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Acculturation under duress: The Puerto Rican experience at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School 1898-1918

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1901 photograph of Puerto Rican students at CIIS. Originally published in the article "Una visita al Indian School", by Luis Muñoz Rivera (Puerto Rico Herald 1(10)) 14 September 1901. Reprinted, by permission, from the Cumberland County Historical Society.

IN MEMORY OF PATRIA RIVERA DE NAVARRO
(1920-2004)

The Indians are just like other men, only minus their environment. Take a new born baby from the arms of a cultivated white woman, and give it to the nurture of a Zulu woman in Africa; take the Zulu's baby away from her and give it to the cultivated white woman. Twenty-five years later you would have a white savage in Africa, and a black scholar, gentleman, and Christian in America. This sharply illustrates what I mean. —RICHARD H. PRATT

Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School.

(For a child not enrolled at an Agency.)

For and in consideration of the United States assuming the care, education, and maintenance in the United States Indian School at Carlisle, Penna., of Emilio de Arce Pagan, male, I, Joaquin L. Mire of San Juan, P. O., State of Porto Rico, do hereby voluntarily consent and agree to his enrollment in said school for a period of three years, and also obligate and bind myself to abide by all the rules and regulations for Indian schools.

I further say that the said child was born at Maquabo, P. R. on Dec. 30, 1892; that the father, Caroline de Arce, was a Indian of the Porto Rican Tribe located at _____ Agency; that he left the tribe about _____;

that the mother, Juana Pagan, was, a Indian of the Porto Rican Tribe located at _____ Agency, and left the tribe about _____; that the said child was born and reared in the Porto Rico United States, and now actually resides therein; and that he has attended the following schools:

NAME OF SCHOOL- PUBLIC GOVERNMENT, OR MISSION.	LOCATED AT-	DATE OF ENROLLMENT.	DATE OF DISCHARGE.	CAUSE OF DISCHARGE.	GRADE.
Emerson Public School San Juan, P. R.		1906	1909	To leave a trade	6th

This 15th day of November, 1910

Two witnesses: Joaquin L. Mire and Carlos Vazquez, P. O., San Juan, P. R.

(NOTE.—Every blank in this application must be properly filled out by the applicant, in his own handwriting, if possible. The signature, whether by mark or otherwise, must be attested by two witnesses.)

AFFIDAVIT.

I, Joaquin L. Mire, do hereby swear that the statements made in the above application are true.

Joaquin L. Mire

were sent to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School Taíno Indians? I believe that there is no right answer to that question” (Rosa 2003).

To support her suggestion, Rosa refers to the work of Juan Martínez Cruzado (2002), also published in the journal *Kacike*. Martínez Cruzado maintains that he has found a Taíno genetic heritage in the populations of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. However, Martínez Cruzado’s article makes no reference to the CIIS or to the Puerto Rican students sent there. With regard to Carlisle, the subject of this essay, there is no evidence that the United States specifically sent Taíno Indians who had presumably survived the Spanish conquest.

To the leadership of the United States, both Puerto Ricans and Cubans were “colored” and should be educated in the same way as the Blacks and Indians in the United States. They set up public school systems in Cuba and Puerto Rico and established scholarships to send students to schools in the United States such as the Hampton Institute in Virginia, the Tuskegee Normal School in Tuskegee, Alabama, and the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The selection of Puerto Rican students was based not on any possible Taíno origin, but on other factors such as the connections between their families and the regime in power in Puerto Rico.

In this essay I will examine the history, mission, goals, and program of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. I will also discuss the context of the school’s founding, and its relation to the sending of male and female Puerto Rican students there, as well as what was known in Puerto Rico about Carlisle and the impact that the Carlisle experience had on those who were sent.

Background

The wave of U.S. expansionism in the nineteenth century very closely followed the pattern set previously by the British Empire. Economic interests that drove the expansion were interwoven with theories of natural superiority and divine mandates or manifest destiny. However, the United States government did not adopt the British practice of governing its colonies indirectly. In fact, the United States did not formally recognize that it had “colonies,” preferring to establish “territories.” U.S. soldiers arrived in Puerto Rico in 1898 in order to impose United States doctrine and economic interests. According to principal leadership elements in the United States, Puerto Rico was an economically and militarily important country, but was inhabited by inferior beings who would need to be “civilized” in order to maximize the potential benefits of the conquest. This was the same evaluation that they made of Indians and Blacks in the United States, as well as Cubans and Filipinos (Zimmerman 2002). In the words of Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University at the time of the 1898 colonial war, and one of the most influential educators in the United States,

If the funds can be secured, it is the plan of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute at Tuskegee, Ala., to bring a number of the most promising Negro young men and women to this institution to receive training, that they may return to Cuba, and start in the interest of the people industrial training on the island. Tuskegee is so near Cuba that it is conveniently located for this work.⁸

Washington added, "What I have said about Cuba applies as well to Porto Rico, where over half the population are Negroes."⁹ The first Cubans arrived at Tuskegee in 1899.

The first to be put in charge of Puerto Rican education after 1898 was General John Eaton, who was a great friend and sympathizer of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. In January 1899, the same month in which General Eaton was appointed to his post on the island, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's periodical, *The Indian Helper*, published the following:

It is eminently fitting that the school teacher should follow the soldier into Porto Rico. If there is anyone who can successfully light the lamp of learning in the island it should be General Eaton, who started so successfully the same work among the freedmen of the south at the close of the civil war.

General Eaton is one of Carlisle's staunchest friends, and we are glad that he has been selected for such an honored position as Commissioner of Education in Porto Rico, which he so eminently fortified by experience and influence to fill.¹⁰

Soon thereafter, Eaton initiated the process by which young Puerto Ricans would be sent to Carlisle. Serious health problems forced Eaton to resign his post about a year after arriving in Puerto Rico to organize the public school system.

Martin G. Brumbaugh, Commissioner of Education for the colonial government in Puerto Rico in 1900 and 1901, indicated in his 1900 annual report that the island had neither good schools nor institutions of higher education, and that it lacked the resources to establish them. On this basis he recommended that the colonial legislature establish scholarships to send 45 students to study in the United States each year. Twenty-five males would be sent to preparatory schools and universities and a second group of twenty males and females would receive scholarships of \$250 each year to study in institutes such as Carlisle, Tuskegee, and Hampton (Commissioner of Education 1904: 25). Brumbaugh, who characterized his educational policy for Puerto Rico as part of a program for "the Americanization of the island" mandated that English be imposed as the

The Legislature of Porto Rico has recently made provision to send from this Island to your school and to Hampton, Va., and to other similar institutions, twenty boys and girls, who will be able to leave this Island as soon after July 1st as you advise in view of the conditions at your school. How many of these twenty can you receive, and at what cost per capita, and under what conditions would you be willing to accept them? It is my desire to send as many to you as you can conveniently accommodate, as I believe you are doing the best work for the colored race that is now being done anywhere in the United States.¹²

In the same letter, Brumbaugh added:

It has occurred to me that in order to break up their Spanish language we might scatter some of them into similar institutions; upon this subject, however, I am not clear and I write to you in perfect frankness for your advise (sic). Would you recommend any other schools besides your own and Hampton for these colored children? If so, will you be kind enough to give me the name and address of such institutions in order that I can take up the question with them? I write this frankly to you because I know that you have the interests of the race at heart and my whole purpose is to do the largest good for these twenty children.

In his book *A History of Education in Puerto Rico*, Osuna (1949: 158) states that a total of 219 Puerto Ricans were studying in the United States in 1901, though he identifies neither the students nor the institutions involved. Osuna says the following:

Besides the teachers, picked youths from the public schools were sent to preparatory schools in the United States. By the summer of 1901, 219 pupils had been sent North and were under the personal oversight of the Commissioner of Education. Some of these pupils were sent to very good schools, while others were not so fortunate, mistakes having been made in selecting some of the schools. Nevertheless the majority of them succeeded, and many of them returned later and made and are making their contribution to the educational as well as to the general progress of the Island.

Osuna was himself one of those students who traveled to the CIIS in May 1901. In his book, he does not specify the errors that were made in selecting United States schools, nor does he explain his view on the implications of such errors.

For her part, Negrón de Montilla (1971: 38) limits herself to stating, in reference to Education Commissioner Martin. G. Brumbaugh, that

The philosophical principles at work at Carlisle and the corresponding practices instituted at the school did not fundamentally differ with regard to Indians and Puerto Ricans. The information available in the existing studies of the CIIS, particularly those of Bell and Ryan, provides a context for understanding the experiences of students from other nations such as Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

Carlisle

Carlisle operated along the lines of a military institute. Upon arriving there, students would pose for a “before” photograph which would later be used to contrast their savage appearance with the civilized persons that they were to become. The student would then get a bath, a haircut, “civilized” clothing, and a Christian name. The use of vernacular languages was forbidden; English was the only language permitted both day and night (Ryan 1962; Lesiak 1991; Navarro 1995; Bell 1998). By the time that the first Puerto Rican student arrived at Carlisle in 1898, the practice of taking “before” and “after” photographs had been discontinued.

Students at Carlisle were constantly observed, and measures were taken to ensure that they did not socialize with others from the same nation or language community. According to Bell:

Students were subject to constant surveillance, both explicit and implicit. Most activities occurred under the watchful eye of teachers, wardens and peers who were prefects. They socialized in restricted areas, and associations between students from the same tribal/National group were actively discouraged. Dormitories, overseen by wardens, were arranged in such a way that students never roomed with someone from their home community or language group (1998: 249).

Just as the “Negro Problem” in the United States had led to the founding of the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes, the “Indian problem” led to the founding of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1879. The conquest of additional new peoples in 1898 added yet another such “problem,” and the Hampton, Tuskegee, and Carlisle models were useful in devising methods for their adaptation. In the case of the Indians, the perceived “problem” was their resistance to the United States appropriation of their national territories and the Federal campaign to destroy them as peoples. In addition to military force, the government used the educational system to suppress indigenous resistance. Between 1873 and 1880, the number of government and religious schools for Indians³ increased from 286 to 393, with an increase in student population from 6,061 to 13,338 (Ryan 1962: 64). According to Ryan, the proportion of school age Indians who were attending school was still only one in twelve, despite these increases.

Supper..... Fall & Winter: 5:30
Evening Hour Spring & Summer: 7:30–8:30
Evening Hour Fall & Winter: 7:00–8:00
Roll Call and Prayer First Call: 8:45
Assembly 9:00
Taps and Inspection of Rooms 9:30

Bell comments on Carlisle and the program there:

Carlisle and schools like it existed to promulgate a federal policy of assimilation. Carlisle parents did not have the same range of choices that most parents have: their children were taken away from them, and resistance could result in a cessation of rations or other government benefits.

Bell also observes that “Letters from family members concerned about their children were frequently ignored or used as an opportunity to castigate individuals for their lack of resolve” (Bell 1998: 115).

Bell also found that:

Carlisle students were monitored at school, but they were also tracked after they left the institution. Their behavior at school had lasting consequences for their ability to obtain work or citizenship. What students did at Carlisle followed them for life (1998).

The power that Carlisle had over its students, and the manner in which that power was wielded as an instrument of control, had a great impact on the students, including the Puerto Ricans. Bell mentions that Carlisle, as an agency of the Federal government, utilized its enormous power to facilitate or hinder the employment of its Native American students. Federal power over Indian individuals was enhanced by the fact that Indians were not granted United States citizenship until 1924, six years after Carlisle closed.¹⁷ The reality of this legal inferiority and political disenfranchisement also affected the Puerto Rican students, as Puerto Rico was a colony at the time that they attended the CIIS. The United States would not grant citizenship to Puerto Ricans until 1917, just one year before the school closed.

A document describing the history of Carlisle states that “in pursuance of this policy every inducement was offered to retain pupils, to prevent their return to reservation life, and to aid them to make for themselves a place among the people of the east.” Concerning the task of Carlisle, Pratt said that “We are doing what we can to make the Indians like other people, capable of meeting the obligations

Carlisle as an Educational Model

Carlisle generated a great deal of interest both in the United States and in other countries. People from many parts of the world visited the school. The following names and their respective places of origin are entered in the Carlisle Register of Visitors for the years 1910 to 1912:²¹

Dorothy Marlit: Bayamo, Cuba; February 25, 1910

Woodrow Wilson:²² Princeton, New Jersey; June 27, 1910

Andrés Martínez: Havana, Cuba; August 12, 1910

Mrs. L.E. Brownawell Tabernilla: Panama; September 8, 1910

Ignacio Cabrera: Cuba; March 17, 1911

Ricardo Torres: Argentina; March 17, 1911

Illegible Signature: Representative of the Republic of Cuba; May 27, 1911

Julio Contel: Orizaba, Mexico; May 27, 1911

Woodrow Wilson: Princeton, New Jersey; August 1, 1911

Charles H. Williams: Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia; September 12, 1911

L. Miller, Africa; December 27, 1911

Illegible Signature: Burma, India; December 27, 1911

John Martínez: Andover, Massachusetts; April 1, 1912

Y. Ono, Tokyo; Japan; May 28, 1912

Carlisle was also visited by representatives of educational institutions interested in Pratt's "civilizing" and "assimilationist" experiment. Among the institutions that sent representatives were Bucknell, Millersville State Normal School, Wyoming Seminary, Keystone Academy, Gettysburg, Ursinus, Dickinson, and Lafayette Colleges.

The nature of visits by Cubans to Carlisle is a matter of some interest. We know that Cubans, like Puerto Ricans, were viewed as inferior people by U.S. government officials, and that institutions such as Carlisle, Hampton, and Tuskegee could serve as models for the work that the United States would undertake in the newly acquired colonies such as Cuba. The Register, unfortunately, does not include the reasons for the visits, and school records do not list any of its students as Cuban.

Visits to Carlisle by distinguished persons were promoted by Pratt in his campaign to portray the school as a successful experiment in "civilization" that could play a role in solving the "Indian problem." To this end, Pratt invited visits from prominent state and federal legislators and other important government officials. Pratt stated that these visits were important factors in winning public and private funding for the school. He stressed that it was of great importance that visitors leave with a good impression of the institution.

With an eye to the impression produced by the school upon visitors, Pratt was

Carlisle, wrote to Martin G. Brumbaugh, United States Commissioner of Education:

The little party of four girls and one boy reached here safely and are apparently happily located. Two years ago we took a Porto Rican boy who had been brought to America by some of the soldiers returning from service in that island, and subsequently three others, brought to America in the same way, were admitted.²⁴

On November 25, 1898, the following information appeared in *The Indian Helper*, a Carlisle School periodical: "The Major [Pratt] told the school last Saturday night that we were to have a Portorican [sic] student before long. Hurrah! The Indians will give him a warm welcome and treat him well."²⁵ On December 2, 1898, the same periodical reported:

The young man from Porto Rico has arrived. He is about 16, speaks very little English, but is fast making friends among the California and New Mexico boys who speak Spanish. He will soon learn English. In his first interview with Major Pratt he volunteered this information: "Me Boston; Me Concord; Me come Carlisle." When he saw it snowing this week he thought it was ice cream, such as he had been treated to in Boston, coming down from the clouds, "but this no sweet." His name is Juan Sultano [Juan Santana], now an Americano.²⁶

José Ayarro was another Puerto Rican brought to the United States by its returning soldiers. In March 1899, *The Indian Helper* contained this item:

We have another addition of a Porto Rican who was brought from New Castle, this State, by Mr. James M. Hamilton. The boy's name is Jose Ayarro. That he will do his best to obey orders was evidenced the other day when the bell rang, without waiting to fall in. He had not learned that he was to go in line with the others. His one idea was to get to school as soon after the bell rang as possible, and not until he arrived in his class room did he find his mistake.²⁷

None of the sources consulted up to this point have revealed very much of what was known in Puerto Rico about Carlisle or why the parents and guardians of young people 11 to 19 years old would have decided to send them there.

Nevertheless, it is clear from the documents encountered so far that at least until the middle of 1901 neither the young people nor their parents or guardians had much information at all about the institution to which the government was

Some time I begin to talk about the Indian school and I think it is a dream. Really, we did not know that the school was a regular school for Indians when we went there, because Miss. Weekly never told us the real truth. We thought that there were Americans as well as Puerto Ricans, after all I was glad because I took lots of experience while there. I learnt to like the Indians very much. That is some of the refine ones. They were very nice to the porto rican although at first they hated us.³⁰

Martínez also commented on her father's view of Carlisle:

After I came to P. R. lots and lots of time I talk to my dear papa about the Indian school and the poor father he used to cry thinking that that place was not a place where we could be happy. You can imagine why he thought so. Down here we do not know anything about good Indians but of those that you read in books that are regular animals.

Matilde Garnier, of Ponce, arrived at the CIIS in 1900. She felt that the school represented an opportunity that she would not have had in Puerto Rico. In response to a questionnaire sent out by Carlisle in June of 1911, Garnier indicated the following:

I have nothing of interest to tell you but I will tell you that the education in Porto Rico has improved a great deal since the Americans came up here. We have at the present time great many public schools all over the Island even in the far away countries where the teachers have to go on Mondays at horse back and returned home on Friday afternoon. Besides we have two Normal schools one in San Juan (the capital) and another in Ponce from this my small sister is going to graduated next week and is going to San Juan to get her diploma.

I always remember Carlisle for what I learned there and wish to see Porto Ricans getting an education there.³¹

Since research focusing specifically on the history of Puerto Ricans at Carlisle is so limited, we do not know very much about their specific experiences there. At this time it is not clear just how much can be learned about the experience of these adolescents there or the impact that it may have had on their lives. Records were kept for some of the students, but for others there is only a registration card containing very little information. Very few letters from students and family members have been found and few of the photographs in the archives identify students as Puerto Rican.³² Nevertheless, the documentation that is available through the school archives and through its students, including the Puerto Ricans,



Julio Fernández, from San Juan Puerto Rico, attended CIIS from 2 May 1901 to 24 September 1902. Photo CS-CH-23 from the Cumberland County Historical Society. Reprinted, by permission, from the Cumberland County Historical Society.

It has not been determined if the allegations of deception were ever investigated. However, it has been documented that Indian leaders and parents were deceived in order to convince them to send their sons and daughters to Carlisle (Lesiak 1991). Muñoz Rivera spent several hours with the Puerto Rican students at Carlisle. In his article, he concluded that the CIIS was an excellent vocational school and a suitable place to learn English. However, he advised families with economic resources that Carlisle was not an appropriate option if they aspired to professional education for their children. Finally, he stated, “This is my opinion, which I have reached as a result of meticulous and direct observation.

I offer it to the families of my country in order to alleviate their fears with regard to the exaggerated reports that are circulating around the island” (Muñoz 1901).

Although in his article in *The Puerto Rico Herald* Muñoz Rivera minimizes the complaints of the students and their relatives on the island, the article describes a situation that is not made explicit in the documentary sources that have been examined. References to the environment at Carlisle described by Muñoz are found in the articles “The ‘Indians’ of Puerto Rico” (1931) by Ángela Rivera and “An Indian in Spite of Myself,” written by Osuna in 1932.

The only year in which a significant number of Puerto Ricans arrived at Carlisle was 1901.³⁷ According to the student records that have been found, a total of 43 Puerto Ricans arrived at Carlisle at different times that year. While at Carlisle, Muñoz Rivera met with 37 students, of whom 26 had arrived at Carlisle in May of that year.

Muñoz Rivera’s article is also evidence of concern in Puerto Rico about the experiences of the young people that the government had sent to Carlisle. The article also speaks to parent and student discontent and to the allegations of false promises that Muñoz Rivera mentions. In his article in *The Puerto Rico Herald*, Muñoz Rivera concludes that he left Carlisle on the afternoon of August 29 with the impression that there was nothing to worry about. All was well at Carlisle, and the students would soon become accustomed to their new environment.

On the other hand, one month before Muñoz Rivera’s visit, Santiago Montano, of Mayagüez, one of the students who had arrived at Carlisle on May 2, 1901, ran away from the school, as did Luis Sánchez on August 1, and Antonio Pagán five days before Muñoz Rivera’s arrival. In 1902, Cástulo Rodríguez, of Barranquitas, and Rafael Gaudier, of Mayagüez, fled. Four of the five students who fled Carlisle appeared in the photograph of

At this time Osuna found out about Carlisle's "outing" program. Under this program, the students lived, usually during the summer, in private homes in places such as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. As part of the program, the students worked for their host families in return for room and board and a small salary. In March 1902, Osuna was placed with the Welsh family in Orangeville, Pennsylvania, and did not return to Carlisle until 1905. This was Osuna's way to escape from Carlisle. Osuna described these events in his article:

As I was different from the Indians and also somewhat different from the Americans, I became a curiosity. On Sunday afternoons, the place was visited by people from all over that section of the country who came purposely to see Miss. Mira's new boy. They had heard that he was not an Indian, that he had come from Puerto Rico; and they wanted to see what Puerto Ricans looked like.

Although I knew very little English when I arrived at Orangeville, within five months—being compelled to speak English exclusively—I had picked up a good working knowledge of the language. In fact, by June it was hard to distinguish any great difference between the Puerto Rican "Indian" and the rest of the farm boys. Here I was introduced into a strict, puritanic life. The bible was put in my hands. We had daily prayers and grace at the table; on Sundays, we had Sunday School at 9 a.m., Church at 10:30, Christian Endeavor at 6 p.m., and Church again at 7:30 p.m. And in order to fill in the day correctly, every Sunday afternoon I was taught the Sunday School lessons for the following Sunday. No work was left for Sunday except that which was absolutely necessary. Once in a while my Spanish blood would long for some sort of expression and I would whistle a tune. I was immediately reminded that it was Sunday.

Instead of returning in the fall of 1902 to Carlisle, I remained with my employer and went to a rural school. I did not want to return to Carlisle. Frankly, I did not like the place. I never thought it was the school for me. I was not an Indian; I was a Puerto Rican of Spanish descent. However, I was a student of the Federal Government, supposed to be located at Carlisle, but with permission to stay at Orangeville, Pennsylvania.

After going as far as I could at Orangeville, I secured permission from Carlisle to attend the Bloomsburg State Normal School which I entered in the fall of 1903.

In the spring of 1905, I received a letter reminding me that I was still a Carlisle student, but that the authorities felt that I was advanced enough to graduate from the institution and sever my relationship with the Federal Government.

The writer was one of the party of Puerto Ricans who attended Carlisle for a few years, and like the majority of us was obliged to leave the school before finishing, as the government decided we were taking up room that rightfully belong to the Indians. When I left Carlisle, I was a junior under Miss. Wood. It was very unfortunate for me as well as for two or three other of us who were in that class that we were not allowed to stay until we could graduate. However the training and knowledge which I acquired at Carlisle has been of great help to me in the past, and I always feel greatly indebted to Carlisle, as an institution, and to my teachers and superiors individually, for I shall never forget the interest and kindness which they showed me during the period of some three years which I remained at Carlisle.

I often think of Carlisle, and whenever its football team has come to this City or West Point to play I have always been on hand to cheer for the Red and Old Gold.

While I was at Carlisle I also attended, in the evening, what was then known as the Carlisle Commercial School from which I graduated. I have not attended any other school, but I am glad to say, that the training which I received at Carlisle has anable [sic] me to battle, with a certain degree of success against the many trials and difficulties which are encountered in this great City in the struggle to get to the top.

I have held two or three different positions since I left Carlisle, and at present I am holding the position of Chief Export Clerk with the above concern, and earning a good salary.

I am still single, but have a good home in Brooklyn, New York, with an American Family. All my relatives live in Porto Rico.

As it is now some eight years since I attended Carlisle, no doubt most if not all of the teachers and superiors of my time, have left, but if there should be any left, kindly remember me to them and express to them my tokens of respect and gratitude.

I shall always be interested in the welfare of Carlisle, and may it long live to continue doing the good work which it was doing while I was there, and which no doubt has been continued and pushed along under your able directorship.⁴¹

Another former student who filled out the Record of Graduates and Returned Students was Paul Seguí, of Ponce, in 1912. Seguí had arrived at Carlisle in October 1900 and moved to Philadelphia when he left Carlisle on December 31, 1904, at the

In 1911, Figueroa applied for work at the federal agency on Indian affairs in Denver, Colorado. M. Friedman, the superintendent of Carlisle at that time, wrote the agency a letter of recommendation in support of Figueroa's employment application and that of another former student. In the letter, Friedman stated:

The other young man is Vincente Figueroa, a Porto Rican, mostly negro, who attended school here until the Porto Ricans were asked to leave when, instead of going back to the Island, he remained at Carlisle. He is a machinist and also a concrete finisher. He is good at the latter occupation and finds steady work in a good season (Ibid.).

According to his records, Figueroa wasn't offered the work that he wanted in Colorado. Figueroa stayed in frequent contact with Carlisle, and in February 1915 he wrote to Friedman that "I can never forget Dear Old Carlisle Indian School. She is one of the great school for Education of the Indian and Porto Rico." Figueroa seems to have had problems when he drank; in the same letter he wrote that "I am always sober industry clean man and having respect for every body any where that I been stoping [sic] at" (Ibid.).

Ramón López Fagundo, of Humacao, was 16 when he arrived at Carlisle in May 1901. On February 28, 1903, he returned to the island for health reasons. He specialized in printing, and became supervisor of the Carlisle print shop during his last year there. In his response to the 1911 census he reported having married Dolores García Rivera, of Río Piedras. In Puerto Rico López Fagundo first worked for five years in the Police Department and then went to work in a legal office. In 1911, he stated that "in the month of April, this year, I was admitted to examination before the Board of Medical Examiners of Porto Rico and had the good luck of winning by hard work and much study my certificate of Minor Surgeon" (Ibid.).

After leaving Carlisle, Providencia Martínez went to work in New Jersey. Shortly thereafter, she moved in with a sister and brother in New York City, where she lived for three years. In a June 16, 1911 letter to Superintendent Friedman, Martínez stated that she was living in Ponce, where she was a homemaker.⁴³

Belén María Nin, of San Juan, was 17 when she arrived at Carlisle in May 1901. She was there until March 1905. In a letter dated July 24, Nin told Friedman the following:

Since I left Carlisle in the year 1905 I went to school at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, Scranton, Pa., and stayed there till the year 1909 when I returned to my own home in Porto Rico. A year after I came home I begun to work as a stenographer in the private office of Mr. R. A. Macfie, an Englishman. I am working yet at the same place.

I am always delighted to hear about Carlisle, and it will be a great

Along with the completed questionnaire, Gonzalo sent a letter to the superintendent of Carlisle that ended with the following thought: "I have always felt glad to hear something about Carlisle School from which I obtained such a good training and will highly appreciate to receive the Arrow and catalogue referred to in your letter" (Ibid.).

Dolores Nieves, of Caguas, was 14 years old when she arrived in May 1901. After leaving Carlisle in the spring of 1905, she worked in Pennsylvania for a few months and returned to the island toward the end of that year. A few months later she moved to the Pennsylvania home where she had worked during her last Carlisle "outing."⁴⁶ Nieves attended high school for one year in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, and then married Herbert Norton, with whom she had one son. In 1911, her husband had been dead for several years, and she was living in Kirkwood, New Jersey. She seems to have lived in Caguas in 1912 and 1913 with her mother and a 16-year-old boy that her mother had raised.

From Caguas, Nieves contacted Carlisle hoping to gain admission to the school for the adolescent boy being raised by her mother, or to get help in placing him with a family. Nieves wrote to Friedman:

... both his parents are dead, he is such a smart boy in everything, he is in the eighth grade in school, he is also in the band here, yet he is not more than sixteen years old, and my mother would like him to get a good education and learn the English well, but as he can not do that here, she would like him to go to the States and make a man of him ... (Ibid.).

In the same letter, Nieves also wrote:

I have told him (the boy) everything that he will have to do, and how he shall have to behave and everything, in fact, I have anticipated him of the rough times that he shall to put up with. I know that we had it hard sometimes in the home that we used to go to, we used to think that such places were hard, at the time, but we didn't know then that in order to taste the sweet, we first must taste the bitter, as the saying is in this country.

Today I thank God for the hardest time that I had at any country homes and at Carlisle (Ibid.).

Carlisle responded that the boy would have to pay school tuition of \$167 per year, and could only be admitted if the federal office of Indian affairs so authorized. Friedman turned Nieves down in August 1913 and suggested that if she wanted the boy to live in Pennsylvania, she should contact families that had previously "helped" Puerto Rican youth. Some of the families that might be interested in a placement were listed in a letter signed with the initials NRD. According to other documents consulted, those are the initials of Nellie R. Denney, the person then in charge of

by Pratt and his concept of “civilization.” This adaptation necessarily began with the destruction of incoming students’ cultural identities, most particularly the substitution of English for their vernacular languages.

According to Pratt, the substitution of “civilization” for the students’ native cultural identities would make it impossible for them to return to their societies of origin. In fact, this itself was one of Pratt’s principal goals: to ensure that the Indian students of Carlisle did not return to the communities from which they had come. Pratt failed in his attempt to keep the Indian students in the East. However, while many students opted to return home, the Indians who left Carlisle had lost much of the identity that defined them when they began the eastern journey years before. They returned as strangers in their own communities, as foreign in those environments now as they had been to those in the East who perceived them as savages.⁴⁹

It is not clear to what extent the Puerto Rican experience in Pennsylvania coincided with that described above. The dearth of information available makes it difficult to reconstruct the Puerto Rican experience at Carlisle with a degree of historical accuracy. For example, we do not know how many of the Puerto Ricans returned to their country or how they experienced that return. Other than what can be gleaned from a small number of letters, we know little about these young people, participants in the initial stage of what would later be known as the Puerto Rican diaspora.

No evidence at all has been found that the United States had a policy of sending Taíno survivors of the Spanish conquest to Carlisle. When the new Puerto Rican government distributed circulars announcing scholarships for study in the United States, they made no mention of Taíno identity as a criterion for selection. The student records of Puerto Ricans at Carlisle, which include their initial applications, contain no references to Taíno heritage, and no such reference has been found in any documentary source that was consulted for this study.

Language is one of the evident preoccupations encountered in the relevant documentary sources. More than 100 years after the founding of Carlisle, words like “Americanization” and “assimilation” continue to have currency. We still hear the word “American” used to mean “from or having to do with the United States.” These words and definitions, which were used by Brumbaugh, Pratt, and many others, were repeated by Ryan in 1962 and Bell in 1998, among other scholars, without any reflection or criticism of their meaning, contextual effect, or descriptive imprecision. These words and concepts used in historical reflection and discussion remain those brought to prominence by the architects of colonial wars like that of 1898 and of identity-crushing grindstones like Carlisle.

The impact that the CIIS had on its Puerto Rican students is one of the areas that warrant further study. The adaptive, identity-molding influence of the institution and its ideology extended beyond the school’s grounds in Carlisle.

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NOTES

¹ Dr. Roamé Torres, Professor of Education at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, provided the author with a copy of this article.

² According to Landis (2001) 10,702 students attended Carlisle between 1879 and 1918, including 2,090 who were not classified by tribe or nation.

³ A total of 60 files of Puerto Rican students have been found. In her research, Landis lists 63 students as members of the “Porto Rico” tribe and Bell (1998: vii) refers to 59 Puerto Ricans as having attended Carlisle.

⁴ Navarro’s dissertation was published by Routledge in 2002 under the title *Creating Tropical Yankees*.

⁵ Letter to S. L. Parrish, from Charles W. Eliot, September 21, 1899. Harvard University Papers, C. W. Eliot, Box 92, Letter Book, C. W. Eliot, January 17, 1898 to March 23, 1903, p. 42 A. Charles W. Eliot (1834–1926) was president of Harvard University from 1869 to 1909.

⁶ Booker T. Washington (1856–1915) was born a slave in Virginia. His birth name was Booker Taliaferro. Washington was a leading educational and political figure during the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. He was also a supporter of vocational education and was the first director of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial School, an educational institution for Blacks founded in 1881 by the State of Alabama.

⁷ Letter to John Davis Long from Booker T. Washington. March 15, 1898. The Booker T. Washington Papers (BTW Papers). Vol. 4, 1895–98, p. 389.

⁸ Letter to the Editor of the Christian Register. August 18, 1898. BTW Papers. Vol. 4, p. 455.

⁹ Duany (2002) argues that during this period there was much ambivalence in the colonial discourse in the United States as it related to the racial identity of Puerto Ricans. According to Duany, this helps explain why the Smithsonian Institution classified Puerto Ricans as Indians (Duany 2002: Chapter 3). It further contributes to our understanding of why Booker T. Washington alleged in his letter that more than half of the population of Puerto Rico was Black, even though the United States Census of 1899 found that two thirds of the population was white. (Duany 2002) For a significant study about race in Cuba see Guridy (2002).

¹⁰ *The Indian Helper*, Vol. XIV, January 27, 1899, Num. 14. See Landis in <http://home.epix.net/~landis/portorican.html>. Eaton (1829–1906), who was white, served as a Colonel of a regiment of Black soldiers during the Civil War (1863–1865), the 63rd U. S. Colored Infantry Regiment, and was promoted to Brigadier General in March, 1865.

¹¹ See Navarro Rivera (2000). Negrón de Montilla (1971) and Torres González (2002).

- Records, 4955–84, Box 124, PI 165, E 1327 HM 1996. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- ³⁶ In 1901, Luis Muñoz Rivera resided in New York City, where he published *The Puerto Rico Herald*. His criticism of the colonial government in Puerto Rico had resulted in his exile to New York and the destruction by government supporters of the press that he had used in Puerto Rico to publish his newspaper, *El Diario*. See Negrón de Montilla (1971).
- ³⁷ Information about the Puerto Ricans who attended Carlisle is found in RG 75 E 1327, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- ³⁸ RG 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, CIIS, School Student Records, 1879–1918, 4669 to 4695, Box no. 113, PI 163, E 1327, HM 1996.
- ³⁹ CIIS, Index To Letters Received, Box 1, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- ⁴⁰ Enrique Urrutia, Record of Graduates and Returned Students, CIIS, RG 75 E 1328 HM 1996, Student Records, 1344–1404, Box 29, PI 163.
- ⁴¹ Letter to M. Friedman, Superintendent, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, from Rafael Ortega, February 19, 1912. Record of Graduates and Returned Students, CIIS, RG 75 E 1328 HM 1996, Student Records, 1344–1404, Box 29, PI 163.
- ⁴² Record of Graduates and Returned Students, CIIS, RG 75 E 1328 HM 1996, Student Records, 1344–1404, Box 29, PI 163.
- ⁴³ Letter to M. Friedman, Superintendent, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, from Providencia Martínez. June 16, 1911. Carlisle Student Records, 2835–2890, Box 57, PI 163, E 1327 HM 1996. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- ⁴⁴ RG 75, Records of the Department of Indian Affairs, Carlisle School Student Records 1879–1918, 2835–2890, Box 57, PI 163, E 1327, HM 1996.
- ⁴⁵ RG 75 Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, CIIS, Student Record Cards, 1879–1918, Abert, Lucile to McFarland, John M., Box no. 5, PI 163, E 1328, HM 1995.
- ⁴⁶ In addition to being the main tool for the “civilization” of students at the school, Carlisle’s outing program also offered training in home economics.
- ⁴⁷ RG 75, Records of the Department of Indian Affairs, Carlisle School Student Records 1879–1918, 2835–2890, Box 57, PI 163, E 1327, HM 1996.
- ⁴⁸ Article published in *The Tuskegee Student*, 13, November 9, 1901. The BTW Papers, Vol. 6, 1901–2, pp. 299–302.
- ⁴⁹ Describing Indians as savages was so prevalent during the Carlisle years that newspapers such as *The New York Times* used the term “savage” when referring to Indians.

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APPENDIX A

Puerto Ricans who attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, their town of origin in Puerto Rico, dates of attendance and reason for leaving Carlisle, as listed in Carlisle's student files:

- José Ayarro*. Town of origin not available. March, 1899 - February, 1905. "Time out".
- Adela Borrelli*. Ponce. September, 1900 - April, 1905. Administrative Order.
- Antonio Blanco*. San Juan. August, 1901 - July, 1904. Parental request.
- Francisco Calderín*. San Juan. May, 1901 - September, 1901. Mother's request.
- María M. Castro*. Mayagüez. May, 1901 - August, 1903. Family request.
- Emilio de Arce Pagán*. Town of origin not available. February, 1911 - October, 1911. Did not return.
- Luis de Jesús*. Río Grande. July, 1902 - January, 1903. Health reasons.
- Miguel de Jesús Martínez*. Ciales. April, 1901 - January, 1904. Financial reasons.
- Concebida Duchesne*. Fajardo. May, 1901 - August, 1904. Adopted.
- Isabel Espéndez*. Guayama. May, 1901 - August, 1902. "Order of Consul."
- Julio Fernández*. San Juan. May, 1901 - September, 1902. Irresponsibility/father's request.
- Vincente Figueroa*. Guayama. September, 1899 - August, 1904. "Time out."
- José Flores*. Barceloneta. May, 1901 - June, 1903. Father's request.
- Carlos Gallardo Lara*. Town of origin not available. July, 1900 - May, 1902. Change of School.
- Matilde Garnier*. Ponce. September, 1900 - April, 1905. Reason not available.
- Rafael Gaudier*. Mayagüez. May, 1901 - November, 1902. Escaped.
- Fernando González*. Town of origin not available. May, 1901 - March, 1905. Administrative Order.
- Esperanza Gonzalo*. San Juan. May, 1901 - 1905. Administrative Order.
- José Gonzalo*. San Juan. September, 1912 - January, 1917. Parental request.
- Manuel Hidalgo Ballester*. Town of origin not available. September, 1909 - April, 1912. Expelled.
- Julio A. Hobeb*. Town of origin not available. May, 1901 - April, 1904. Administrative order.
- Ramón López*. Town of origin not available. May, 1901 - February, 1903. Health reasons.
- Levia Martínez*. Ponce. July, 1901 - September, 1904. Family request.
- Providencia Martínez*. Ponce. November, 1901 - September, 1904. Financial reasons.
- Felicita Medina*. Town of origin not available. September, 1900 - September, 1902. Health reasons.
- Joaquina Menéndez*. Town of origin not available. May, 1901. No additional information is available.
- Joaquín Menéndez*. No additional information is available.
- Santiago Montano*. Town of origin not available. May, 1901 - September, 1901. Escaped.
- Olimpia Morales*. Hatillo. May, 1901 - August, 1904. Family request.
- Pedro Enrique Musignac*. Ponce. July, 1901 - February, 1903. Health reasons.

