

Definitional questions are dealt with by supplying several useful conceptualizations for each key term. Language is seen as a human problem, as well as a human resource, and this volume is an attempt to develop useful perspectives on the problem.

While an introductory, exploratory, review of a subject area as broad as this can not result in any firm conclusion, some approximations do develop. O'Barr finds that language is seldom the basic issue itself, but rather mirrors the political reality, serving as the expressive vehicle for political issues. Not only do the language and words used signify the relationships, but the very opportunities to speak indicate status as well. Denial of such opportunity, whether by editorial decision or by monolingual ballots results in the inability of some persons to "speak themselves." Governmental choice of permissible language reflects other, more basic decisions about natural relationships within culture, as in the U.S. "melting pot" myth as opposed to the Canadian mosaic. Additionally, understanding of the past, as well as the present, is colored by the language in which it is recorded.

By raising these political issues and their linguistic components, vehicles and expressions, the writers have made a substantial contribution. Although the essayists vary in clarity, precision, depth, and originality, the overall impact of the volume is positive and productive. Well referenced and indexed, the book will serve as a valuable resource for researchers willing to take the analysis to the next step, the organization and integration phase.

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**Michi Kodama-Nishimoto, Warren S. Nishimoto, and Cynthia A. Oshiro, eds. *Hanahana: An Oral History Anthology of Hawaii's Working People*. (Honolulu: Ethnic Studies Oral History Project, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1984) xvi, 178 pp., \$14.95.**

Oral history is unquestionably an important method for recovering the history of ethnic groups, particularly of ethnic working people who leave few written accounts of their own and whose lives are often ignored or else inadequately described by outsiders because of their apparent routineness and unimportance. Unfortunately, many oral history materials remain unknown and unused except by occasional researchers. In 1976, the Hawaii State Legislature established the Oral History Project (OHP, formerly the Ethnic Studies Oral History Project) at the University of Hawaii to record the recollections of ethnic working men

and women. Since then, OHP has interviewed over 250 individuals through several major projects. To OHP's credit, it has gone beyond this stage and reached out to the public through slide shows, videotaped documentaries, workshops, a newsletter, and two books, *Uchinanchu* and *Hanahana*.

*Hanahana* contains ten detailed narratives about the lives of twelve individuals from varied ethnic, geographical, and work backgrounds including a Waipio Valley Chinese rice and taro farmer, a Japanese boatbuilder from Honolulu, two Filipino participants in the 1924 plantation strike, a Waialua Portugese plantation couple, and a Maui Chinese storekeeper. These narratives are based on oral history interviews which were then edited to eliminate ambiguous and uninteresting parts and to provide greater coherence and readability. The narratives describe work, family, and community experience with vividness and realism. While each is unique, together they present a picture of hardship, struggle, ambition, accomplishment, vitality, and the value of the ordinary features of life. Each account is prefaced with information on the person's life history and the circumstances of the original interview. A useful glossary and an introduction by the three editors, all OHP staff members, comprise the remainder of the book.

Some readers may be disturbed that these narratives do not represent the entire spectrum of Hawaii's ethnic working people, or that the original interviews were edited, or that it is difficult to assess the veracity and recall abilities of the interviewees. None of this is problematic as this book is really an effort to provide a general audience with the personal views of a sample of ethnic working people whose contributions to Hawaiian history are often overlooked. For those who require more, *Hanahana* can serve as a first step and an incentive to explore OHP's interview transcripts. However, since many non-Hawaiian readers will be relatively unfamiliar with that state's economic, political, and social history, a brief introductory summary of the latter should have been included. In this summary, attention could have been given to patterns of labor immigration, the nature of the plantation-based economy, ethnic and economic class divisions, and social changes including the contributions of ethnic working men and women to a more democratic, multi-ethnic Hawaiian society. In addition, this book might have benefited from some concluding analytic insights based on the ten narratives and related OHP interviews.

*Hanahana* is recommended as an enjoyable overview of Hawaii's ethnic working people. It is also an excellent example of how oral history materials can be made accessible to the public—thereby making the “people's history” available to the people.

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