congress cleared a major roadblock for the admission of Japanese war brides of American GIs by ending the exclusion of Asians in the 1952 Walter-McCarran Act. Between 1952 and 1953, approximately 6,220 Japanese brides of American soldiers entered the U.S. on non-quota immigrant visas.<sup>3</sup> It is estimated that there were another several thousand Japanese brides of American servicemen in Japan in 1952 and that over three-quarters of these Japanese brides of American soldiers were married to whites.<sup>4</sup>

Historians of interracial marriage in postwar America state that legal and social barriers to interracial marriage slowly began to fall in postwar America due to the influx of European war brides of black GIs between 1944 and 1950 and that of Japanese war brides of white GIs between 1947 and 1953.<sup>5</sup> Both black and white GIs who wanted to marry across racial lines abroad faced obstacles from military officials. Civil rights groups at home denounced military officials' opposition to American soldiers' choices of their own marital partners as a violation of civil rights, particularly if these soldiers' home states did not prohibit interracial marriage.<sup>6</sup>

The JACL contemplated using a marriage between a white GI and a Japanese war bride to challenge anti-miscegenation laws. In the end, the JACL decided that such marriages were not

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<sup>3</sup> In 1952, 4,220 Japanese war brides were admitted to the U.S. and another 2000 Japanese brides of American citizens entered the U.S. in the following year. Shukert and Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II*, 216.

<sup>4</sup> According to the report of the American Consul General, by December 1952, there were 10,217 Japanese brides of American soldiers and more than 75% of these brides were married to "Caucasian Americans." Shukert and Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II*, 217.

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the marriages between black GIs and European women, see Alex Lubin, *Romance and Rights: the Politics of Interracial Intimacy, 1945–1954* (Jackson, Miss., 2005), 96–122; Romano, *Race Mixing*, 12–27. With regard to the marriages between white GIs and Japanese women, see Shukert and Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II*, 185–218; Spickard, *Mixed Blood*, 121–158. For the information about the Japanese war brides of black GIs and the black community's responses to them, see Lubin, *Romance and Rights*, 115–118. Regarding Japanese war brides' domestic lives in the U.S., see Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Lubin, *Romance and Rights*, 107–108; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 198–199; Romano, *Race Mixing*, 23–26.

useful in attacking anti-miscegenation laws because they took place on military bases in Japan.<sup>7</sup> According to Pascoe, civil rights organizations and lawyers had believed that marriages between white GIs and Japanese women would be strategically effective in tackling anti-miscegenation laws because these marriages were about “White men’s rights to choose their marital partners.”<sup>8</sup> While turn-of-the-century American liberals defended interracial marriages between “Oriental” men and white women against whites’ opposition to interracial marriage, postwar liberal challenges to anti-miscegenation laws chose to focus on white men’s marriages to Asian women.

My work argues that the influx of Japanese war brides of white soldiers in postwar America represents another instance in which the U.S. government adjusted immigration policies in order to respect white men’s patriarchal prerogatives to choose their spouses. As Chapter 2 has revealed, the U.S. government had had a history of admitting Japanese wives of white men as legal immigrants some nine years after Asian immigration had been blocked in 1924. Beginning with the Soldier Brides Act of 1947, the Truman administration briefly allowed Japanese wives of American soldiers to enter the U.S. as spouses of American citizens.<sup>9</sup> A greater influx of Japanese and other Asian war brides, who were mostly married to white soldiers, began in the 1950s, a time when the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 repealed the 1924 National Origins Act and enabled persons of all Asian national origins to become naturalized citizens.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the 1952

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<sup>7</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 234.

<sup>8</sup> Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 234.

<sup>9</sup> The Soldier Brides Act of 1947 (Public Law 213) allowed the “alien spouse of an American citizen by marriage occurring before 30 days” after July 22, 1947 to enter the U.S. regardless of race. In August 1950, at the outbreak of the Korean War, Congress passes Public Law 717 to allow American soldiers to apply for permission to marry Japanese women until February 1951. Public Law 717 was later extended to March 1952. It was recorded that fewer than 900 Japanese war brides entered the U.S. prior to 1952. Shukert and Scibetta, *War Brides of World War II*, 209–217.

<sup>10</sup> For more information about Korean military brides of American soldiers, see Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York, 2002).

McCarran-Walter Act retained the quota system and created an “Asia Pacific Triangle,” which limited immigration quotas for each Asian country to 100.<sup>11</sup> However, Asian war brides of American soldiers were admitted as “non-quota immigrants” under the provision in the 1924 National Origins Act that declared a foreign spouse of an American citizen “a non-quota immigrant.”<sup>12</sup>

My work has tried to offer a fuller account of marriages between whites and Chinese and/or Japanese Americans between 1880 and 1954 with a focus on those marriages in the U.S. West. Although most states in the West prohibited marriages between Asians and whites, a small but continuous stream of such marriages took place—due to the possibility of evading anti-miscegenation laws. My work has examined how race and gender critically defined the ways that interracial couples between whites and Chinese and/or Japanese Americans experienced the consequences of marriages across racial lines. Between 1850s and 1950s, nativism, patriarchy, and white supremacy were the ideological backbones of federal laws on overseas marriage, citizenship, immigration, and naturalization. These federal laws generated a race and gender hierarchy among interracial marriages between whites and Chinese and/or Japanese Americans in terms of the ways that Chinese and Japanese immigrants’ marriages to whites affected their immigration and citizenship status. White men married to Asian women could make their wives legal immigrants even when Asian immigration was completely restricted between 1924 and 1943. By contrast, the 1907 Expatriation Act stripped the citizenship of white women who

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<sup>11</sup> Regarding the racist features of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952, see Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 237–239.

<sup>12</sup> In 1946, 70,000 British war brides of American servicemen entered the U.S. under the War Brides Act of 1945 and it is estimated that 150,000 to 200,000 European women were married to U.S. servicemen between 1944 and 1950. The War Brides Act of 1945 defined “alien spouses or alien children” of U.S. servicemen as “non-quota immigrants” based on the section 4 (a) of the Immigration Act of 1924.

married Chinese or Japanese men, and these marriages made no changes to the immigration status of their husbands, who remained ineligible for naturalized citizenship.

My work has argued that the military's mixed marriage policy during the World War II internment of Japanese Americans was deeply biased not just in racial terms, but on the basis of gender as well. The mixed marriage policy bolstered white men's prerogatives to have their Japanese wives and mixed race children safely ensconced within their patriarchal household, rather than in internment camp, while squarely denying Japanese men the same prerogatives. As a result, Japanese women who had children with their white husbands became the only group of Japanese Americans who were allowed to return to the West Coast when all American-born persons of Japanese ancestry were stripped of their citizenship rights and were incarcerated.

One of the two main parts of my work is to explore progressive criticisms of nativism and white supremacy that underpinned the anti-miscegenation laws and other government policies. Thus I examined how the ideas of four progressive intellectuals—Franz Boas, W.E.B. Du Bois, Sidney Gulick, and Robert Park—repudiated the negative constructions of interracial marriage embedded in anti-miscegenation laws. Notably, these four scholars viewed interracial marriage as vehicles of racial assimilation and harmony at a time when most whites abhorred the phenomena of interracial marriage and mixed race offspring.

The other main objective of my work is to unearth the reactions of interracial couples (especially white women who were married to either Chinese or Japanese men) to the racialized and gendered policing of interracial marriage at both state and federal governments' levels. Both spouses in marriages between white women and Chinese and/or Japanese men acted upon the belief that Asian immigrants' marriages to white women proved the former's willingness to be assimilated. White women married to Chinese and/or Japanese immigrants considered

themselves as Americanizing agents of their husbands and mixed race children, although this perspective never gained credence among whites generally. White women married to second-generation Japanese Americans reacted to the mixed marriage policy in ways that emphasized the civil rights of their husbands and mixed race children.

Recent scholarship on the history of miscegenation laws and interracial marriage has emphasized the significance of studying the complex ways that miscegenation laws affected American ideas of race and gender prior to 1967.<sup>13</sup> My work intends to contribute to this recent scholarship by focusing on marriages between whites and Chinese and Japanese Americans in the West before 1954—a history that reveals how anti-miscegenation laws worked in conjunction with federal laws to create a race-and-gender hierarchy in interracial marriages. The U.S. government basically dismissed the voices of white women and their Chinese/Japanese American husbands, who defended their marriages and their rights to a family. These white women proclaimed their husbands' assimilability and asserted their civil rights, as well the Americanness of their families, from 1890 to 1954.

The demise of miscegenation laws in the U.S. has resulted in a slow but conspicuous increase in interracial marriage as well as in the growth of interracial families. Asian Americans have known for their contributions to this postwar phenomenon. Asian American scholarship has portrayed interracial marriage as a postwar phenomenon, and as a result has perpetuated the (mis)understanding that the main form of Asian interracial marriages historically has involved white men marrying Asian women. This characterization is true of the postwar period: across ethnic divisions among Asian Americans, marriages between Asian American women and white

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<sup>13</sup> Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*; Lubin, *Romance and Rights*; Moran, *Interracial Intimacy*; Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*.

men have outnumbered marriages between Asian American men and white women by large margins.<sup>14</sup>

However, this characterization is not true of the earlier period, in which the reverse was true: the primary form of Asian-white marriages involved white women marrying Asian men. Although it was believed that only lower-class or missionary white women would marry Chinese and/or Japanese men, my work has shown that marriages between white women and Chinese or Japanese men took place across social classes. Regardless of their social class and education backgrounds, white women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men faced objections from their parents, siblings, and friends and tried to avoid attention from outside society.

Nonetheless, most of these white women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men did not shy away from supporting their marriages across racial lines whenever they were given a chance to speak. For instance, these women gave details about their marriages and children when interviewed by the Survey of Race Relations in 1924. During the internment of Japanese Americans, white wives of Japanese Americans wrote many letters to government officials, from the President of the United States to camp officials, pleading for the release of their husbands from internment camps. Although Estelle Ishigo did not win her legal battles with the government over the Evacuation Claims Act of 1948, she kept every memo and letter she wrote

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<sup>14</sup> One of the most recent statistics on interracial marriage patterns for Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, and Vietnamese, indicates that interracial or interethnic marriages are rather uncommon among these Asian American ethnic groups while most of the interracially married Asian Americans are married to whites. Gender gaps among Asian Americans married to whites are noticeable except for Asian Indians. In 2007, rates of marriages to whites for Asian Indian men are 5.5% while rates of Asian Indian women's marriages to whites are 4.3%. It is recorded that rates of marriages to whites for Chinese men and women are 5.3% and 13.9%, respectively. Rates of marriages to whites for Filipino men and women are 9.2% and 27.2%, respectively. Both Japanese men and women are more likely to marry whites than other Asian American ethnic groups: 19.7% of Japanese men and 38.2% of Japanese women are married to whites. Gender gaps in marriages to whites are more noticeable among Koreans and Vietnamese. Rates of marriages to whites for Korean men and women are 5.5% and 23.7%, respectively. While 2.9% of Vietnamese men are married to whites, 11.3% of Vietnamese women have white spouses. C.N. Le, "Interracial Dating and Marriage," *Asian-Nation: the Landscape of Asian America* (2011), [retrieved 12 January 2011], available from <http://www.asian-nation.org/interracial.shtml> .

and received from congressmen, lawyers, and the Justice Department, between 1952 and 1954, and donated them to the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1971.

I have been inspired by the audacity of those white women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men who stood up and criticized the race prejudices of whites when their husbands and children suffered racial marginalization. These white women had already posed challenges to anti-miscegenation laws before postwar liberals organized to strike down the laws. These white women married to Chinese and/or Japanese men claimed their right to call Asian men husbands and to have mixed race children with their Asian husbands at home in the U.S. West half a century before white American servicemen asked for their rights to marry Japanese women abroad between 1945 and 1952.

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