

ED 265-01
October 12, 2020
Mid-Term Poem

Influence

What does the future hold for the people of Guam?
As history evolves and time goes on,
Throughout the years our people endured,
Changes by men who misunderstood,
Who are they to step foot on our land?
To strip us from our culture with their bare hands?
Who are they to determine what is taught?
To tell us what's right and what is not?

In 1673 the Spaniards brought us schools, (GuamPedia, n.d.)
Speak, write, and read in their language, that was the Spanish's rule,
To force the CHamoru people to abandon all that they know,
Takes a toll on the CHamoru language and culture as a whole,
Although their intentions may have been for the better,
Their forceful implementations have caused many to suffer,
This forceful education made the Chamorros believe,
That learning these new values was what they needed to succeed,

Even after adapting to the Spanish colonial culture,
A new time came to learn from another,
The US Navy had plans of their own,
In exchange for education, they then owned our home,
After adopting Spanish words into our native tongue,
The U.S. decided that another change must be done,
Education was enforced to Americanize the people,
If you did not speak English, you were not seen as an equal,

This structure of cultural cleansing led many CHamoru to believe,
That speaking their native language was the equivalent of a criminal deed
What kind of impact did this have on our youth?
To believe that their culture is of lesser value,
Instead of teaching what was necessary to the people and the land,
The American education system had other plans,
In their favor and to think like them,
They've set educational standards that do not bend,

As time passed on not much has changed,
We still learn from textbooks the American way,

Standards are still set to determine what we learn,
To not think out of the box and that there's only one right answer,
As of today the CHamoru language is taught,
But it's hard to grasp because of the years it was not,
A year or two isn't enough,
To learn an endangered language that was hardly brought up,

As of 2015, 38% of us are Chamorro speakers, (Salinas, 2018)
Will this number go up if we continue our behaviors?
To neglect teaching the language to our native youth,
It neglects passing it down to their future youth too,
With so much Westernized standards and ideals,
It's understandable as to why the focus on language isn't the appeal,

Current learning standards have mainly taught,
That if you fail a test, then you are not smart,
With this kind of pressure and system of education,
A lot of kids will fail to understand the information,
Instead of having the will to learn and absorb,
They would rather focus on anything to pass with a high score,
Our education system has been flawed from the start,
From the moment we were forced into learning what others thought was best for us,
Rather than learning with our hearts,

The year is 2020 and we're smarter than we know,
We notice all the problems that continue to grow,
If the students aren't learning according to plan,
Perhaps learning goes deeper than just listening to the big man,
Overwhelmed with information about a land we do not know,
Why is it more important to learn about other places than our home?

The American system has taught us that education leads to a good life,
The American dream with a head full of lies,
High expectations, Standards, and Stress,
Sleepless nights and failure, repeat and no rest,
We aren't worth anything until we earn a degree,
Because that's the only way someone can judge me,
Instead of our worth with individual minds,
We live in a simulation that has influenced and shaped our lives

Sources

Salinas, J. (2018, August 30). *A dying language*. Retrieved from

<https://www.pacificislandtimes.com/single-post/2018/08/07/A-dying-language>

This correct reference citation for the source was posted in the directions for the project...

Lujan, P. C. (n.d.). Role of education in the preservation of Guam's indigenous language.

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