

**Power, Prejudice, and Paradise:
Debate, Diplomacy, and the Annexation of Hawai'i**

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Individual Website

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I've always found Hawai'i interesting. It's the only US state not on the North American continent, it's the farthest south US state, it's the only US state with a royal palace, and it's the US state with arguably the most climate variation. So, when I first heard about the annexation of Hawai'i, and the history behind it, I was intrigued. In fact, when I initially looked into what happened a bit more, I thought it would make an interesting NHD topic. I had one other topic initially that I was seriously considering (The Great Game, a diplomatic struggle between the United Kingdom and Russia in Afghanistan in the 1800s) however that topic would have been a lot harder to research, and harder to even make a project on. So, I had it narrowed down to my current topic.

Compared to past years I had both more primary sources and more non-internet sources. Interestingly enough, I found most of my primary sources through the internet, and a lot of my important secondary sources were hard-copy books. To find my sources, I did extensive searches (one strategy I used is I looked at every source other sources cited, making a chain) and went to the library and requested books about the topic. My project would be far more different if I had not done either of these. Although I did not have a specific most useful source, the books I used and the record of the congressional debates from that period collectively helped me the most.

With my two previous projects I had used a website before, so doing the same thing this time was an easy decision. With a website, I am thoroughly versed in the NHD WebCentral software and understand its ins and outs. I also believe that a website is the best form of NHD

projects because it is quite literally accessible to any computer with an internet connection. The information you spread can be disseminated the farthest of any project.

The US annexation of Hawai'i in 1898 and the events leading up to it had significant consequences. The debate over annexation tied into larger controversies over race and imperialism. Different members of both the American and Hawaiian populace, politicians, and prominent business people all had varied stances on the issue. Hawai'i tried to preserve independence through US trade deals, but ultimately succumbed to gunboat diplomacy. The annexation of Hawai'i was both a catalyst and bellwether of the direction US foreign policy, especially in the Pacific, would take in the coming years. In Hawai'i, annexation led to cultural repression, but also helped to create a new culture, one influenced by Asian, Polynesian, and European influences.