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ABSTRACT

In 1959 local, national, and international news celebrated Hawai‘i statehood as a Cold War victory. Since race relations in America were thought to have a critical impact on U.S. prestige abroad, and reports of racial segregation and violence were far-reaching and easily used to the advantage of Soviet propagandists, the U.S. State Department attempted to spread Hawai‘i’s story of ethnic diversity and racial harmony as wide as possible. Washington treated Hawai‘i statehood as an important opportunity to claim a civil rights victory during the Cold War, at the same time counter claims of American colonialism and imperialism. Not only was Hawai‘i’s ethnic composition offered as evidence of America’s racial tolerance, but also proof that American democracy would not be denied based on race or ethnicity.

Recognizing Hawai‘i’s resources and Cold War assets, the United States Information Agency and Voice of America created and disseminated films, pamphlets, essays, and books about Hawai‘i’s history, racial harmony, and the achievement of statehood. Washington also recognized Hawai‘i’s unique “Asian” and “American” qualities, which made it an exceptional place for Cold War diplomacy and military training. Most notable of the cultural diplomacy projects were the East-West Center at the University of Hawai‘i and Peace Corps training centers. As the Cold War escalated, so did military training and testing in Hawai‘i. Recognizing that Hawai‘i’s landscape resembled Southeast Asia, the U.S. military conducted Agent Orange research and weapons testing, and created Asian “training villages.” Despite the celebrated narrative that statehood ended or repudiated American imperialism in Hawai‘i, I argue that statehood helped sustain and further normalize American imperialism in Hawai‘i.

To understand how Hawai‘i became part of America’s Cold War domestic and foreign policy, this project examines the role of films, congressional statehood hearings, domestic print media, literature created by Hawai‘i-based authors, and State Department documents. Together, these forms created a distinct historiography about Hawai‘i that recast Hawai‘i’s history within Cold War objectives that the U.S. sought at the time. This collection of official documents and popular media sources served to reinforce ideas
about American exceptionalism while further normalizing American hegemony in Hawai‘i.
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NOTES ON USAGE OF TERMS:

In the 1950s and 1960s, most literature written by Americans on the U.S. continent described anyone who lived in Hawai‘i as “Hawaiian.” A majority of the documents that I am analyzing in this project use this terminology as well. This is problematic for several reasons. One, the state of Hawai‘i shares the same name as the sovereign nation of Hawai‘i. Therefore, Hawai‘i’s native people are referred to as Hawaiian. Second, in Hawai‘i, if someone uses the term “Hawaiian,” they are almost always referring to someone who identifies as Native Hawaiian or Kanaka Maoli. Third, it is usually those who are not located in or live in Hawai‘i who refer to Hawai‘i’s population as “Hawaiian.” Despite the usage being typical among Americans in the 1950s and 1960s, I have chosen not to use the term “Hawaiian” to generically describe the people who live in Hawai‘i. Instead, my use of the term Hawaiian refers to Hawai‘i’s indigenous people.

To describe non-natives in Hawai‘i, I have attempted to be as specific as I can within the context of what I am discussing. To refer to whites, I use either white, Caucasian, or haole. Haole is the most common term used in Hawai‘i and it refers to foreigners. Because European Americans were the first settlers in Hawai‘i, the term became equated with them. When referring to Asians in Hawai‘i, which make up a majority of the population, I often use the term “Asian American” rather than “Asian” to emphasize that they are U.S. citizens. However, for readers in Hawai‘i, the term “Asian American” sounds very “mainland” because it is rarely used in Hawai‘i. Instead, Asians in Hawai‘i are described according to their ethnicities or the term “local” is used to describe those who call Hawai‘i home, but are neither native nor haole.

I also use the word “settler” to differentiate between natives and non-natives. While the term “local” is commonly preferred in Hawai‘i to describe people who have lived in Hawai‘i for generations (mostly Asians) but want to distinguish themselves from American haoles or new arrivals, I will use the term settler to describe those who reside in Hawai‘i but are not native. The term is also instructive for understanding the complexities of colonialism in Hawai‘i since Hawai‘i is a settler society.
One of the most well-known images of Hawai‘i statehood in 1959 is of a grinning young boy selling newspapers “hot off the press” announcing that President Dwight Eisenhower had signed the Hawai‘i Admission Act. This iconic image of Chester Kahapea was published around the world and he became a symbol of the achievement of Hawai‘i statehood. National and international news reported that Hawai‘i’s streets were full of people dancing and celebrating that Hawai‘i was now the fiftieth state. Fifty years later, the Kumu Kahua Theatre in Honolulu organized *The Statehood Project* in order to reflect on the anniversary and meanings of statehood. They called on authors to produce original writing that would create the basis for a play that would be performed at the theatre. Denny Hironaga wrote a short story that began with the iconic photo of the paperboy but blended his friend’s own retelling of the streets on “statehood day.”

Sometimes people ask me what I tink about Statehood cuz I was in dat picture and I part Hawaiian. I tell dem no ask me. Ask da people who write da history books and in da newspaperhs. I only sell em. Dey ask me if was true what da newspaperhs wrote, dat all da Hawaiians wanted Hawai‘i for be one State. I don’t know but I can tell you what I saw on dat day. I saw all kine people cheering and celebrating at da ‘Iolani Palace, even some Hawaiians. But I’ll never forget seeing my grandpa with one group of people just off to da side of the celebration. Dey was all crying. Even my grandpa was crying. How come?

My mom said was because we lost our land, our ‘āina. I neva’ really undastand but dat night when I lay down fo’ sleep, I keep tinking about how sad all dose people were. I kept seeing dem over and over but mostly I kept tinking about how my grandpa was crying. I never seen him cry before [. . .]

Dat make me tink . . . maybe some of da stuff written in da newspaperhs and history books is not always da truth. Maybe da writer stay biased or self-serving… and nobody wen boddah fo check the facts. Maybe dey leave out some stuff on purpose like how come dey neva report about my grandpa and dose people crying at da ‘Iolani Palace. Maybe . . . but no ask me. I no write fo’ da newspaperhs. I only sell em.1

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I begin with the photograph of Chester Kahapea and Denny Hironaga’s story because they highlight the various reactions to statehood within Hawai‘i even today. Despite the diversity of feelings about statehood, there are widespread and persistent stories about Hawai‘i becoming the fiftieth state in 1959. Many of them have become so “taken for granted” that they are assumed to be “truths” and therefore, are not up for debate. The dominant narrative about Hawai‘i statehood insists that the people of Hawai‘i wanted to be part of the U.S., that they voted to become a state, and that the U.S. has had only good intentions in bringing Hawai‘i into the nation. However, as Denny Hironaga’s story suggests, there is some ambivalence about this narrative.

The granting of statehood in 1959 was a significant event amidst Cold War politics. Nationally, Hawai‘i’s inclusion was celebrated for its contributions of hula, sugarcane and pineapple, as well as its “polyglot population” and “colorful culture.” “[But] perhaps most important of all,” Universal-International Newsreel asserted, “Hawaiian statehood [gave] lie to communist charges of American colonialism.” This claim was also repeated at the local level. For example, an article published by the Honolulu Star-Bulletin stated:

U.S. prestige in Asia and the United Nations will be enhanced by Hawaiian Statehood. [It] would be proof to the world that the U.S. does practice democracy regardless of race, creed or color and that its policy is not one of colonialism and exploitation as charged by Russia.

During the Cold War, race relations in America were thought to have a critical impact on U.S. prestige abroad. Reports of racial segregation and violence in the U.S. were far-reaching and easily fueled Soviet propaganda. The U.S. government’s efforts to contain and manage the story of race in America became a central component of the nation’s broader Cold War policy of containing communism. Domestic crises were handled by U.S. presidents “with an eye toward how their actions would play overseas” and any

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progress on civil rights was considered a foreign affairs achievement. Hawai‘i’s racial and ethnic diversity, as well as the lack of violence attributable to it, were considered important counterpoints to Soviet criticism of racism and segregation. Hence, Washington treated Hawai‘i statehood as an important opportunity to claim a civil rights victory during the Cold War.

When I first came to Hawai‘i for graduate school, I realized very quickly that the “truths” I had been taught as a child growing up on the U.S. continent were not indisputable facts. In fact, it quickly became clear that the legacies of American colonialism were ever present in Hawai‘i. In many ways, Hawai‘i felt like a colony and the military’s omnipresence seemed like an occupation. As I completed my Ph.D. qualifying exams, the fiftieth anniversary of statehood was approaching. Television and radio were cluttered with memories of statehood, commemoration plans, and history re-telling. The sudden abundance of statehood discussions made me realize how little I knew about statehood. I also noticed there was an absence of Hawai‘i within the Cold War historiography. The state had huge commemoration plans scheduled, but it was clear not everyone in Hawai‘i was celebrating statehood. Most notably, many Native Hawaiians (and their allies) used the anniversary as an opportunity to speak about the ongoing legacies of American imperialism in the islands, the contested legality of statehood, and the injustices of poverty and political marginalization for Hawai‘i’s indigenous people. Informed by these new conversations happening, my curiosity led me to wander down this path of inquiry.

This project analyzes the different meanings attached to statehood and contextualizes them within the Cold War. The dominant history, most of which has been written by white Americans, describes Hawai‘i’s transition to statehood as the achievement of democracy and granting civil rights to all citizens. By focusing on Hawai‘i’s large Asian population and the end of territorial status, statehood was interpreted as a form of reparations for those who had previously been treated as second-class citizens under territorial status. This ascent to democracy implied that colonialism

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no longer existed after statehood. I, on the other hand, argue that statehood continued—not repaired or ended—U.S. colonialism in Hawai‘i. I analyze the historiography, narratives, and literature produced around the time of statehood, some of which was endorsed by the U.S. government and even circulated as Cold War propaganda. Despite the celebrated narrative that statehood conquered colonialism, I argue that statehood helped sustain and further normalize American colonialism in Hawai‘i.

America’s international reputation during the Cold War was thought to impact the nation’s ability to maintain its leadership role as well as ensure that democracy would be appealing to newly independent nations in Asia and Africa. By incorporating a set of islands two thousand miles away from the nearest border, during the Cold War, the granting of Hawai‘i statehood required an explanation that not only maintained America’s reputation, but also refuted accusations of imperialism and racism. The dominant history that emerged around statehood attempted to describe American influence in Hawai‘i not as imperial but reciprocal. In other words, the United States was not imposing itself on Hawai‘i by force or coercion; rather, Hawai‘i welcomed American influence and wanted statehood. Statehood was explained to be the ultimate fruition of American democracy and progress. The renewed interest in Hawai‘i created through its newly-minted statehood status also provided an opportunity for American politicians and historians to re-historicize previous exchanges between the U.S. and Hawai‘i prior to 1959. Perhaps surprisingly, the historiography produced around statehood did not leave out the contested events of the 1890s where the U.S. acquired Hawai‘i via overseas imperial expansion. Instead, American imperial motives in Hawai‘i were appropriated into the official narrative that emphasized Hawai‘i’s transition from savagery to democracy as a story of progress and advancement. American imperialism in Hawai‘i was not something that needed to be ignored, but instead fundamental to the narrative that Hawai‘i had progressed from a “heathen” kingdom to a progressive democracy. Thus, statehood was not just an opportunity to improve America’s reputation during the Cold War, but also a pivotal opportunity to further normalize America’s influence in Hawai‘i while describing it as benevolent, not hegemonic.

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5 Dudziak, 6.
Hawaiian Kingdom to American Territory

The original inhabitants of Hawai‘i lived in isolation for many centuries before Westerners arrived. Hawaiian nationalist Haunani-Kay Trask points out that Hawai‘i had its own meaningful history before contact with Westerners.

Before there existed an England, an English language, or an Anglo-Saxon people, our Native culture was forming . . . The economy of pre-haole Hawai‘i depended primarily on a balanced use of the products of the land and sea. Each of the eight inhabited islands was divided into separate districts (known as ‘okana) running from the mountains to the sea.6

By the late eighteenth century, Hawai‘i’s population had reached around 800,000.7 In 1778, British explorers arrived in Hawai‘i, under the leadership of Captain James Cook. American histories emphasize Cook’s “discovery” of Hawai‘i and the upsetting circumstances of his death in 1779. For Hawaiians, the regrettable circumstances were that the crews aboard the two British ships carried syphilis and gonorrhea. Subsequent explorers also brought contagious diseases to which Hawaiians had no immunity. Hawai‘i’s population began to decrease precipitously. When Cook first arrived, the population was near 800,000. By 1820, it was roughly 200,000. By the early 1830s, it was 130,000. By the mid-1850s, it was less than 70,000. By the 1890s, it was below 40,000—a mere five percent of what it had been when Cook arrived one hundred years earlier.8

In the midst of this devastation, Protestant missionaries arrived in 1820. They viewed Hawaiians paternalistically and wanted to convert and “civilize” the natives. Their impact cannot be overstated. Sally Engle Merry describes the colonial transformation of Hawai‘i via several global processes—imperialism, capitalist expansion, transition to modernity, and specific actions taken by those with a mission to civilize.9 Hawaiian cultural practices were considered “barbaric” and backward. The

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Hawaiian language was disparaged and outlawed in schools, Hawaiian religious practices were condemned, and hula was banned.10

By the 1840s, many of the children of the first missionaries left the mission to engage in business and politics. Eventually, many descendants of the earliest missionaries became businessmen. The law became one of the most significant ways to exert colonial control in Hawaiʻi. In 1848, the “Mahele” or division of lands was the “single most critical dismemberment of Hawaiian society” because it transformed the land tenure system from communal land sharing to private ownership, serving the interests of commerce and capitalism.11 Whether a “political fiasco” or “devious theft,” Hawaiians were dispossessed of their ʻāina (land).12 In 1850, Americans who were not naturalized were allowed to own and sell lands. With new access to land, many haole businessmen turned to agriculture, most notably sugar and pineapple. The goal was not sustenance, but profits. As a result, the plantations that they created required massive amounts of cheap labor. Plantation owners looked to Asia. Wanting a submissive workforce, the plantation owners knew that having a large number of laborers from a single nationality would allow collaboration and organizing. Therefore, they sought diverse laborers that could be controlled and divided by their ethnicity. Laborers came from China, Portugal, Norway, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, and Puerto Rico, the legacy of which was an ethnically diverse Hawaiʻi.13

By the late 1800s, haole business elites held considerable political power in Hawaiʻi and sugar barons wanted to increase their profits. They pressured King David Kalākaua for a “Reciprocity Treaty” with the United States so that they could sell their sugar to the U.S. market duty-free. That meant that haole-owned sugar plantations would

12 Ibid., 46. It is also important to note evolving scholarship on the Mahele. For example, Kamana Beamer argues that the Mahele can be seen as a “hybrid institution” that was created through the authority of the Hawaiian monarchy as a means of exerting some control over Western interests by “attempt[ing] to get people back on the land so that cultivation might again thrive by granting them title to lands.” See, B. Kamanamaikalani Beamer, “Na wai ka mana? ʻOiwi Agency and European Imperialism in the Hawaiian Kingdom” (PhD diss., University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, 2008), 201.
remain competitive while solidifying the U.S. as their primary purchaser. Many Hawaiians viewed the issue of reciprocity as “equivalent to a fight for the nation’s independence” and broke with Kalākaua over this issue.¹⁴ Noenoe Silva says Kalākaua tried to win the support of the lāhui (Hawaiian nation) while facing increasing conflict with haoles.¹⁵ Stephen Kinzer points out that the treaty “preserved the façade of Hawaiian independence, but in effect turned Hawai‘i into an American protectorate.”¹⁶ There was also growing pressure to cede Pearl Harbor to the U.S. Queen Emma Nae, who ran against Kalākaua in the election of 1874, said that the prospect of ceding Pearl Harbor to the United States made her “blood boil.”¹⁷ The impacts of the 1875 Reciprocity Treaty were significant. The sugar industry expanded and so did immigration to Hawai‘i. In the four years after the Treaty, sugar production doubled and the number of immigrants quadrupled.¹⁸ By 1884, only nine years after the treaty was signed, Hawaiians made up only half the population. By 1890, the number dropped down to only thirty-eight percent. In a short time, Hawaiians had become a numerical minority as a result of the immigrant labor force.¹⁹

As Americans gained more economic control over the islands, they sought additional political power. In 1887 the “Bayonet Constitution” was forced—through threat of violence or death—on King Kalākaua by a group of haole elites who formed their own militia, called the Honolulu Rifles. When the King was presented with the new constitution, one which stripped him of his most important executive powers and diminished Hawaiian participation in government, the King “brooded, argued, and capitulated.”²⁰ The new constitution dramatically shifted power to the haole minority and disenfranchised most of the nonwhite population. This was done through a strict new property qualification that mostly benefited sugar-rich haoles while excluding most

¹⁴ Osorio, Dismembering Lahui, 168.
¹⁵ Silva, Aloha Betrayed, 125.
¹⁷ Osorio, Dismembering Lahui, 166.
¹⁹ Ibid., 64.
²⁰ Ibid., 82.
Native Hawaiians and entirely disenfranchising Asian “aliens.” While Kalākaua had successfully resisted giving America exclusive rights to Pearl Harbor in perpetuity, the new cabinet of the Bayonet Constitution quickly added a clause giving the U.S. navy exclusive rights to Pearl Harbor in order to build and maintain a coaling station.  

Faced with new realities of American influence, Hawaiians agitated for a new constitution. Upon Kalākaua’s death in 1891, Hawaiians turned to his successor, his sister, Queen Liliʻuokalani. She, too, pushed to rectify the Bayonet Constitution, which had transferred significant political power to haole Americans. In January 1893, she attempted to officially declare the new constitution that her people demanded. In response, a handful of American politicians and businessmen, mainly the same men involved in the Bayonet Constitution, overthrew her government. The American minister to Hawaiʻi, John L. Stevens, ordered U.S. Marines on shore and immediately recognized the new “provisional government” of Hawaiʻi. The military occupied the government building and the Queen called on the people of Hawaiʻi to not use violence out of fear that it would only cause bloodshed for her people. She unequivocally wrote that she “solemnly protest[ed]” the acts against herself and the constitutional government of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Hawaiʻi’s government was a European-style constitutional monarchy with an elected legislature, an internationally recognized sovereign nation, having negotiated many treaties with other countries, including the United States. The Queen wrote to the president of the United States, as an ally nation, urging the U.S. government to right the wrongs inflicted upon the Hawaiian government. In the meantime, for the first time, the American flag flew at the top of the government

21 Noel Kent, Hawai‘i Islands Under the Influence (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1993), 55.  
22 Coffman, Nation Within, 86, 92.  
25 Liliʻuokalani to Benjamin Harrison, February 1893, Blount Report.
buildings in Hawai‘i. John Stevens wrote to the State Department, “The Hawaiian pear is now fully ripe, and this is the golden hour for the United States to pluck it.”

President Grover Cleveland, who took office in March, ordered a thorough investigation into the events. He hired James Blount, former chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, to travel to Hawai‘i and assess the full scope of the situation. When he arrived, he ended the American protectorate, sent the military troops back to their ship, and ordered the American flag lowered. His final report (referred to as the “Blount Report”) was more than one thousand pages and an “unprecedented critique of America’s behavior overseas.” President Cleveland proclaimed the coup d’état to be an illegal “act of war” against the nation of Hawai‘i. He rejected the provisional government’s proposal to annex Hawai‘i and asked for Stevens’ resignation. He also said the Queen should be restored. Despite this, many Americans in Congress favored the annexation of Hawai‘i.

While the provisional government worked on their goal of annexation, Hawaiians protested the overthrow and possibility of annexation by writing petitions, letters, and songs in their native language. When William McKinley was elected president in November 1896, Hawaiians intensified their efforts because they knew that he was much more inclined to support annexation than Cleveland had been. By June 1897, McKinley had already signed a treaty of annexation with the representatives of Hawai‘i’s provisional government and submitted it to the U.S. Senate for ratification. Hawaiians organized themselves into two key nationalist groups (Hui Aloha ‘Āina and the Hui Kālai ‘Āina) and submitted petitions that clearly stated their opposition to becoming part of the U.S. “in any form or shape.” The Kūʻē petitions, as they became known, stated that they had been “held in subjection by the armed forces of the Provisional Government” and “[had] never yielded, [did] not acknowledge . . . or support the Provisional Government.” The petitions included over 38,000 signatures at a time when Hawai‘i’s

26 Quoted in Coffman, Nation Within, 127.
27 Ibid., 142.
28 Silva, Aloha Betrayed, 146.
30 Silva, Aloha Betrayed, 152.
Kanaka Maoli population was only 40,000. The petitions were delivered to President McKinley and Hawaiians met with politicians in Washington to plead their case. They were successful at lowering the number of votes in favor of annexation and the bill did not pass. However, the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in February 1898, caused many to believe that Hawai‘i’s strategic location was necessary for fighting Spain in the Philippines. Despite massive indigenous opposition, the United States annexed Hawai‘i in July 1898 through a simple majority vote in each house. The Newlands Resolution was passed in Congress without any treaty. David Keanu Sai explains:

Like a carefully rehearsed play, the annexation ceremony of August 12, 1898, between the self-proclaimed Republic of Hawai‘i and the United States, was scripted to appear to have the semblance of international law . . . and the joint resolution is but a mere example of the legislative branch attempting to assert its authority beyond its constitutional capacity.

The outbreak of the Spanish-American war had devastating impacts for Hawai‘i. In addition to an unconstitutional annexation, the war led to a full-scale military occupation of the islands and construction of a new naval base at Pearl Harbor began, further consolidating American empire in the Pacific.

Under the “Organic Act” of 1900, Hawai‘i would become a U.S. territory—a status that would remain until 1959. Territorial status meant that all adult males who were born in the United States, regardless of race, were constitutionally entitled to voting rights and citizenship. This definition meant everyone born in Hawai‘i was now entitled to citizenship and voting rights, regardless of race or ethnicity. However, Asian and Portuguese laborers who were born outside of Hawai‘i but now lived in the territory, were denied citizenship. In contrast, Americans, whether born in Hawai‘i or not, were automatically granted citizenship. Under territorial status, Hawai‘i’s governor would be appointed by the American president, not by the voters of Hawai‘i. All other offices were elected, including the delegate to Congress, although the delegate would not have voting powers. Therefore, residents of Hawai‘i had only minimal rights of citizenship and no

31 Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 152.
direct control over their representative government. Momiala Kamahele explains that a foreign government and foreign economic systems have been imposed on Hawaiians since the overthrow and today Hawaiʻi remains under U.S. colonial rule.\textsuperscript{34}

As the U.S. shifted from territorial expansion to overseas empire in the 1890s, new questions of belonging arose. The “Insular Cases” of the early 1900s sought clarification for the newly gained territories. Alaska and Hawaiʻi were labeled “incorporated” territories (making them eligible for statehood) while Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines were “unincorporated” and ineligible for statehood.\textsuperscript{35} The creation of these new legal categories was related to taxation, revenue, and constitutionality, but they were also ambiguous. Political cartoons around the turn of the twentieth-century repeatedly suggested that the new territories—incorporated and unincorporated—were unfit for self-government. They were depicted as unruly children and barbaric savages. Sometimes Puerto Rico and Hawaiʻi were portrayed as submissive and obedient women, particularly in relation to Cuba and the Philippines. In the cartoon below, Uncle Sam has the difficult yet worthy task of assimilating and educating the newest American dependents (“the white man’s burden”). Even though Hawaiʻi was considered eligible for citizenship and the other territories were not, Hawaiʻi was portrayed equally “unfit” and “barbaric.” In this way, Hawaiʻi occupied a liminal space between the “foreign” and “domestic.” Amy Kaplan argues that the Insular Cases demonstrate the anxiety and ambivalence about the nature of American empire at the turn of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} Momiala Kamahele, “Īlioʻulaokalani: Defending Native Hawaiian Culture,” in Fujikane, Candace, and Jonathan Y Okamura, eds. \textit{Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawaiʻi} (Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2008), 76.
Figure 1: W.A. Rogers, “Uncle Sam’s New Class in the Art of Self-Government,” Harper’s Magazine, August 27, 1898. Image courtesy of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library.

From Colonial Subjects to Loyal Citizens

During Hawai‘i’s fifty-nine years of territorial status, the U.S. military maintained its presence, causing clashes between American soldiers and Hawai‘i’s civilians. In many ways, the U.S. Army wanted to be welcomed and absorbed into the local community in Hawai‘i, but the tensions also brought threats of martial law and policies discouraging
marriage between soldiers and “local women.”**37** The haole population in Hawai‘i increased significantly in the 1920s; many were soldiers, military dependents, or laborers recruited to work on military bases. By the 1930s, Hawai‘i had become an American playground for the wealthy.**38** Generating more publicity than any other case in the territorial period, the famous “Massie case” in 1931 revealed the persistent racism and complex power relations between haole elites and Hawai‘i’s ethnically diverse population. A young navy officer’s haole wife alleged that she was raped by a gang of five native men. After a mistrial, her mother and husband arranged for one of the suspects to be murdered. With the dead body in the backseat of the car, they were caught by police and put on trial. The case drew to the surface fears over the safety of “honorable” white Americans in Hawai‘i, a desire to keep the scandal under-wrap as to not disturb the growing tourism industry, and haoles’ institutional attempts to maintain control in Hawai‘i. Historians Ralph Kuykendall and A. Grove Day have argued that territorial status was a “preparation for statehood” and part of Hawai‘i’s process to become American.**39** For those that shared that mindset, the Massie case suggested to Americans that Hawai‘i did not deserve to be an American territory let alone a state.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, thousands of Americans of Japanese ancestry (AJAs) in Hawai‘i were anxious to show their support for the United States. They enlisted in the U.S. military in record numbers. First, the 100th Infantry Battalion was composed solely of Hawai‘i AJA soldiers. Their motto was “Remember Pearl Harbor.” Then, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team was formed; it was composed of both Hawai‘i and mainland Nisei soldiers. For their service in France and Italy, the 100th and 442nd won more decorations than any other unit during World War II.**40** They had proven their loyalty, and by extension Hawai‘i’s loyalty to the nation. John Whitehead describes that the islands were transformed by the war. Now every American knew where Pearl Harbor was, millions had now been there (he says that at least one million men in just the U.S. Army alone were trained at Schofield Barracks

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40 Whitehead, *Completing the Union*, 89.
during the war), and many more had seen Hawai‘i on the newsreels throughout the war. AJA’s patriotism during the war would become a central reason cited in support of Hawai‘i’s readiness for statehood. Hence, many felt that Hawai‘i was on the “threshold” of statehood at the end of WWII.

Part of what made Hawai‘i’s war record so exceptional to American commentators was Hawai‘i’s ethnic diversity. For one, when America first entered WWII, American men of Japanese ancestry were not allowed to enlist in the U.S. armed forces. Their appeals were successful and the Nisei units were created in the summer of 1942. Originally excluded from demonstrating their civic virtue, Hawai‘i’s Nisei eventually proved their loyalty by performing “proper masculinity” and “bear[ing] arms for the state.” Hawai‘i’s Nisei soldiers were also celebrated nationally because they came home to relatively few incidences of racial tensions in Hawai‘i. Like Japanese Americans, African Americans also jumped at the chance to defend the U.S. and prove their loyalty. On the U.S. continent, many black soldiers were disappointed when they returned home feeling unwelcome, unappreciated, and discriminated against. The NAACP, among other groups, criticized racial segregation in the military and demanded desegregation. Working within the framework of the Cold War, NAACP executive secretary Walter White pointed out that racism gave the enemy an effective propaganda weapon. Members of President Truman’s Committee on Civil Rights, which he created by executive order in the wake of WWII, identified racial discrimination as a key foreign relations issue that needed attention. The Committee’s motivation was to improve America’s reputation among the people of the world in order to create more allies. Rather than directly responding to Soviet claims, Truman’s administration implemented domestic policies that aimed to improve U.S. prestige abroad, while highlighting exceptional cases of interracial cooperation. The racial tensions and riots between urban whites and blacks on the U.S. continent, as well as the increasing demands for military

41 Whitehead, *Completing the Union*, 93, 96.
44 Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 84.
45 Ibid., 81.
desegregation, were somewhat deflected by highlighting Hawai‘i’s wartime record and postwar return to “racial harmony.”

In 1948, the same year Truman desegregated the military, University of Hawai‘i professors Ralph Kuykendall and A. Grove Day wrote in *The Nation* that Hawai‘i, in addition to its stellar wartime record, had given the world a “remarkable” example of interracial democracy which they described as “racial aloha.” Their logic was that lynchings and race riots were unknown in Hawai‘i and that the prevalence of racial mixing made discrimination “almost impossible” in the islands. In addition to this racial harmony, they believed Hawai‘i deserved statehood because its wartime record demonstrated that “Orientals” and “Polynesian[s]” could and had become “useful” and “loyal” American citizens. They touted Hawai‘i as living proof that, despite Soviet claims, America did not have a racial problem. Their citizenry was harmonious, loyal, and most importantly racially and ethnically diverse.

The key to portrayals of Hawai‘i’s exemplary race relations was highlighting the progress immigrants had made in assimilating to American culture and gaining American freedoms. This was done by emphasizing civil rights granted to Asian Americans in Hawai‘i, their social mobility, rates of intermarriage, and economic success. Although Kuykendall and Day explicitly included Polynesians in their statement about becoming loyal to the U.S., their 1948 article primarily cited examples of non-native settlers, Asians in particular, who had come to Hawai‘i as laborers. The two men, both of whom were themselves white settlers from the U.S., were viewing Hawai‘i in terms of what it offered the United States and how the U.S. could use Hawai‘i for its own foreign policy agendas. They conceded that Hawai‘i’s history, like elsewhere, was “smudged” with incidences of “paternalism and discrimination,” but that they were only minimal. They failed to consider U.S. imperialism in Hawai‘i to be a form of discrimination against Native Hawaiians, nor a denial of their civil rights. Their conclusions were that Americanization efforts had been successful in Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i would inevitably become more

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American as ethnic groups continued to mix and the white population coming from the U.S. increased.\textsuperscript{47}

**Campaigning for Statehood during the Cold War**

Eventually Hawai‘i would be considered an asset for the U.S. in the Cold War struggle to win the hearts and minds, but initially it presented an obstacle. At the end of World War II, pressure was placed on the U.S. and other “First World” nations to reject and abandon colonialism. Powerful anti-colonial movements were expanding and new nations were emerging across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. In contrast, European empires, such as the British, French, Dutch, and Belgian, were dismantling. This revolutionary time of decolonization presented new complications for the United States, which had begun to extend the political and military dominance that it had gained during the war while retaining its colonies. The Territory of Hawai‘i was one of many colonies the U.S. decided to maintain.\textsuperscript{48} In January 1946, the *Christian Science Monitor* urged Congress to maximize the gains of WWII and grant Hawai‘i statehood in order to confirm American hegemony in the Pacific. Not only would statehood move America’s frontier two thousand miles west, they explained, it would also establish the first overseas American state, establish an “American lake” between San Francisco and Honolulu, and demonstrate to the world that the Pacific was a defense zone of the U.S.\textsuperscript{49} In some ways, the *Christian Science Monitor* was “ahead of its time.” Military personnel and spending in Hawai‘i actually declined from 1945-1950,\textsuperscript{50} yet military leaders consistently advocated for statehood between 1946 and 1950 because they saw Hawai‘i’s strategic location paramount. Especially after the outbreak of the Korean War, congressional and military leaders increasingly linked Hawai‘i to the developing Asian Cold War and militarism quickly increased again.\textsuperscript{51} In just six years (1950-1956), military personnel jumped from 20,000 to 57,000 (with dependents this number was 107,000 or about one-

\textsuperscript{47} Kuykendall and Day, “‘Racial Aloha’ in Hawai‘i,” 185–186.
\textsuperscript{48} After World War II, U.S. colonies included Hawai‘i, Alaska, Guam, Samoa, the Marshall Islands, the Philippines, Palau, Okinawa, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.
\textsuperscript{50} Whitehead, *Completing the Union*, 168.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 168.
fifth of the territory’s total population) and spending increased from $147 million to $284 million.\textsuperscript{52}

At the end of World War II it seemed quite likely that statehood would come soon. The celebrated AJA units (the 442\textsuperscript{nd} and 100\textsuperscript{th}) highlighted the contradictions of Hawai‘i’s status as a territory. The thousands of men who had eagerly signed up for the U.S. military after the attack at Pearl Harbor proved their loyalty to the United States. While they set records for service-awarded medals, they were not all guaranteed the rights of citizenship, nor could they vote for their governor or president. The 100\textsuperscript{th} Infantry Battalion and 442\textsuperscript{nd} Regimental Combat Team were well known throughout America\textsuperscript{53} and many thought their valiant service would be quickly rewarded with statehood.\textsuperscript{54} Before the war, only 48% of mainland Americans approved of statehood for Hawai‘i; in March 1946, the number had grown to 60%.\textsuperscript{55} In January 1946 the U.S. House Committee on Territories held hearings on the topic. They were headed by Louisiana representative Henry Larcade and were referred to as the “Larcade hearings.” Just after the hearings had finished, in his State of the Union Address, President Truman spoke in support of Hawai‘i statehood:

> The major governments of the world face few problems as important and as perplexing as those relating to dependent peoples. This Government is committed to the democratic principle that it is for the dependent peoples themselves to decide what their status shall be . . . I urge . . . that the Congress promptly accede to the wishes of the people of Hawai‘i that the Territory be admitted to statehood in our Union, and that similar action be taken with respect to Alaska as soon as it is certain that this is the desire of the people of that great Territory.\textsuperscript{56}

Seizing the publicity gained by the 1946 hearings, proponents launched a national publicity campaign where they consulted with Congressional leaders and Governor

\textsuperscript{52} Whitehead, Completing the Union, 168.
\textsuperscript{53} Film played a role in publicizing the stories of the 442\textsuperscript{nd} and 100\textsuperscript{th}. For example, the 1951 film Go For Broke! received significant media attention and was screened at the U.S. Capitol and in Japan. See Dean Itsuji Saranillio, “Seeing Conquest: Colliding Histories and the Cultural Politics of Hawai‘i Statehood” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2009), 148-9.
\textsuperscript{54} Whitehead, Completing the Union, 135.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 97.
\textsuperscript{56} The American Presidency Project, Harry Truman, Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 21, 1946, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12467#axzz1IlgwND3m. In this speech, in addition to mentioning Hawai‘i and Alaska, he also mentioned Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.
Ingram Stainback established the Citizens’ Statehood Committee. The Equal Rights Commission, dating back to 1935, became the Hawai‘i Statehood Commission in 1947. It used taxpayer money to intensify its advocacy for statehood and framed the debate as a simple choice between statehood and maintaining the status-quo as a territory.\(^{57}\) To prove Hawai‘i’s readiness for statehood, the territorial legislature organized a constitutional convention in 1950 and the Statehood Commission published numerous manuals and leaflets aimed at increasing awareness and support for statehood. Dean Saranillio makes an important point that the links between the 1893 overthrow and the Hawai‘i Statehood Commission were familial.\(^{58}\) Lorrin P. Thurston, whose father Lorrin A. Thurston had helped lead the overthrow, would eventually chair the Hawai‘i Statehood Commission.

Despite presidential support for statehood, as well as an organized statehood commission, both of which proclaimed that the people of Hawai‘i were more or less united in their desire for statehood, many in Hawai‘i were opposed to statehood. Native Hawaiians in particular preferred Hawaiian sovereignty. The most well cited opponent was Alice Kamokila Campbell. Campbell was born in 1884 to a Hawaiian mother who descended from royal family and a Scottish-Irish father who had come to Hawai‘i in the mid-1800s and became a wealthy sugar planter. Campbell’s family knew Queen Lili‘uokalani well and they had remained loyal to the Queen and nation of Hawai‘i through the 1893 overthrow. Her mother Abigail Kuaihelani was a key leader in organizing the 1897 Kūʻē petitions opposing American annexation.\(^{59}\)

At the Larcade Hearings in 1946, Alice Kamokila Campbell testified for two hours before a crowd of 600 people at ‘Iolani Palace. Her testimony was aptly given January 17 on the fifty-third anniversary of the overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani and given at the palace where the Queen was imprisoned.\(^{60}\) Campbell described that she opposed statehood because it would increase the economic power of the Big Five and the rising political domination of Japanese in Hawai‘i. Some have incorrectly interpreted her

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\(^{57}\) Saranillio, “Seeing Conquest,” 140, 143.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., 7.
\(^{59}\) Ibid., 160; Noeno Silva, Aloha Betrayed, chapters 4 and 5.
\(^{60}\) Saranillio, 163.
comments as anti-Japanese and “racist,” while others have assumed that her opposition to statehood was an endorsement to maintain territorial status. For example, John Whitehead in *Completing the Union: Alaska, Hawai‘i, and the Battle for Statehood* concluded that Campbell preferred territorial status over statehood. I agree with Dean Saranillio that her comments were much more of statement against continued foreign involvement in Hawai‘i and additional settler colonialism. Furthermore, her comments against statehood should not be read as a vote for remaining a territory, nor in favor generally of territorial status. Kamokila wrote passionately about her concern for the rights of Hawaiians and preferred Hawaiian independence over further incorporation. She explicitly stated that her message to Congress was: “Hawai‘i and Kamokila ask nothing else but to be left alone.”

I do not feel . . . we should forfeit the traditional rights and privileges of the natives of our islands for a mere thimble full of votes in Congress, that we, the lovers of Hawai‘i from long association with it should sacrifice our birthright for the greed of alien desires to remain on our shores, that we should satisfy the thirst for power and control of some inflated industrialists and politicians who hide under the guise of friends of Hawai‘i, yet still keeping an eagle eye on the financial and political pressure button of subjugation over the people in general of these islands.

Although Whitehead essentially mocks Kamokila Campbell’s testimony as “Hawaiian pageantry,” he does concede that although statehood is often presented as progress toward first-class citizenship, particularly for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians’ relationship to statehood is much more complex. He writes that “many, if not most” [emphasis mine] Native Hawaiians had opposed the 1893 overthrow and 1898...
annexation and preferred to retain their own recognized nation. Despite this opposition, Whitehead concludes that by the end of WWII, there was little hope that the Hawaiian nation would ever be restored and “to all groups in Hawai‘i statehood signified finality” [Whitehead’s emphasis]. This finality might have meant increased rights for Asian Americans, but to Hawaiians this would be the final blow to their chances of regaining their nation’s sovereignty.

“Red Baiting” and “Race Baiting” in Hawaiʻi

To most Americans on the U.S. mainland, the debate surrounding statehood was about whether or not to keep Hawaiʻi a territory or fully incorporate it as a state. In both scenarios, Hawaiʻi remained under the control of America; the question was whether or not Hawaiʻi was ready for full inclusion. For them, statehood was at its minimum full inclusion and at its best proof of American democracy. As the Cold War persisted, debates extended to whether or not Hawaiʻi was loyal to the United States. Questions of loyalty were imbued with Cold War fears of communist infiltration in Hawaiʻi. As concerns about communist infiltration erupted on the U.S. mainland, eventually these concerns turned to Hawaiʻi. Some pointed to the growing labor union movement as proof that communists had already arrived in Hawaiʻi. Meanwhile, some feared communists would take over the territorial government, or even worse, that they already had. Although many were genuinely concerned about communism, many white Americans on the continent thought the nonwhite majority in Hawaiʻi was more susceptible to communism in large part due to their race and ethnicity. The intensity of anti-communism set the stage for both the advocates and opponents of statehood on the mainland: for opponents, Hawaiʻi must be rejected because it was communist; for the advocates, Hawaiʻi must be accepted because it would help fight communism by improving America’s image regarding race relations. Both scenarios appeared to be opposite, but actually shared similar thoughts on the dangers of communism.

In response to Cold War pressures, President Harry Truman began a hunt for “subversives” in the government and labor unions. In 1947 Truman issued Executive Order 9835, initiating a loyalty program to screen federal employees for any present or

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66 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 140.
prior communist affiliations. Following Truman’s lead, many state and local
governments, universities, political organizations, churches, and businesses undertook
their own anti-subversion campaigns by initiating loyalty oaths. That same year,
Hawaii’s Army Commander General John Hull warned Hawaii’s Democratic territorial
governor Ingram Stainback that there were significant numbers of communists already in
Hawaii. Stainback wasted no time responding to these perceived threats, giving
several speeches throughout the summer of 1947. That November he spoke at the
National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (‘‘Punchbowl’’) on Armistice Day, marking
the twenty-ninth anniversary of the end of World War I. He publicly announced that
communism was rampant in the islands and read aloud excerpts from what he reported to
be the communist plan for the territory, a document allegedly written by an unnamed
author who was at large in Hawaii. In many ways, Governor Stainback’s approach to communism in Hawaii paralleled that of President Truman’s policy on the U.S. continent. Stainback had been originally appointed by President Roosevelt in 1942 and reappointed by Truman in 1946.
In fact, the establishment of loyalty procedures by the Truman administration in the
spring of 1947 corresponded ‘‘almost exactly with the first revelations to the governor
about communism in Hawaii.’’ Investigations into allegations of communism would
quickly follow, particularly within the labor unions, but not exclusively. Teachers were
fired and investigated, but more than any other group, the International Longshoremen’s
and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU) and its local head Jack Hall would become the
primary focus.

67 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 142; T. Michael Holmes, The Specter of Communism in Hawaii (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994). Stainback still opposed statehood in 1954 when he testified before a congressional committee saying communism had become even worse. When he was interviewed in 1958 by Edward Murrow for the See it Now episode, he had changed his mind. Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 44; Whitehead, Completing the Union, 141.
68 Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 49.
69 Holmes explains that the territorial attorney general’s office conducted investigations that focused on
local school teachers. One example was Mr. John Reinecke. Holmes describes that he wrote a letter to Gov.
Stainback and accused him of using these accusations of communism in an effort to prevent statehood.
Stainback refuted that the greatest service he could render statehood would be to clean the Communists out
of the territory.
70 This would become a source of embarrassment for Stainback considering he had appointed Jack Hall
(and Jack Kawano) to public commissions. See Holmes, 49.
Because Hawaiʻi depended heavily on products coming from the continent and because dockworkers were the most susceptible to hearing about labor movements on the West Coast, many local union men wanted to use their power to obtain higher wages on par with those on the West Coast. In 1949, the most well known labor strike in Hawaiʻi began. The ILWU workers in Hawaiʻi began striking on May 1 and it would last 177 days. The two thousand longshoremen decided to strike for wages comparable to their West Coast counterparts and in response to the company’s refusal to arbitrate. Efforts immediately began to vilify the strikers as radical and militant while indiscriminately calling them communist. The Honolulu Advertiser was at the forefront of such slander.72 The paper’s owner Lorrin P. Thurston, whose father played a vital role in the overthrow of the Queen almost sixty years earlier, was fiercely anti-communist and wrote critically of the ILWU (and territorial delegate to Congress Joseph Rider Farrington).73 Only three days after the strike began, Thurston began printing a series of “Dear Joe” letters written as a dialogue with Joseph Stalin about his plans for a Communist takeover of Hawaiʻi.74

By 1948 Washington was well aware of the allegations about communism in Hawaiʻi. Governor Stainback had complained to Attorney General J. Howard McGrath in Washington, D.C. that the communists had taken over the Democratic Party in Hawaiʻi “lock, stock, and barrel.”75 Most susceptible to communism, Stainback thought, were Japanese-Americans.76 At the national level, the subcommittee on territories wanted to explore these allegations, particularly in light of the growing statehood debate. In 1948, Oregon Senator and committee chairman Guy Cordon was sent on a solo mission to Honolulu to conduct statehood hearings. He concluded that Hawaiʻi passed every test, finding less than one hundred communists in Hawaiʻi, and no communist penetration of the legislature.

72 Holmes says that the Star-Bulletin was more “restrained in its rhetoric” and feared that the Advertiser’s obsession with communism would ultimately hurt their statehood efforts. See Holmes, chapter 12.
73 Farrington was also the publisher of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.
74 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 155. The Honolulu Record was a radical labor weekly paper that was first published in the summer of 1948 and sometimes responded to the specific “Dear Joe” letters. See Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 142.
76 These comments were made to the annual Young Buddhists’ Association convention in Hilo and reported in the Honolulu Advertiser, March 26, 1948, p. 8. See Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 126.
Nebraskan Republican Senator Hugh Butler, a “bitter foe” of Hawaiian statehood,77 was disappointed with Cordon’s findings and wanted to stall this report until he could go investigate for himself. Therefore, Butler made his own solo mission in October 1948 to conduct formal and informal interviews. His report entitled Communist Penetration of the Hawaiian Islands, known simply as the “Butler Report,” was published seven months later in June 1949, shortly after the ILWU strike began.78 Butler’s findings and recommendations were much different than Cordon’s. He said that international communism had a “firm grip on the economic, political, and social life” of the territory. His report named “identified communists” that were “directed from Moscow” and he wrote that the Kremlin regarded Hawai‘i as one of its “principal operating bases.”79 Butler also claimed that the ILWU was directly responsible for spreading communism in Hawai‘i, a claim used by those opposed to the longshore strike to further discredit their tactics.80 Butler’s charges were promptly ridiculed by the Honolulu Star-Bulletin which concluded that those who opposed Hawai‘i statehood on the grounds of the “Red menace” are “either impugning the loyalty of the great majority of the people of Hawai‘i, or they are using this so-called issue to camouflage some other objection.”81 In other words, many considered communist allegations to be inflated or perhaps a politically convenient opportunity to oppose statehood without appearing racist.82

77 Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 145.
79 Quoted in Whitehead, Completing the Union, 151. See also "Communist Penetration of the Hawaiian Islands," Report by Hugh Butler for the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 80th Congress, 2nd Session.
80 Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 146.
82 Many ILWU members in particular felt that those accusing Hawai‘i residents of ties to the Communist Party were blatantly racist. For example, Gerald Horne describes that in preparation for theHUAC hearings in April 1950, ILWU researcher Theodora Kreps investigated the records of the HUAC members on the issue of Japanese evacuation and internment in order to prove their racist attitudes about Asians in particular. The ILWU also ran a full-page ad in the Honolulu Advertiser that cited some of the most racist HUAC members including Congressmen John Rankin and John Wood. See Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 218.
Needing to prove itself fit for self-government and disprove allegations in the Butler Report, which were only exacerbated by the 177-day ILWU strike, the 1949 territorial legislature called a constitutional convention for April 1950. This would purposely coincide with the arrival of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in Honolulu. Many hoped that the HUAC hearings would provide a vital opportunity to clear Hawai‘i’s reputation and disprove communist associations. Furthermore, by holding hearings at the same time as the convention, the goal was that people would see that those conducting the statehood convention had no connection to communism in the islands because they were not at the hearings. Additionally, all delegates at the convention were required to swear an oath declaring that they were not members of the Communist Party.

While this strategy might have been effective at differentiating statehood proponents from communists, claims of communism were not easily quelled. When Senator Pat McCarran of Nevada, a fierce anticommunist crusader, came to Hawai‘i to conduct a “careful study,” he concluded that the territory was “heavily impregnated with Communist cells and active Communist workers.” Over the course of nine days, sixty-six witnesses testified. Most refused to answer at least one question. In all, thirty-nine witnesses called refused to testify claiming their Fifth Amendment rights. They were all cited for contempt of Congress and became known as the “Reluctant Thirty-nine.” Twenty-six of those stated under oath that they were either officers or employees of the ILWU, further fueling allegations in Hawai‘i that the ILWU had direct links to the Communist Party. More importantly, twenty-eight of those cited were of Japanese ancestry, which contributed to feelings in Hawai‘i that HUAC members were using the committee for racist ends. Eventually all thirty-nine were acquitted by Judge Delbert

83 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 157.
86 Holmes, The Specter of Communism, 159.
87 Ibid., 159.
88 Horne, Fighting in Paradise, 218.
Metzger, a move that infuriated anticommunists and revealed the limitations of HUAC’s authority.  

During the spring of 1950, as politicians continued to grapple with reports of communism in Hawai‘i, Congress began debating Hawai‘i statehood in Washington, D.C. In March 1950, the House of Representatives passed HR49 by a two-to-one margin; in June, the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee agreed to send the bill to the floor of the Senate. By this time, the Korean War was underway and those in Hawai‘i pushing for statehood knew this was an opportune time. Despite growing Congressional support and other optimistic signs that statehood could be achieved quickly, allegations of widespread communism in Hawai‘i continued to plague the debates. Somewhat abruptly, in the early morning of August 28, 1951, twenty-one FBI agents arrested seven alleged leaders of the Communist Party of Hawai‘i. The “Hawai‘i Seven” were arrested for violating the Smith Act for things like attending Communist Party conventions, serving on the board of Hawai‘i’s Communist Party, and publishing the labor newspaper, the Honolulu Record. Those arrested included Jack Hall, head of the local ILWU; former teacher John Reinecke; newspaper employees Jack Kimoto and Koji Ariyoshi; mechanic Jim Freeman; chairman of Hawai‘i’s Party Charles Fujimoto; and secretary of the ILWU, Eileen Fujimoto. Hawai‘i’s Smith Act trial was the fifth in a series of federal actions since 1951 across the nation. The trial for the “Hawai‘i Seven” began in November 1952. The six men were sentenced to five years in prison and fined $5,000 each, while Eileen Fujimoto was sentenced to three years and fined $2,000. Through the ILWU Defense Fund, Jack Hall was released right away while the others remained in jail for only one week. None of them would return to jail and in 1958, their convictions were reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court decision Yates v. United States.

Even more than the perceived threat of communism in Hawai‘i, the most consistent reason for opposing Hawai‘i statehood was its majority nonwhite population.

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89 Horne, Fighting in Paradise, 218; Boyes, “Red Hawai‘i,” 10, 42.
91 Ibid., 190.
92 Prior arrests had been made in New York City on June 20, San Francisco on July 26, Baltimore on August 7, and Pittsburgh on August 17. See Holmes, 191.
93 Ibid., 210-211.
Unlike any of the forty-eight states in the early 1950s, Hawai‘i’s population was not majority Caucasian. As Figure 2 shows below, in 1940 and 1950, less than a quarter of the resident population was white while almost three-quarters were Asian and Pacific Islander, including Hawaiians. Southern Democrats were the most explicit about their feelings that Hawai‘i’s ethnic and racial composition made it unsuitable for statehood and feared that Hawai‘i’s politicians would be pro-civil rights. A Mississippi newspaper in 1947 warned that Hawai‘i’s two senators might be the deciding votes on legislation related to racial issues and civil rights. Similarly, a Texas newspaper that same year argued that statehood would “give Hawai‘i the right to exercise two Senators’ worth of self-determination” on the South, something they clearly saw as a threat to their maintenance of Jim Crow racial segregation.

Figure 2: Hawai‘i’s Population By Race (% of total population)  Source: U.S. Census Data http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tab26.pdf

Hawai‘i’s Democratic Revolution

In 1954, for the first time, Hawai‘i Democrats gained the majority in both houses of the territorial legislature, an event that would be referred to locally as the “Democratic

94 It is interesting to note that in 1960 (the first year of statehood), Hawai‘i’s white population increased 9% while Asian and Pacific Islanders decreased by almost 8%. An interesting research project would be to determine if these changes were attributable to statehood, or if they related more to the Cold War buildup of additional U.S. troops, or Cold War era immigration restrictions.

95 Quoted in Roger J Bell, Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1984), 133.
Revolution.” This came at an important time and as Kyle Kajihiro points out, “the new Democrats saw statehood as the ticket to ‘first-class citizenship.’”

Nationally, Democrats retook control of the Congress in 1954 but only by a small margin. Both the House and Senate were now controlled by Southerners—both Texans in fact. Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn and Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson were both opposed to Hawaiʻi statehood. Then-president Dwight Eisenhower supported Hawaiʻi’s statehood bid but opposed Alaska’s. Hawaiʻi politics after the 1954 Democratic Revolution now meant that Hawaiʻi would likely send Democrats to Congress if they were granted statehood. As the civil rights movement in the American South picked up steam by 1955 and 1956, the issue of civil rights now became the central obstacle for Hawaiʻi statehood.

Under Johnson’s leadership in the Senate, there was no push for a vote on Hawaiʻi statehood. Even more frustrating, the Senate Judiciary Committee, led by staunch segregationist Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, held hearings in Honolulu in 1956. Less offensive than debating the “race question” in Hawaiʻi, the committee returned to old “red baiting” techniques by focusing on the topic of communist infiltration in Hawaiʻi. Despite significant attempts, statehood did not come in 1956.

When Congress approved the Alaska statehood bill in 1958, many were convinced that Hawaiʻi would inevitably be next. Hawaiʻi’s Democratic Revolution, with the help of many newly elected Asian Americans in the legislature, intensified the push for statehood and with Alaska’s success, it seemed that many of the reasons previously used to deny Hawaiʻi statehood would no longer suffice. Now that Alaska had been approved, no longer could Hawaiʻi’s noncontiguous status be used against its bid for statehood. Furthermore, if Hawaiʻi was now denied after Alaska—a state not known for its ethnic diversity—was approved, it would be clear to many that racism had played a

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97 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 196.

98 The Honolulu Advertiser publisher Lorrin P. Thurston and one of his editors, Buck Buchwach began a “vigorous campaign” to subdue the Red Scare that re-emerged in late 1956 during the James Eastland committee hearings in Honolulu. Thurston was a long-time proponent of statehood and member of the Hawaiʻi Statehood Commission, but he had previously put anti-communism ahead of these goals. Now in 1957, he publicly supported statehood again and claimed that Communism was not an issue in the islands. See Whitehead, Completing the Union, 306-7; George Chaplin, Presstime in Paradise: The Life and Times of the Honolulu Advertiser, 1856-1995 (Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 1998), 235-9.
role. As many predicted and hoped, in January 1959, Congress passed Hawai‘i’s statehood bill and President Eisenhower signed it March 18. On August 21, Hawai‘i was officially admitted as the fiftieth state.

The Hawai‘i statehood bill federally mandated that a plebiscite vote be offered so the people of Hawai‘i could officially confirm their desire for statehood. The plebiscite was celebrated for its record turnout and its 17:1 endorsement of statehood. However, Mililani Trask and others have pointed out that the plebiscite itself violated United Nations regulations and that the results of this plebiscite are not enough to conclude that Hawai‘i voted overwhelmingly in favor of statehood. Trask explains that in 1953, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 742 which said the following three options had to be required in order to verify that the group voting had “attained a full measure of self-government.” These included “independence,” “separate systems of self-government,” and “Free Association.” The 1959 plebiscite did not offer the mandated option of independence, nor did it include the option to create a “separate system of government,” thereby violating the UN Resolution, according to Trask. Instead, Hawai‘i’s 1959 plebiscite offered only statehood or continued territorial status. Between these two options, both of which would maintain American guardianship over Hawai‘i, the voters overwhelmingly favored statehood.99

Although it is commonly recited that the 1959 plebiscite enjoyed high voter turnout, the limited options cannot accurately depict the voters’ feelings about Hawai‘i’s relationship to the U.S. Some have suggested that those who opposed statehood simply did not vote in the plebiscite, but reports of high voter turnout suggest that this might not be true. Many point out the role ethnicity played in different levels of support for statehood. For example, Tom Coffman clarifies that Japanese Americans overwhelmingly supported statehood, while Hawaiians were much more likely to oppose statehood.100

John Whitehead explains that the all-Hawaiian precinct of Ni‘ihau voted against


100 For example, see Tom Coffman, The Island Edge of America: A Political History of Hawai‘i (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2003), 290.
statehood, but this is minimized when he points out that Niʻihau was an exception or anomaly. Furthermore, he dismisses suggestions that Hawaiians who opposed statehood chose to not vote (and therefore forfeited their say) by citing a 99% voter turnout. Ron Williams Jr. suggests that this number is not correct. He argues that only 132,773 registered voters cast their votes in support of statehood when the census data from 1960 indicates Hawaiʻi’s population was 642,000. This would mean that a mere 21% of Hawaiʻi’s residents voted in support of statehood. These conflicting interpretations of the plebiscite problematize the popular assertion that the people of Hawaiʻi overwhelmingly supported becoming the fiftieth American state.

Competing Historiographies of Hawaiʻi

In spite of the longstanding history of American imperialism in Hawaiʻi and the failure of the 1959 plebiscite to recognize the rights of self-determination, American politicians, journalists, and even historians insisted that statehood was proof of democracy in Hawaiʻi and a repudiation of American empire. Amy Kaplan has argued that the study of American culture and history has long denied American Empire while reinforcing notions of American exceptionalism. Despite claims that democracy overcame colonialism with statehood, I argue that the colonial relationship between the U.S. and Hawaiʻi remained even after 1959. The discrepancy of these claims relate to the struggle over Hawaiʻi’s historiography. The dominant stories produced about Hawaiʻi’s transition from a sovereign kingdom to American state have been written primarily by Americans (not Hawaiians) and white settlers with allegiance to the United States (not Hawaiʻi). Furthermore, these writers have relied almost exclusively on English language sources (not Hawaiian). Thus, Hawaiʻi’s colonial historiography has become the mainstream historiography. Just like in other colonized places, the writing of history has been central to projects of colonialism. Edward Said reminds us that colonialism is “not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and

101 Whitehead, *Completing the Union*, 319.
imaginings.” Hawaiian historian Kanalu Young describes the use of historiography to maintain America’s military occupation of Hawai‘i:

American scholars developed a military occupation-based historiography predicated on their own misrepresentations of the indigenous and national Hawaiian pasts and their own last century of illegal control here. Selected nineteenth-century primary and secondary sources were then contoured to the needs of the occupier government apparatus to provide school children with knowledge that indoctrinated as it educated.

Noenoe Silva asserts that colonial historiography “is one of the most powerful discourses that justifies the continued occupation of Hawai‘i by the United States today.” The historiography is imbued with power relations and networks that validates the voices of elite haole Americans over subjugated natives. Michel Foucault explains that it is no accident these voices have become the dominant voices about Hawai‘i’s relationship to the U.S. because they have been given the right to speak through institutional power, for example the U.S. government, law, English language, and economic materialism. This institutional support validates and legitimizes their experiences by “rationaliz[ing] and justif[y]ing [their] currency.” At the same time, those who can speak “avert [their] powers” and “exercise a sort of pressure” to “constraint . . . other forms of discourse.” Similarly, Marita Sturken explains that Americans are not simply “amnesiac” about past imperialism or resistance to it, but rather “replete with memory.” Cultural memory is a “field of cultural negotiation through which different stories vie for a place in history.” Sturken continues by saying that the “culture of amnesia” actually involves the generation of memory in new forms, a process often misinterpreted as forgetting.

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108 Ibid., 216, 219.
110 Ibid., 2.
Fortunately, new scholarship by Native Hawaiian scholars has begun to rewrite the dominant history by centering indigenous knowledge and views, recovering previously unknown or ignored documents, and translating Hawaiian language sources. These scholars include Davianna McGregor, Lilikala Kame‘elehiwa, Haunani-Kay Trask, Jonathan Osorio, Noenoe Silva, J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, Ty Tengan, and Hokulani Aikau. In particular, Silva’s use of Hawaiian language sources has recovered an inspiring past that directly contradicts the widespread falsity that Hawaiians welcomed American imperialism. By reading documents written by Hawaiians in their native tongue, Silva’s groundbreaking research has documented that Hawaiians adamantly opposed American imperialism and annexation. These sources, however, have been ignored and unread by non-Hawaiian speakers. This has meant that Hawai‘i’s history has been told primarily from the perspective of Americans who directly participated in or directly benefited from American colonialism. Colonial historiography, according to Silva, does not just rationalize the past and suppress the knowledge of the oppressed… [It] is one of the most powerful discourses that justifies the continued occupation of Hawai‘i by the United States today.” As far as Hawai‘i’s mainstream history goes, the old adage that ‘history is written by the winners’ has been true.

One of my goals is to consider the role of culture in constructing the narrative that statehood was anti-imperialist, while at the same time naturalizing the continued military occupation of Hawai‘i. My project relies on English language sources, but my intention is not to reproduce or validate Hawai‘i’s colonial historiography. Instead, I analyze the historiography produced about statehood in order to point out its competing messages about whether or not statehood maintained or repudiated American imperialism. Despite common remarks that Hawai‘i statehood affirmed America’s dedication to democracy


112 Silva, Aloha Betrayed, 9.
and civil rights, I argue that statehood was not a fulfillment of democracy, but rather a direct continuation of U.S. hegemony and colonialism in Hawai‘i. The 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom and 1898 annexation were illegal and imperialist, in direct contrast to the principles of democracy and self-determination. Making Hawai‘i a U.S. state did not undo or amend the previous actions; instead, it further folded Hawai‘i into the United States. Statehood sounds more democratic, and has been touted as such, because it offered Hawai‘i residents additional rights that they did not have under territorial status. However, statehood further absorbed the Hawaiian nation under the United States, making sovereignty and decolonization even further unimaginable.

This dissertation merges the fields of American Empire and Hawai‘i history in order to highlight the continuous grip of American imperialism in Hawai‘i. Extensive scholarship focuses on the 1890s when Hawai‘i became a U.S. colony, as well as Hawai‘i’s militarized history, particularly during World War II; however, little scholarship blends the two, particularly in the Cold War period.113 Hawai‘i’s Cold War period has been understudied but significantly shaped contemporary society and politics in the islands. Not only did the Cold War impact the debates about Hawai‘i’s readiness for statehood, but it also helped mobilize the narrative of Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism that was used to repudiate claims of American racism and serve American interests abroad. Despite pressure to repudiate empire during the Cold War, I argue that the Cold War did not end or disrupt American imperialism, but rather maintained it. My project examines American interests in Hawai‘i during the Cold War by engaging with Hawai‘i’s history as well as Cold War history. I also examine the role of cultural products and narratives in establishing the parameters of American national and global interests in Hawai‘i.

U.S.-Hawaiʻi Relations

America’s relationship to Hawaiʻi is well studied. Within American historiography, Hawaiʻi is firmly historicized within the decade of the 1890s when the U.S. shifted from territorial expansion to overseas empire. Trask asserts that Hawaiʻi has not regained its deserved sovereignty and that Hawaiʻi’s relationship to the United States remains contested. She says Hawaiʻi is not postcolonial but rather has an ongoing colonial relationship to the U.S.114 She continues, “Thanks to postwar American imperialism, the ideology that the United States has no overseas colonies and is, in fact, the champion of self-determination the world over holds no greater sway than in the United States itself.”115 Silva agrees that Hawaiʻi is a colonial state, but wrestles with the question of whether this should be described as a neocolonial state.116 David Keanu Sai argues that Hawaiʻi remains a sovereign but occupied state because the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi never abdicated its sovereignty even though it is illegally occupied by the United States today.117 While these scholars might disagree on terminology and the best recourse for making amends, they all agree that Hawaiʻi is not a legal state of the United States.

One of the clearest ways to see America’s continued colonialism in Hawaiʻi is to center the role of the U.S. military. Today, Hawaiʻi remains one of the most militarized places on the planet. The military controls roughly five percent of the total land in Hawaiʻi, but over twenty-two percent of the most densely populated island of Oʻahu.118 Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull argue that military order is written onto Hawaiʻi both literally and figuratively.119 They also see Western intervention as a constant in Hawaiʻi. Early explorers, traders and missionaries, planters, diplomats, and military leaders have continually seen Hawaiʻi as a “welcoming feminine place, waiting with open arms to embrace those who come to penetrate, protect, mold, and develop.”120 Demilitarization activist Kyle Kajihiro similarly argues that the forces of militarism and

114 Trask, From a Native Daughter, 103.
115 Ibid., 136.
116 Silva, Aloha Betrayed, 9.
119 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, xiv.
120 Ibid., 6.
imperialism have indelibly shaped modern Hawai‘i and that Hawai‘i has long been a “centerpiece” of U.S. military strategy. However, he says, militarism in Hawai‘i cannot be reduced to a simple product of military policy, but instead needs to be understood as the result of a complex interaction of political, economic, and global forces.

I am also reminded by Cynthia Enloe that militarism is a process that includes not just the official institutions and technologies but also civilians. Enloe says to become militarized is to adopt militaristic values and priorities as one’s own, to see military solutions as particularly effective, and to see the world as a dangerous place best approached with militaristic attitudes. Most importantly, she clarifies, “most of the people in the world who are militarized are not themselves in uniform. Most militarized people are civilians.” Similarly, Kajihiro argues that militarism in Hawai‘i relies upon various “discursive strategies to cloak itself in an aura of inevitability and naturalness” which make militarization, according to Ferguson and Turnbull, “hidden in plain sight.”

Recent focus on Asian settler colonialism is also incredibly helpful for understanding the complexities and ambiguities of colonialism in Hawai‘i today. By adding Asian settlers, Hawai‘i has not just been colonized by haoles but continues to be colonized by non-natives who settle in the islands. Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Okamura’s anthology, entitled Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawai‘i, emphasizes that Hawai‘i is a settler colony that continues to deny Native Hawaiians their rights to their own lands and resources. They call for a methodological and epistemological shift away from dominant and simplistic narratives of Hawai‘i as a democratic, “multicultural” or “multiracial” state by focusing on the historical and political conditions of such a settler colony. Dean Saranillio’s

important work also links settler colonialism directly to Hawai‘i statehood. Speaking about the statehood movement, he says:

. . . [It] narrate[d] an American tale that is closely related but also distinct from the settlement stories told on the U.S. continent. Hawai‘i’s narrative tells a story not just of white settlement but of Asian settlement; it describes Hawai‘i as a place where Asians, who were largely seen as “perpetual foreigners” by the American public, helped to settle an exotic territory in the middle of the Pacific Ocean—a place where the seemingly oppositional cultures of the East and West were reconciled to create an “American melting pot” of the Pacific.\(^{125}\)

Saranillio’s point is that the statehood movement strategically mobilized stories about Hawai‘i’s multicultural society that resembled American immigrant stories. They were powerful because they were familiar but also congratulated America’s success in creating a multicultural society. They also emphasized America’s devotion to civil rights in hopes of quelling Native Hawaiian claims of American colonialism in Hawai‘i as well as Soviet claims of imperialism around the world.

Claims of benevolent American democracy in Hawai‘i are quite common among recent histories of Hawai‘i as well. John Whitehead’s thorough history of Alaska and Hawai‘i statehood movements largely glosses over the conflict and tensions of statehood. Whitehead relies overwhelmingly on pro-statehood sources, neglects Native Hawaiian perspectives, and seems to repeat the mantra that statehood ended American colonialism. His book is titled *Completing the Union*, which suggests that the process was natural and the conclusion inevitable. Even Stephen Kinzer, whose work in *Overthrow* details America’s long history of imperialist regime change starting in Hawai‘i in 1893 and ending in Iraq in 2003, seems to accept statehood as an appropriate solution to ending American colonialism in Hawai‘i. For example, he says:

Most people on the islands, however, are pleased with the way their history has turned out. They enjoy the prosperity and freedom that comes with American citizenship, and especially with statehood. Their experience suggests that when the United States assumes real responsibility for territories it seizes, it can lead them toward stability and happiness. In Hawai‘i, it did that slowly and often reluctantly. The revolution of 1893 and the annexation that followed undermined a culture

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\(^{125}\) Dean Saranillio, “Seeing Conquest,” 8.
and ended the life of a nation. Compared to what such operations have brought to other countries, though, this one ended well.\textsuperscript{126}

While I hesitantly concede that the situation in Hawai‘i might have ended better than in other countries, for example Iraq, I would not go so far as to say that the situation in Hawai‘i ended well. While there is much to gain from Kinzer’s book and he is correct that statehood gains (i.e., voting rights and citizenship) are fundamental to democracy, he is naïve to assume that most people on the islands are “pleased” with how things have turned out since statehood. He does acknowledge, however, that the overthrow and annexation “undermined a culture” and “ended the life of a nation.”\textsuperscript{127} In addition to this, Hawai‘i’s indigenous population suffer the most from the highest rates of homelessness, unemployment, poverty, health problems, and incarceration.\textsuperscript{128} Statehood might have benefited some, but Native Hawaiians have had the most to lose and continue to suffer under American control.

History of the Cold War

Hawai‘i is rarely mentioned in the scholarship of the Cold War, despite strong evidence that it was a central location and staging ground for Cold War military expeditions and training. Surprisingly, there is also very little written about Hawai‘i’s importance to the Cold War debates about racial politics, winning over the “hearts and minds of the world,” and bridging the gap between the East and the West. Therefore, Hawai‘i’s importance during the Cold War is understated. The State Department viewed Hawai‘i’s location and combination of white and Asian Americans as an important opportunity during the Cold War. Coupled with Hawai‘i’s reputation of interracial harmony and integration, Washington hoped the people of Hawai‘i could serve as American ambassadors. This made Hawai‘i an attractive location for hosting American diplomats on their way to Asia, Asians on their way to America, and Asians who could learn about the benefits of American democracy in a “familiar” place yet less fraught with racial discrimination than the U.S. continent. The State Department found this option appealing because the U.S. needed allies in Asia and something to counter the

\textsuperscript{126} Stephen Kinzer, \textit{Overthrow}, 88.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 88.
\textsuperscript{128} See, for example, Fujikane and Okamura, \textit{Asian Settler Colonialism}. 

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pervasive reports of violence and discrimination in the South. Hence, the State Department created a new institution at the University of Hawai‘i (the East-West Center) and increased its technical training and educational exchange programs already in existence. The Peace Corps also saw great value in Hawai‘i for training volunteers headed to Asia. At the same time Hawai‘i was at the forefront of American cultural diplomacy efforts, it was also at the forefront of Cold War military training and testing.

Having said this, there is some scholarship on Hawai‘i during the Cold War that informs this project. For example, Noel Kent argues that Hawai‘i was a major staging area for U.S. military activities against Vietnam and that between 1966 and 1970 the University of Hawai‘i engaged in over one hundred contracts with the U.S. military, worth over $20 million.\(^\text{129}\) And despite my disagreements with some of Whitehead’s conclusions, he does correctly state that the statehood battles in Alaska and Hawai‘i were so “interwoven” with Cold War policies that “we may well call Alaska and Hawai‘i the Cold War States.”\(^\text{130}\)

Mary Dudziak’s book *Cold War Civil Rights*, which articulates the importance of race and civil rights to the Cold War, is an important foundation to this project. She explains that in spite of the repression of the Cold War period, civil rights reform was also a product of the Cold War.\(^\text{131}\) Because racial discrimination in the U.S received such attention from other countries after WWII (especially as nations in Asia and Africa were decolonizing), international focus on America’s racial segregation was used by the Soviet Union as anti-American propaganda during the Cold War. Therefore, the U.S. designed several strategies to counter this propaganda. For example, Penny Von Eschen’s book *Satchmo Blows up the World* describes how the State Department recruited racial minorities to serve as ambassadors in an effort to counter the widely spread reports of racial violence and Jim Crow segregation. Von Eschen specifically looks at the decision to hire African American jazz musicians to tour Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Asian Americans in Hawai‘i were also recruited for specific roles.

\(^{129}\) Kent, Hawai‘i Islands Under the Influence, 144-145.
\(^{131}\) Dudziak, Cold War Civil Rights, 12.
The extensive scholarship on the culture of the Cold War is also important. Christina Klein’s *Cold War Orientalism*, for example, reminds us that the U.S. attempted to construct a national identity that legitimated U.S. expansion while simultaneously denied its imperial nature.\(^{132}\) Klein describes how this was accomplished through what Mary Louis Pratt termed “narratives of anti-conquest” that used ideas of reciprocity and sentimentalism to disguise imperialistic goals. Klein’s final chapter specifically describes how Hawai‘i’s multicultural reputation served as one narrative of anti-conquest during the Cold War. I expand this topic while also contrasting America’s diplomatic rhetoric against Hawai‘i’s expanded military role that helped assert America’s military force.\(^{133}\) Klein says, Hawai‘i in the 1950s had an “ideological value” unmatched anywhere else in the U.S. It was a multiracial society that served as a model because it recast American race relations in Asian-white terms rather than in the more fraught black-white terms.” It allowed Washington, commentators, and cultural producers to champion the ideal of racial equality without having to grapple with the unequivocal racism that the black civil rights movement was revealing on the U.S. continent.\(^{134}\)

**Culture of American Imperialism**

My goal is to reexamine statehood as part of the continuous and uninterrupted legacy of American imperialism in Hawai‘i, complicating the common yet simplistic narrative that statehood ended imperialism in Hawai‘i. If we take seriously Edward Said’s assertion that colonialism is not only about soldiers and cannons, but also about ideas, images, and imaginings,\(^{135}\) then we realize that the cultural exchange of ideas about Hawai‘i during the Cold War is significant. In order to understand American claims about Hawai‘i and statehood during the Cold War, it is important to understand where these claims came from, how they were circulated, and what they hoped to achieve. To do this, I engage with a range of cultural texts, including films, literature, news media, congressional debates, and speeches. One of my goals is to explore the cultural logic that

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\(^{133}\) Ibid., 244.

\(^{134}\) Ibid., 260-261.

supported U.S. Cold War policies in Hawai‘i, including statehood, discourses of multiculturalism and civil rights, federal cultural diplomacy programs, and militarism.

In an influential essay, American Studies scholar Amy Kaplan has criticized the frequent denial of American empire, and challenged scholars to consider the role of culture in understanding American international relations. By foregrounding culture, which she argued has traditionally been ignored by those who understood imperialism to be a matter of foreign policy done in distant places by diplomats and market forces, Kaplan asserted that we can better understand how international relations reciprocally shape both domestic and foreign cultures and cast the two into “jarring proximity.”

Challenging the notion that the “foreign” and “domestic” spheres are dichotomous, Kaplan argues that imperialism is a network of power relations embedded with instability and disorder, creating ambiguities and contradictions that she calls the “anarchy of empire.”

One response to Kaplan’s challenge was Melani McAlister’s book that places culture at the center of her analysis of the “production and reproduction of U.S. power” in the Middle East after 1945.

McAlister explains that “foreign policy has a significant cultural component” and cultural texts need to be positioned in history as “active producers of meaning,” not just reflections or reproductions of preexisting social realities. Through the interplay between cultural products and political discourses, their meanings are created. Narratives and meanings do not become naturalized only by repetition; they also become naturalized when different sets of texts, with their own interests and affiliations, come to overlap and reinforce one another. McAlister eloquently describes, the end product is “neither entirely planned nor entirely coincidental,” but instead a “process of convergence, in which historical events, overlapping representations, and diverse vested interests come together in a powerful and productive, if historically contingent, accord.”

My project places cultural texts in conversation with political discourses in order to explain how narratives about Hawai‘i’s racial harmony and the achievement of statehood converged during the Cold War and

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136 Kaplan, “Left alone with America,” 14; Kaplan, Anarchy of Empire, 1.
137 Kaplan, The Anarchy of Empire, 1.
139 Ibid., 5.
140 Ibid., 8.
were mobilized by writers, educators, politicians, and diplomats in an effort to repudiate national and international claims of American racism and imperialism.

Chapter Outline

Chapter one looks at the role of film in familiarizing and Americanizing Hawai‘i in the 1950s. Two of the primary obstacles Hawai‘i faced in obtaining statehood during this decade were interrelated. One was the widespread accusations that communism was rampant in the islands. The other was that Hawai‘i’s racial diversity caused concern over Hawai‘i’s loyalty to the United States. I look at popular films made about Hawai‘i during the 1950s, many of which had WWII themes and starred John Wayne. I argue that films helped domesticate and familiarize Hawai‘i during the 1950s by historicizing and essentializing Hawai‘i as inherently American. I place these films in conversation with the national debates about Hawai‘i’s readiness for statehood. When Congress debated the Hawai‘i statehood bill in early 1959, Hawai‘i was at the center of the nation’s foreign and domestic policies. The hearings gave national politicians an opportunity to recast Hawai‘i’s history within the Cold War objectives it sought at the time.

During these hearings, Washington rehearsed and recited the narrative of Hawai‘i’s unique multiculturalism as a decisive counterpoint to Cold War claims of American racism and imperialism. Upon the attainment of statehood, the trope that Hawai‘i was a model of multiculturalism quickly gained traction and was spread extensively. This is the focus of chapter two. Once statehood was achieved, Washington decided that Hawai‘i was an important and strategic tool in its Cold War arsenal. I describe, analyze, and contextualize the narratives and their meanings found in printed media after statehood. This includes magazines such as *Time, Life,* and *National Geographic*; literature by haole writers in Hawai‘i such as James Michener, Bob Krauss, and A. Grove Day. I also examine films and literature created by the United States Information Agency (USIA) about Hawai‘i that would be distributed throughout the world as part of its efforts to “win the hearts and minds” of the people during the Cold War. Together, the stories attempted to convince the world that Hawai‘i represented the best of America.
Chapter three focuses on the attractiveness of Hawai‘i and its “ideological value” to the Cold War. Washington saw Hawai‘i as a cultural “bridge” between the East and West, where Hawai‘i would be a place for cultural diplomacy to be fostered, and Hawai‘i’s diverse people would be used as American ambassadors. This was the logic for the State Department financing the East-West Center at the University of Hawai‘i, Peace Corps training centers, and other programs emphasizing cultural exchange between the East and the West. Hawai‘i was chosen specifically because it had recently achieved statehood, had a reputation of achieving racial harmony, and a significant Asian population. Asians in Hawai‘i were specifically recruited as American ambassadors because they could speak to the virtues of American democracy yet hold more credibility throughout Asia than would white American ambassadors. However, as it turned out, American and Asian grantees at the East-West Center found ways to use the Center’s rhetoric of international cooperation and diplomacy to challenge U.S. Cold War policies in Vietnam.

Chapter four juxtaposes the projects aimed at cultural diplomacy with Hawai‘i’s expanded military testing and training. Just as Hawai‘i was considered strategic for cultural diplomacy because of its similarities to Asia, Hawai‘i was seen as a strategic military training ground for the same reasons. I focus on Hawai‘i’s military role during the Cold War to animate the contradictions of Washington’s Cold War strategies in Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i was considered a symbolic place, unlike anywhere else, where cultural diplomacy was touted. At the same time, however, Hawai‘i was considered a crucial spot for military training and testing so that the U.S. military could escalate its competitive and aggressive stance in the Cold War. Hawai‘i was a place of peace and war. Together, these four chapters complicate the simplistic view that Hawai‘i has become the fiftieth state through a genuinely democratic process and that U.S. intervention in Hawai‘i—particularly after statehood—has been altruistic.
CHAPTER 1:
ADOPTING THE 50th STATE:
DOMESTICATING HAWAI‘I THROUGH FILM IN THE 1950S

More than any other event, World War II has helped shape Hawai‘i’s identity as American. As the site of where America was attacked in 1941, the bombing of Pearl Harbor had an important symbolic role in conceptualizing Hawai‘i as part of America. Despite this persistent conceptualization, Hawai‘i would remain a U.S. territory for another eighteen years. While Hawai‘i statehood efforts predated WWII, it was not until the 1950s that statehood efforts intensified, eventually culminating in 1959.

This chapter attempts to understand the role 1950s popular culture played in how Americans understood Hawai‘i and its relationship to the United States. As others have accurately pointed out, placing statehood within the context of the Cold War is absolutely essential. In addition to this, I argue that statehood cannot be fully understood without considering the role of popular culture in creating awareness among Americans about Hawai‘i. Although the islands have historically been a tourist destination for wealthy Americans, not until the rise of the jet age in the late 1950s was Hawai‘i feasible for middle-class American travelers. This means that in the 1950s, when Hawai‘i’s bid for statehood was accelerating, many Americans only knew about Hawai‘i what they saw on the big screen. Therefore, they relied on what Hollywood presented to them. This chapter looks at the most popular films made in and about Hawai‘i during the 1950s. I argue that these films played a significant role in “domesticating” Hawai‘i by presenting it as American and safe. Through this process of domestication and assimilation, the United States and by extension Americans, gradually adopted Hawai‘i as their own, easing the transition from territory to state.

The process of domestication, as Amy Kaplan has described it, entails “conquering and taming the wild, the natural and the alien” and “relates to the imperial project of civilizing” the foreign.141 The domestic and foreign are not separate in Empire, however; instead the “meaning of the domestic relies structurally on its intimate

141 Kaplan, The Anarchy of Empire, 25.
opposition to the notion of the foreign.”\textsuperscript{142} In Hawai‘i, American efforts to assimilate and domesticate have a long history and are intimately connected to wielding political and social control. In the nineteenth century, missionaries attempted to “civilize” Hawaiians through Christianity because they saw them as “savage” and “primitive.” Later in the century, the descendants of missionaries, now turned businessmen, sought to “civilize” Hawai‘i through capitalism vis-à-vis private land ownership and agricultural markets. Once Hawai‘i was deemed an American territory, decades of Americanization projects ensued (from American schools, to English language training, citizenship training programs, etc.). When statehood was debated in the 1950s, efforts were made by politicians to quantify and measure Hawai‘i’s progress toward “Americanization” in order to make a decision about its readiness for statehood.

Popular culture, films, and statehood hearings fed off one another to create powerful discourses about America’s national and global interests in Hawai‘i during the Cold War. The films’ use of World War II and Pearl Harbor themes historicized Hawai‘i as part of America and helped create familiarity among Americans. During the 1950s, these films primarily portrayed a white Hawai‘i that was safe for Americans and their interests, which helped alleviate fears that Hawai‘i was overrun by Asian communists. By the end of the decade, politicians debated if Hawai‘i was ready for statehood. They grappled with the fact that Hawai‘i was simultaneously both Asian and American. Realizing that Hawai‘i offered a Cold War ideological value unmatched anywhere else in the U.S., they concluded that Hawai‘i was strategically Asian yet sufficiently American. Statehood gained momentum as a symbolic step toward achieving civil rights and countering Soviet claims that America was racist and imperialist. The potential gains of granting Hawai‘i statehood, in Cold War terms, represented an important opportunity to demonstrate that the United States did not discriminate on the basis of race and was committed to equality and democracy. Once statehood was achieved, films portrayed Hawai‘i’s racial diversity and harmony, which made it a model for the rest of the nation as well as the world.

\textsuperscript{142} Kaplan, \textit{The Anarchy of Empire}, 25.
HUAC Comes to Hawai‘i

The biggest impediments proponents of statehood faced were Hawai‘i’s physical distance from the U.S. continent, reputation of communism (that drew headlines in the early 1950s), and a large nonwhite population. These three concerns were mutually reinforcing because many American politicians feared that Hawai‘i’s isolation made it more susceptible to communist infiltration and many felt that Hawai‘i’s “Asiatic” population was more inclined toward communism because of their race. Despite the completed HUAC hearings and dropped charges of the “Reluctant Thirty-nine” who had refused to testify, national debate about rampant communism in the islands continued. In February 1952, the Saturday Evening Post published an article written by Richard English entitled, “We Almost Lost Hawai‘i to the Reds.” English, who specialized in writing anticommunist articles for the American press, began with an overly-dramatic declaration that for 177 days in 1949, Hawai‘i was “held captive by communists,” almost reaching a “catastrophe,” and warned that the “next attack could be worse.” Within months, John Wayne was in Hawai‘i to begin filming Big Jim McLain, an anticommunist film written by Richard English himself.

The film echoes real life concerns of communist labor unions in Hawai‘i and received full cooperation of HUAC. English collaborated with HUAC investigator William Wheeler about his own experiences in Hawai‘i. The film also included appearances by real-life HUAC chairman John Wood and was partially shot in the actual hearing room at ‘Iolani Palace. John Wayne plays the main investigator Jim McLain (not accidentally sharing initials JM with Joseph McCarthy) and James Arness plays his partner Mal Baxter. The two are sent to Honolulu to investigate the allegations of communism. This was not Wayne’s best film, but the fact that he was the most popular

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143 For example, Edward Dmytryk, one of the blacklisted “Hollywood Ten,” sought to get his name removed from the blacklist and agreed to meet with journalist Richard English in order to renounce his communist past. See Richard English, “What Makes a Hollywood Communist?” Saturday Evening Post, May 19, 1951.
146 Boyes, “Red Hawai‘i,” 65; Navasky, Naming Names, 42.
actor of the 1950s gave it credibility and visibility. Wayne also co-produced the film when he was president of The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, an organization he had also helped found along with Gary Cooper, Walt Disney, Adolphe Menjou, and Cecil B. De Mille. Their stance was that “anyone who is not fighting communism is helping communism.” In fact, the organization had hosted HUAC when they came to Los Angeles to investigate the Hollywood film industry in 1947. John Wayne specifically thought it was his duty during the Cold War to lend his “star power” to fighting communism.

By the time Big Jim McLain was released in 1952, HUAC had already completed its hearings in Hawai‘i and returned to Hollywood. The film portrayed an “anticommunist vision that… reified the communist threat as the committee perceived it.” The Smith Act trial in Hawai‘i was by now under way, Alger Hiss was serving his five-year prison sentence, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg had been sentenced to death, the Korean War continued in its third year, and proponents of Hawai‘i statehood persisted in their movement knowing that perceptions of communism posed a threat to their cause.

The film itself begins with the question ‘how stands the Union?’ taken from a short story by Stephen Vincent Benet entitled “The Devil and Daniel Webster.” Following the question, the story begins in Washington, D.C. at a HUAC hearing where a professor of economics is being questioned about his connections with the Communist Party. Citing his Fifth Amendment rights, the professor is let off because the evidence is inconclusive. McLain is angry that this man, who he insists is a communist, will continue to “contaminate more kids.” Meanwhile Baxter is furious because he has just returned from fighting in Korea and hates the communists that shot him there. The film’s opening message is that domestic communists are as dangerous as communism abroad. Following the hearing, the two men fly to Honolulu to begin “Operation Pineapple.”

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149 Ibid., 127.
151 Boyes, “Red Hawai‘i,” 68.
152 Daniel Webster was a Senator and Secretary of State prior to the Civil War.
Big Jim McLain set a new precedent for anticommunist films by starring a popular celebrity and making a profit. Despite this, the film’s early reviews were “disastrous,” seen by many as nothing more than “crass” anti-Communist propaganda. Despite poor reviews, it was one of the highest-grossing anticommunist films of the 1950s and Stephen Whitfield argues that it is the only movie to glorify HUAC. Its message against communism is indisputable; it presents the Cold War as a noble struggle, particularly domestic efforts to pursue communists. Big Jim McLain serves an equally important second function of domesticating and Americanizing Hawai‘i during the Cold War. My point is not that this film alone Americanizes Hawai‘i, but that it exemplifies several tropes that have helped to domesticate Hawai‘i. Big Jim McLain and the other films I discuss here helped to conceptualize an American Hawai‘i by historicizing Hawai‘i as American, familiarizing Hawai‘i for Americans, and properly assimilated. They also portrayed Hawai‘i as a safe place for American influence and interests.

The Hawai‘i McLain and Baxter arrive in is marked as American. Background music includes military marching songs such as “Yankee Doodle” and before they get to work, they visit the USS Arizona to pay their respects to the American lives lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor, including Baxter’s own brother. The film was made before an official national memorial has been created at the site and so the two men are personally escorted by the U.S. Navy to go visit the “temple.” To the United States, the site of Pearl Harbor has long been a gem of the Pacific and American desire, but after World War II it became a site of loss. The fact that American bodies remain buried at sea below the memorial marks Pearl Harbor as sacred American ground. There they witness a dramatic ceremonial raising of the American flag over the mass gravesite, visually and symbolically marking the space as American. The navy bugler plays the military call “To the Colors,” similar to the national anthem, and McLain and Baxter salute the flag and give honor to their nation. Unlike earlier movies that consistently portrayed Hawai‘i as

different and exotic, Brian Ireland has argued that *Big Jim McLain* presents a Hawai‘i that is loyally American.\(^{155}\)

Figure 3: Here John Wayne (left) and James Arness (second from the left) salute the American flag as it is raised over the sunken USS *Arizona* in the 1952 film *Big Jim McLain*. Screenshot photo by A. Krattiger

By weaving the story of World War II with the hunt for communists, *Big Jim McLain* equates the Cold War as equally just and necessary as WWII. McLain and Baxter may be visiting Pearl Harbor for the first time, but the space itself is embedded with cultural narratives and national mythologies.\(^{156}\) Geoffrey White argues that “one of the mainstays of the canonical American narrative of World War II as the good war has been the story of Pearl Harbor, a story that locates the historical and moral origins of the Pacific War in a single, defining moment.”\(^{157}\) As a national myth, Kyle Kajihiro has argued, Pearl Harbor “reproduces the notion of America’s innocence, goodness, and redemption through militarism and war. It absolves the sins of war while mobilizing endless preparations for war, a constant state of military readiness that has mutated into a

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\(^{155}\) Brian Ireland, *The US Military in Hawai‘i*, 152-3.

\(^{156}\) Ferguson and Turnbull, *Oh, Say, Can You See?*, 135.

war machine of vast, unfathomable proportions.” White similarly argues that Pearl Harbor is both a “symbol of national history and site of present-day military activity.” McLain and Baxter, having never been to Hawai‘i, nonetheless arrive with these mythologies in hand. The narratives themselves are then reproduced at the memorial, and the visitor’s assumptions are subsequently validated as they witness American history. Viewers watching Big Jim McLain become visitors themselves touring Pearl Harbor and they too become tourists of American history.

By beginning McLain and Baxter’s visit at Pearl Harbor, Hawai‘i is marked as American, and Hawai‘i is historicized within American historical events like the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Hawai‘i is thus portrayed to owe its safety and protection to the United States while America’s involvement in Hawai‘i is told as beginning with an unpredictable “sneak attack” in 1941, rather than the century before. At the same time, beginning Hawai‘i’s history with Pearl Harbor means that Hawai‘i is conceptualized from the beginning as being an American possession, which obscures its own history before American influence and control. The assumption that Hawai‘i was an indisputable part of America played an important role in statehood debates because many would posit Hawai‘i’s dependency and need for American protection as evidence that statehood was not only necessary but inevitable. Omitted from this narrative, of course, is the history of sovereign Hawai‘i and U.S. imperial maneuvering during the 1800s that granted American access to the lagoon. Achieved by coercion and the threat of physical force upon King Kalākaua, a contentious addition to the Reciprocity Treaty of 1887 granted the United States exclusive rights to use what Hawaiians have long-called Ke Awalau o Pu’uloa. The fact that the United States used Pearl Harbor as its central base in the Pacific made it a target for Japan in World War II. Today the United States maintains its imperial position in Hawai‘i by continuing to occupy Pearl Harbor and manipulating its

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159 White, “Moving History,” 268.
160 I borrow this from Marita Sturken’s book Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero.
dramatic story. Jonathan Osorio explains that today the harbor’s fleet of U.S. warships symbolizes American power, Hawaiian dispossession and helplessness.\textsuperscript{161}

The construction of Pearl Harbor in \textit{Big Jim McLain} reminds the American viewers that domestic containment is as noble of a cause as foreign containment and that the Cold War is equally a “good war” as was WWII. Reminding viewers that America has been attacked before, McLain and Baxter are in Hawai‘i to stop any future threats to Hawai‘i or America. In the process, constant emphasis on Pearl Harbor makes Hawai‘i American. This historicizing has played a significant role in domesticating Hawai‘i by making the foreign domestic. Historicizing Hawai‘i as America also connects to geographic imagining of Hawai‘i as America. If Hawai‘i is historicized as American at Pearl Harbor, Hawai‘i is also thought to be geographically American as well.\textsuperscript{162} The trailer for the film says it clearly: “Islands that we fought so hard to protect not too long ago [are] in danger again.” The message is that America has long been protecting Hawai‘i and needs to maintain a military presence; the U.S. will continue to do so, thanks in part to John Wayne.

\textbf{John Wayne’s America}

In 1979 actress Maureen O’Hara told a House subcommittee why she believed John Wayne deserved the Congressional Gold Medal. She said, “John Wayne is not just an actor, John Wayne is the United States of America . . .”\textsuperscript{163} John Wayne was a “living symbol of American patriotism” during the Cold War and “had a greater impact on the way Americans viewed the conflict than probably any other Hollywood figure.”\textsuperscript{164} His


\textsuperscript{162}Other characters in the film help to domesticate Hawai‘i as well. In one scene, a Polish immigrant who has immigrated to the islands refers to it as “the west coast.” His comment figuratively brings Hawai‘i further into the fold of the United States by moving its border. To him, Hawai‘i is America, not an island off the mainland, but part of the mainland. In a related but reverse move, some Hawaiians today refer to Hawai‘i Island (“the Big Island”) as the mainland, cutting off all connections between Hawai‘i and the U.S. Both terms are used to make political and geographical claims about the islands’ status and sovereignty.

\textsuperscript{163}Quoted in Randy Roberts and James Olson, \textit{John Wayne: American} (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 641. The Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are the highest civilian awards in the United States. John Wayne was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 1979 just before he died, and was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1980.

visibility and peak in popularity coincided with McCarthy era efforts to seek subversives and communists. Even though most Americans probably did not realize the extent to which Hawai‘i was becoming increasingly militarized in the 1950s (with increasing military spending and military personnel sent to the islands), Hawai‘i was taking on an important role in the Cold War. Considering the role John Wayne saw for himself in the Cold War, it is not surprising to see him take on a number of roles in Cold War era films made in Hawai‘i, in order to “rally the troops.”

Born Marion Morrison in 1907, John Wayne was best known by his nickname “Duke.” Although he never served a day in the military, he had immeasurable influence on the institution. He entertained troops overseas and played roles designed to rally the troops. In a speech before the American Legion Convention, another organization that played an important role in enforcing patriotic themes in Hollywood during the Cold War, General Douglas MacArthur praised Wayne’s performance in *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949) saying “[he] represent[ed] the American serviceman better than the American serviceman himself.” Richard Slotkin says Wayne offered films a kind of military “authenticity.” Congress would even authorize a John Wayne gold medal in honor of his embodiment of American military “virtue” and he has more monuments than do real war heroes. His screen persona was connected to his roles in combat films and Westerns; even in other roles, his character generally relied on his soldier/cowboy persona. His body spoke a highly specific language of “manliness,” of self-reliant authority. Real life cold warrior Henry Kissinger once attributed his own diplomatic success to Americans’ admiration for cowboys who come into town alone, drawing on the legacy of John Wayne.

*Big Jim McLain* is the most overtly political of those films set in Hawai‘i during the 1950s, but the film trailer portrays the film more as an adventure (mixed with romance) than a political drama. Wayne’s reputation as an adventuresome renegade is not

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165 The nickname was given by film director and co-collaborator John Ford.
167 Ibid., 513
168 Ibid., 515; Wills, *John Wayne’s America*, 14.
171 Ibid., 13.
forgone. The trailer reads “out of the tropical mists, where adventure is born” steps the man they call Big Jim McLain, with his big stride, big fists, big smile; he has a big job in Hawai‘i—“bigger than any he’d ever tackled before.” Drawing on the previous attack during WWII and fears that Hawai‘i could again be attacked, the trailer continues “the[se] islands we fought too hard to protect not too long ago [are] in danger again.” This time the enemy is more “insidious” and Jim McLain will have to “def[y] danger’s darkest challenge” by traversing “into the mysteries of the Orient” and “Honolulu’s back streets and blind alleys” in search of Hawai‘i’s communists.

Figure 4: Screen shots from Big Jim McLain. Photos by A. Krattiger

Jim McLain is a larger than life symbol of American paternalism and guardianship traveling to Hawai‘i during the Cold War to protect American interests in Hawai‘i and domesticate the islands in the process. Hawai‘i is the new Western frontier in Big Jim McLain and John Wayne is on a heroic mission fighting the Cold War. The
film’s slogan read: “He's a go-get 'em guy for the U.S.A. on a treason trail that leads half-a-world away!” Just as Teddy Roosevelt asserted his masculinity vis-à-vis imperialism and settling the “frontier” around the turn of the twentieth century, John Wayne did the same with his Western and war films, including his Hawaiʻi films during the 1950s. Roosevelt’s Western frontier required virile masculinity to compete with and overcome “savages.” The Cold War, according to John Wayne, similarly required action and fortitude because the enemy was insidious and persistent. This was similar to Roosevelt’s notion of the “strenuous life” which warned that if American men lost their primal abilities to fight, they would lose their authority and their civilization would decay. Therefore, Roosevelt said that men should not stand idly. Teddy Roosevelt was disappointed with President Grover Cleveland’s reluctance in 1894 to annex Hawaiʻi, for this very reason. John Wayne’s overt message in Big Jim McLain is that Americans must not sit idly by and watch communism overtake “their” Hawaiʻi. Both Teddy Roosevelt and John Wayne’s masculinity is intimately intertwined with their visions of American exceptionalism as a test of manhood. Big Jim McLain’s emphasis on size and strength parallels Roosevelt’s famous quote “walk softly and carry a big stick.” For Roosevelt, imperialism was a “prophylactic means of avoiding effeminacy” just as the Cold War was an opportunity for John Wayne to exercise his virility and “sail into action.”

Big Jim McLain’s overall message is that the Cold War requires perseverance and vigilance because it will be neither quick nor easy. The film ends with HUAC hearings in Honolulu as a result of the communists McLain and Baxter found in the islands. However, just as the film began in Washington, D.C., the communists get away scot free because of their Fifth Amendment rights. John Wayne’s political motives are clear, particularly in his diatribe right after the Hawaiʻi “communists” are released. He says: “There are a lot of wonderful things written in our Constitution that are meant for honest decent citizens and I resent the fact it can be used and abused by the very people who

173 Ibid., 178-180.
175 Bederman, Manliness and Civilization, 184.
want to destroy it.” The film does not offer a standard happy ending where all the communists are found and prosecuted. However, the message is that the Cold War continues to require diligence and with the Korean War now underway, the film is a rallying call for cold warriors. Answering the question from the beginning—how stands the union?—the film ends with the answer “here stands our union.” The closing scenes play the same military marching songs and shows American troops boarding their ship and going off to fight in the Korean War, a clear message that the union’s strength is dependent on its commitment to the “strenuous” war of fighting communism. In addition, the opening and closing scenes mark Hawai‘i as American vis-à-vis the U.S. military’s continued presence in the islands.

In addition to overtly political messages about Hawai‘i’s relationship to the United States, films like Big Jim McLain help domesticate Hawai‘i by portraying its beauty in an attempt to make Hawai‘i familiar and safe for American (white) tourists and business interests. McLain and Baxter arrive in modern Honolulu and make note of their “swanky” beach house. McLain meets a widow named Nancy Vallon (Nancy Olson) and the two are inseparable for the rest of his stay—sightseeing, sailing, riding outriggers, and dining to the sights and sounds of Hawaiian music and hula. Even if Hawai‘i is run by communists, Big Jim McLain demonstrates that its beauty remains undisturbed; and even though they are busy hunting communists, Hawai‘i is a safe American playground for John Wayne and other adventure-seeking Americans. The film itself can be seen as a commercial for Hawai‘i tourism. Vallon, a haole American woman, acts as McLain’s tour guide and helps familiarize the islands for him, while together they help domesticate Hawai‘i for Americans via tourism.

Pearl Harbor and World War II

In addition to Big Jim McLain, John Wayne starred in three additional movies filmed in Hawai‘i in the early 1950s: Operation Pacific (1951), The High and the Mighty (1954), and Sea Chase (1955). Considering his star power and his ability to sway public opinion, coupled with his Cold War political agendas, it is important to also look at these films to see what they tell us about how Hawai‘i was portrayed in film, at the same time groups in Hawai‘i were advocating for statehood. None of these films are explicitly about
Hawai‘i politics or statehood, but they make Hawai‘i more familiar to Americans and construct Hawai‘i as part of America. Equally important, these films help normalize American militarism in Hawai‘i, a task in which John Wayne played a central role. Examining the films that were popular during Hawai‘i’s bid for statehood can help us understand how Americans saw Hawai‘i and its relationship to the nation during the 1950s.

*Operation Pacific* (1951) is set just after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and John Wayne plays Lieutenant Commander “Duke” Gifford aboard the USS *Thunderfish* submarine. The film begins with a dedication to the loss of fifty-two submarines and 3,500 men during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Like other films of the Cold War, *Operation Pacific* enjoyed full cooperation with the U.S. military. The film’s technical advisor was Admiral Charles Lockwood, the real-life Commander of Submarine Forces in the Pacific (COMSUBPAC) during the war. The plot begins with Duke rescuing white nuns and orphans from an unnamed Pacific Island under Japanese occupation. Duke’s unit loads them on to the submarine to take them back to Pearl Harbor. On the submarine, they do everything they can to make the nuns and children feel comfortable and safe while the sounds of bombs rattle the submarine. Noticing the children’s visible fear, Duke urges them to focus their attention on the lone infant that Duke has grown particularly fond of and has begun affectionately calling “Butch.” Butch becomes a symbol of innocence and hope that they will all arrive back in Hawai‘i safely despite the danger. Meanwhile, the rescue mission itself works to depict the U.S. military as humanitarian and benevolent. Once the explosions have ended and there is momentary peace, Duke and Commander “Pop” Perry (Ward Bond) resourcefully create a bottle out of rubber gloves in order to feed the baby. Duke personally takes on a paternal role to care for Butch and ensure his safety. Only later do we realize he is calling the baby Butch after his own son that has died. Duke expresses regret and pain associated with losing his son and his failed marriage with Mary Stuart (Patricia Neal). He recalls being an “eager beaver” who was too busy volunteering for the military to focus on his family.

Duke is, from the beginning, the leader that other men look up to and envy; he was a former football star and always knew he wanted to be in the military. He represents
an all-American hero. Bob Perry, Pop’s son, who is also serving in the unit, has always been jealous of Duke and they both compete for the affection of Stuart. Following the western genre that Wayne himself was the “definitive” symbol and star of, Duke’s character is marked by “heroic melancholy,” in that he is both “supremely powerful and yet utterly vulnerable.” After an intense battle at sea, Duke is wounded while rescuing Bob and so Bob is ashamed that Duke was the one to save him. As Bob is literally being carried off the ship—a symbol of his dependence and emasculation—Duke taps his head childishly and winks back at the picture of Mary. Duke ultimately triumphs over Bob by saving him and winning back Stuart, while preserving his masculinity and strength in the process.

Both Operation Pacific and From Here to Eternity were released during the Cold War, but rely on memories of World War II and Pearl Harbor, highlighting Hawai‘i’s importance to America. The attack on Pearl Harbor reinforced a narrative that the U.S. (and its military) owed Hawai‘i protection. The U.S. military’s occupation has long been contested by residents of Hawai‘i, especially Native Hawaiians. The bombing of Pearl Harbor asserted American innocence and the military’s necessity in Hawai‘i which reinforces the continued occupation of the islands. This innocence of an unprovoked attack trumps claims of American imperialism in Hawai‘i because the dominant narratives of World War II include innocence and spreading democracy around the world. World War II is the “good war” fulfilled. Therefore, this narrative says that Hawai‘i needs the US military, offers proof that other nations might attack (as they did in 1941), and justifies further military buildup (bases and training). World War II also gives the impression to Americans that Hawai‘i wants the military in Hawai‘i.

Paternality of John Wayne

Duke’s masculinity and paternalism in Operation Pacific are linked to his role as a soldier, his leadership of the crew, and his ability to get Mary back. By extension, he symbolizes a paternal protector of Hawai‘i during WWII because he is able to save his

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176 Gary Wills, John Wayne’s America, 18.
crew from attack. Throughout the film, as he and Mary make plans to be together again, Duke is needed to help in the testing of faulty torpedoes. Duke’s priority is keeping his unit together and he struggles to balance his love for Mary with his dedication to the military. Ultimately, after returning to Hawai‘i and solving the problem with the torpedoes, Duke realizes he had made a mistake in losing his family once and does not want to repeat the same mistake. When he returns to Hawai‘i, he and Mary head directly to the hospital to adopt Butch who will fill the void of their deceased first son. In the military Duke has a paternal role, but without a child (or wife) he has no paternal role in the familial sense. Through military victory and a reunited nuclear family, Duke is able to redeem himself by reasserting his masculinity and paternalism. In the end, Duke is the paternal hero over his family, the U.S. military, and even Hawai‘i. Metaphorically, just like the orphans need protective affiliation, the territory of Hawai‘i needs parental affiliation. The military and Duke—its living embodiment—help protect Hawai‘i which enables the American adoption of Hawai‘i.

*The High and the Mighty* (1954) was another John Wayne film that draws on Hawai‘i during the 1950s and showcases his paternalism. The film was a huge hit and incredibly profitable.¹⁷⁸ This quirky movie kicked off the “danger in the sky” disaster genre and received six academy award nominations. It begins at the Honolulu airport as passengers check in for their flight to San Francisco. Here we get an introduction to each character and their reasons for flying. The eclectic cast of characters included unhappy married couples, a former beauty queen, newlyweds, easygoing vacationers, a Korean student, and an agitated physicist. Playing Dan Roman, John Wayne is the flight’s co-pilot. He shows up at the airport to the surprise of an old acquaintance who was surprised to see him returning to the job after his plane crashed in Colombia. Wayne was only injured, but his wife and son were killed in the crash. His old acquaintance tells others that he blamed himself for their deaths, yet he was the “only guy with enough guts not to commit suicide” after that. While explaining these troubles, the camera looks up to

Wayne climbing the ladder into the cockpit, literally pulling himself back up after such tragedy and standing tall.

Wayne’s first flight after the crash is a symbolic test of his mettle and ability to repair his damaged reputation. During the flight, their plane loses one engine and the explosion creates a hole in the gas line so they begin losing gasoline over the Pacific Ocean. The head pilot, Captain Sullivan (played by Robert Stack), wants to do a water landing because he is sure there is not enough fuel. As co-pilot, Wayne thinks they have just enough fuel to get to San Francisco safely. After fighting about which course to take, Stack has a breakdown and Wayne has to slap him and take over. Not afraid to take risks, Wayne takes control and lands the plane safely, proving he is a leader and can deliver under pressure. In the end, Stack thanks Wayne for knocking sense into him and saving everyone onboard. Although he was criticized for being such an old pilot, after successfully landing the plane, he is fondly called an “ancient pelican”—old but wise. Wayne does not start as the number one patriarch of the plane, but he becomes the patriarch and enhanced by his age and ability to shine, becomes the paternal figure as well.

Compared to the other John Wayne films that explicitly emphasize WWII, only brief mention of the war is made in The High and the Mighty. Wayne plays a former military pilot, but more than anything, his synonymousness with the military accentuates his paternalism and veteran status. Running on a connection between military pilots and civilian airline pilots, and vague references to the war, uniformed pilot Wayne is perceived as a veteran military figure. Wayne was apparently worried that Dan Roman’s character was too much of a departure from his usual “man of action” role, but in keeping his cool in spite of danger, Wayne proves that Roman is just as fearless as his previous character roles. Dan Roman “acts rather than talks.”179 The High and the Mighty is also not a traditional “war film,” but it did have military cooperation. For example, U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Commander Robert Cannom was hired to be the film’s technical advisor and

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179 Roberts and Olson, John Wayne: American, 408.
the film begins with an official note of gratitude to the U.S. Coast Guard for their “cooperation and advice.”

Familial themes in *Operation Pacific* and *The High and the Mighty* are used to quell Cold War anxieties and assert Wayne’s paternalism. Like Duke in *Operation Pacific*, Roman has lost his son in *The High and the Mighty* and the film’s story focuses on a symbolic substitute. In *The High and the Mighty*, just before passengers board the plane, five-year-old Toby Field, the only child on the plane, shoots a toy gun at Wayne in the cockpit. Toby reminds Dan of his own deceased son, similarly named “Tony.” Seeing Toby, Wayne gets PTSD-like flashbacks to the crash site where he picks up Tony’s soiled teddy bear while surrounded by flames. Toby is flying alone because his father lives in Hawai’i and mother in California, making him an ephemeral orphan for the duration of the flight. Toby is counting on Wayne—his temporary parent—to get him to his destination safely and Wayne feels the extra pressure since this is the first time flying after losing his own family. During the crisis, Toby sleeps through everything. The stewardess puts a blanket over the child and lets him sleep since he represents innocence and the crew’s goal is to protect him from any harm. Faced with the double burden of protecting the young boy and all the passengers, Wayne’s heroism and manhood are reasserted in the end by calmly landing the plane safely. Likewise, Wayne’s paternalism is reasserted vis-à-vis the child who he temporarily adopts to ensure his safety. After the passengers learn that they are losing fuel, they each face the possibility that they might die on this flight. The large portion of the film focuses on the passengers’ handling of their predicament. Some want to make amends with their family members, others grapple with lies they have told or mistakes they have made, and others have flashbacks to earlier times. These themes of reconciliation and family togetherness are typical of the Cold War era. The passengers are dealing with anxiety and fear of inhalation, only here it is from a potential plane crash and not nuclear warfare. Many of the passengers turn to their family for comfort and support in a moment of possible catastrophe. Elaine Tyler May has argued that Americans were encouraged to embrace domesticity during the atomic age.
because family created a “feeling of warmth and security against the cold forces of disruption and alienation.”

Whitewashing Hawai‘i

While films before WWII tended to portray an ethnically diverse Hawai‘i, the five movies I have discussed here—all of which were released between 1951 and 1955—portray Hawai‘i as overwhelmingly white and American. This was done by overemphasizing the U.S. military and World War II plots. Known best today for its racy love scene on the beach, Fred Zinnemann’s *From Here to Eternity* (1953) portrays army life at Schofield Barracks on the eve of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Based on James Jones’ novel of the same name, the film’s script underwent several revisions before approval for film adaptation. Following wartime tradition, studios in the early 1950s had scripts approved by the Pentagon in exchange for permission to film troops and military equipment. The novel had been published in 1951 and was an instant bestseller, but the military had concerns that it could “hamper recruiting efforts” and the Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield declared the novel non-mailable in 1955. To win military approval, the film adaptation had to eliminate profanity and violence at the barracks, prostitution, and gonorrhea. Upon censorship, the army said they were “delighted” with the results and they, along with the air force, showed the film on their bases. The film won eight Oscars, ultimately overriding the various criticisms about its depictions of army life. I argue that the film played a significant role in domesticating Hawai‘i for American audiences. Instead of showcasing natural beauty and tourism, the film portrays ordinary American life in Hawai‘i. Brian Ireland argues that it reinforces traditional American values using Hawai‘i as a backdrop and “makes Hawai‘i less out of the ordinary and unusual, and instead transforms it into just another American community

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183 Ibid., 64. However, the navy banned the film from its ships and its shore installations.
184 Ibid., 64.
with everyday American problems.”\textsuperscript{185} The plot involves friendships and rivalries, romance and affairs, work and leisure. The film only ends with the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, so the rest of the film portrays typical life on an American military base in Hawai‘i and typical American lifestyles in Honolulu. The issues are ordinary, but the film is isolated to military-frequented clubs so almost all the characters are white Americans. The military itself helps domesticate Hawai‘i for white American audiences by making it familiar and just like anywhere else.

Considering how well-known Hawai‘i’s ethnic diversity was during the 1950s, it might be surprising that these films predominantly focus on whites. The villains in \textit{Big Jim McLain} (the suspected communists) are almost all white. Even though there were plenty of Americans opposed to Hawai‘i statehood on account of its large nonwhite population, namely southern Democrats, it was not always popular to frame opposition to statehood in these terms. Southern Democrats did create a political bloc primarily based on the racial implications of statehood because they predicted Hawai‘i voters would be in favor of civil rights legislation that they were so vehemently opposed to. For others, however, it was easier and less controversial to blame one’s opposition to statehood on concerns over communism rather than racism. \textit{Big Jim McLain} could have easily and predictably depicted Hawai‘i communists as Asian or Hawaiian, but instead it focused on white communists. As a result, Brian Ireland has pointed out, their un-Americanness is their Communism rather than their race.\textsuperscript{186} The decision to make the communists white protected the film from claims of racism and also reflected national fears that communism was spreading through outside forces, Soviet propaganda, and coercion.

\textit{The High and the Mighty} likewise portrays a white Hawai‘i. It is surprising that there are only two nonwhite characters in the film. One is an ethnically ambiguous character named Gonzalez and the other is a Korean student on her way to the U.S. for the first time. Dorothy Chen (played by Joy Kim) checks in at the Honolulu airport and the airline staff marvel at Chen as if they are not used to seeing Asians in Hawai‘i. Chen checks in very politely and obediently and stewardess Miss Spalding (Doe Avedon)

\textsuperscript{185} Brian Ireland, “Sugar-Coated Fortress: Representations of the U.S. Military in Hawai‘i” (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 2004), 158.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 153.
marvels: “That face! The Moon and the Willow Tree.” This is a reference to a song sung by Dorothy Lamour in *The Road to Singapore* (1940) where she plays an “exotic” local “Mima.” Attractive Lamour typically played “exotic” characters although she is white with dark hair. By comparing Dorothy Chen to Dorothy Lamour, she simultaneously whitens and exoticizes Chen. Considering Hawai‘i’s large Asian population, this seems like an odd (or displaced) stereotypical depiction of an Asian woman, particularly when you consider an Asian passenger at the Honolulu or San Francisco airport would not have been that uncommon.

*The High and the Mighty* is similar to the other films in their overwhelming whiteness of characters. This is not to say that there is no ethnic diversity visible in the films, yet all of the main characters are white. The Hawai‘i depicted in these five films is largely also segregated. The plot of *Operation Pacific* and *From Here to Eternity* takes place at sea or on base which depicts segregated life in Hawai‘i where locals and the military do not share the same social spaces. This is made particularly clear when the navy men in *Operation Pacific* get into trouble with the “locals” after a night of partying in Honolulu. Duke gets called to the police station to take care of the situation, and when he arrives, the men are wearing grass skirts and dancing drunk in the cells. The police commander is frustrated and tells Duke that this happens too often, but Duke defends them because they have been out at sea for months and are about to be re-deployed. He asks the commander: “Can you blame them?” Still unconvinced, Duke tells him that they had saved a bunch of children and two nuns, again drawing on their innocence to create sympathy for their actions while asserting the military’s benevolence. In the end, the commander agrees that as long as they settle with “the Hawaiians” he will drop the report. The film portrays a white-led U.S. military with free reign and authority over the islands’ day-to-day events.

Films in the early to mid-1950s treated Hawai‘i’s diversity cautiously and carefully. Americans were certainly aware of Hawai‘i’s diverse population and some politicians considered its large non-white population a problem for achieving statehood,

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187 Lamour also played Miss Lafleur (Gilhooley’s girlfriend) in *Donovan’s Reef*, another film I will describe in this chapter. Lamour also promoted war bond sales and Hawai‘i statehood.
however, films like *Operation Pacific, Big Jim McLain*, and *From Here to Eternity* present Hawai‘i as harmlessly diverse and different. Hawai‘i’s “exotic” character was visible, in Chinatown and Waikīkī, for example, but its isolation reassured American viewers that Hawai‘i was appropriately and safely segregated and immune to the conflict and racial violence persistent in the American South. In this way, Hawai‘i’s racial and ethnic makeup may have seemed preferable to the mainland because whites in Hawai‘i, who held political and economic control, viewed racial turmoil in Hawai‘i as only minimal. Hawai‘i was a multicultural society but contained only a negligible number of African Americans, which made it much easier to recast American race relations in Asian-white terms rather than in the more fraught black-white terms.\(^{188}\) Life in Hawai‘i, according to these films, was diverse yet segregated, different yet familiar and not intimidating. White viewers were reassured that Hawai‘i was a safe place to be. For those weary or fearful of the expanding civil rights movement in the U.S., seeing “appropriately” segregated Hawai‘i could reassure them that racial integration and harmony was possible.

### Welcoming Hawai‘i to the Family

The idea that Hawai‘i was a “melting pot” and “multicultural paradise” was not pervasive until the late 1950s and early 1960s. As I will discuss later, this narrative gained saliency as the Cold War continued and after statehood had been achieved. In the early to mid-1950s, Hawai‘i was not seen as a model for the United States; instead, Americans needed to be convinced that Hawai‘i should be fully incorporated into the United States. There were barriers that stood in the way of easily accomplishing this, two of which were communism and racism. These concerns caused many Americans to question if Hawai‘i’s nonwhite majority were “fit” for American democracy. However, because the Cold War was a battle for global reputations, it was important for the United States to avoid being perceived as racist and imperialist. Christina Klein argues that films, plays, and literature during the Cold War deflected overt themes of American expansion in the Pacific by using themes of family formation and adoption.\(^{189}\) I argue that films about Hawai‘i in the early 1950s did the same. The recurring death of the

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188 Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 260-1.
189 Ibid., particularly chapter 4.
mothers and children in these films symbolized the (war) losses that created turmoil and broke up families. Needing repair, the discourse of adoption reunited and created families and offered a more benign metaphor for U.S.-Hawai‘i relations during the Cold War. In other words, the U.S. was not expanding its (economic, political, and military) role in Hawai‘i by force or for selfish reasons. Instead, the U.S. had altruistic motives and was acting unselfishly out of concern for the welfare of Hawai‘i. This was done through sentimental and familial terms of marriage and adoption, love and commitment. Still, Klein argues these sympathetic discourses served a hegemonic function: “The push toward global integration demanded a national identity formulated in less confrontational terms” than discourses of masculinization could provide. Hawai‘i was not being taken over; it was being adopted as a new member of the family.

The metaphor of adoption was useful in describing how the U.S. saw its relationship with and responsibilities to Hawai‘i. The U.S. did not want its actions in Hawai‘i to be perceived as expansionist or imperialist; therefore, it used familial terms rather than military terms because this was less confrontational and more reciprocal. This does not mean that military relationships were absent or insignificant in the films; they were not. However, adding the sentimental stories of family formation, softened the military themes. In film, for example, John Wayne’s political obligations to Hawai‘i were portrayed in military and non-military terms. In Operation Pacific, John Wayne plays a navy man, divorced, and his son Butch has died; in Big Jim McLain he is single but pairs up with widow Nancy Vallon; in The High and the Mighty he is a widower who lost his wife and son Tony. Elaine Tyler May has written about the pervasive stigma during the Cold War against those who did not marry and have children. They were perceived to be at the very least selfish, but also perverted and often times accused of being homosexual. The nuclear family therefore was hailed as the building block in a strong society because it represented the fulfillment of traditional gender roles and heterosexuality. To fulfill proper Cold War manhood, John Wayne had to be unmistakably heterosexual and this demonstrated when his characters were looking for a wife and while he exemplified paternalism over a child, the military, or to Hawai‘i.

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190 Klein, Cold War Orientalism, 189.
191 See, for example, Elaine Tyler May, Homeward Bound.
The family has long been used as a metaphor for the nation but took on particular significance during the Cold War as it became an “emblem of a prosperous and secure America.”\(^{192}\) In this way, it is not surprising that John Wayne’s characters are marked as heterosexual and paternal in order to validate his masculine legitimacy. However, family loss (either spousal or children) is a consistent theme in these films and filling that absence then becomes a priority. Duke regrets previous choices that led to divorce and decides to re-marry Mary Stuart so the two of them can recreate their family by adopting another son named Butch; Jim McLain falls in love with widow Nancy Vallon and in doing so creates a new heterosexual partnership; and Dan Roman ephemerally adopts Toby Field who stands in for his own deceased son Tony. Marriage and adoption are then essential for John Wayne achieving the nuclear family. As he adopts a new family in Hawai‘i, he is also adopting Hawai‘i.

John Wayne’s search for a family (via marriage and adoption) mirrors his paternal role in the U.S. military and the American adoption of Hawai‘i. In *Operation Pacific*, Butch is an orphan located on an unnamed Pacific island that Japan is occupying during WWII. Butch’s nationality is ambiguous but he is a victim of wartime violence. The U.S. needs to protect the island’s inhabitants (Butch) and protect the island from Japan. In this way, the island itself is a metaphor for Hawai‘i and it needs protection. Ultimately, Butch is adopted by Duke, the island is protected from Japan, and Hawai‘i is saved by the United States. Through the trope of World War II (defending Hawai‘i from Japan) and adoption (rescuing Butch and Pacific islands threatened by Japan), the United States adopts Hawai‘i out of benevolent concern. Even if America’s actions in Hawai‘i began with imperialist intentions and coercive maneuvering, the message after World War II is framed in compassionate and benign terms. The U.S. is bound to this Pacific island out of familial love and selflessness.

The Final Push to Americanize Hawai‘i

In 1957, John Burns arrived in Washington; he would be Hawai‘i’s last territorial delegate to Congress. His foremost goal was gaining support for statehood. Burns was the former head of the Honolulu Police Department and became chair of the Democratic

\(^{192}\) Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 147.
County Committee in 1948. John Whitehead argues that the secret to Burns’s success was in making the most of the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor. The death toll at over two thousand connected each of the forty-eight states to Hawai‘i and Burns had lists with the names of every one of those victims who formed that connection. He introduced HR 5809, which was prepared by the territory’s Pacific War Memorial Commission, to build a memorial to the victims of the attack. To gain support for this measure, Burns contacted every member of the Congress. The bill was quickly passed in the House in August 1957 and became Burns’s first piece of legislation handed to Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson. In a letter from Burns to Johnson, he included the names of seventy-five Texans who died on the USS Arizona. Johnson responded enthusiastically and the Senate passed the bill in March 1958. Burns learned quickly the power of Pearl Harbor for Hawai‘i-U.S. relations and as Whitehead phrased it, “the symbolism of the USS Arizona Memorial was Burns’s calling card to Congress.”

John Burns, like John Wayne, drew connections between the Western frontier and the Pacific frontier of Hawai‘i. Both men also understood the sentimental power of Pearl Harbor and World War II in preserving that connection between Hawai‘i and the U.S. Whitehead describes John Burns as a “western man” (less an “island boy”) because he was a child of the Western frontier and part of that westward moving trail of mainland Americans who came to Hawai‘i with the military after 1900. Historical debate continues about which Hawai‘i politicians were the most influential in gaining Hawai‘i statehood and Whitehead tries to avoid these contentious questions, but he certainly recognizes Burns’s contributions to the achievement. Whitehead refers to him as a “westward-moving pioneer” and draws a connection to pioneers before him:

In that new western land, he interacted with people of different races who had migrated there by other paths or had been there originally. In Burns the East truly met the West. As territorial delegate he reversed the flow and brought the West eastward. He found his way from Hawai‘i to the national Congress, where he championed the diverse peoples of his far western home.

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193 This information is cited in John Whitehead’s Completing the Union, 305. Then President Eisenhower signed Public Law 85-344 on March 15, 1958 authorizing the creation of the Memorial.
194 Ibid., 305.
195 Ibid., 302.
196 Ibid., 328.
In their own ways, both John Burns and John Wayne helped Americanize Hawai‘i, one through politics and the other through film.

By the time the new Congress reconvened in January 1959, Alaska statehood had already been approved, leaving very few reasons to not support Hawai‘i. The case for Hawai‘i was now even stronger. First, Hawai‘i benefited from the added votes of the new Alaskan delegates. Second, the argument that statehood should be denied based on its noncontiguous borders was no longer a viable reason. Third, if Congress denied Hawai‘i statehood, then it would easily be perceived as doing so out of racial discrimination. Finally, media attention was also moving in Hawai‘i’s favor. Major magazines like Life had come out in support of Hawai‘i statehood and writer James Michener had moved to Hawai‘i and started making public endorsements for statehood, as did other celebrities like movie star Dorothy Lamour. In March 1958, Edward R. Murrow’s See it Now devoted an episode to debating statehood for Alaska and Hawai‘i. It aired only two months before Alaska became the forty-ninth state and an estimated seven to eight million people watched the show. Murrow thought this topic was particularly significant because “there [had] been no great public debate on the matter” and their presentation was “in the hope of starting a small argument about it.”

See It Now included both proponents and opponents of Hawai‘i statehood. Democratic Senator from Mississippi, John C. Stennis, shared his concern that “Asiatic communism [would] have a direct route” to the Senate floor with Hawai‘i’s two votes. Well-known foe of civil rights Senator James Eastland shared concerns about Communist control over the islands and Hawai‘i’s long distance from the continental U.S. Avoiding explicit language about race, Eastland said that he did not think people in Hawai‘i knew enough about the problems in the U.S. in order to “cast an intelligent vote” and that if granted statehood, its two Senators would not be able to “pass intelligently” on the questions that confront the U.S. Congress. Murrow pressed a little harder and asked if

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197 John S Whitehead, Completing the Union, 4.
199 “Statehood for Alaska and Hawai‘i,” Transcript, 2.
200 Ibid., 40.
the islands’ mixed racial background played a role in his opposition; Eastland of course denied this idea.201

Murrow interviewed several Hawai‘i politicians and public figures who articulated Hawai‘i’s loyalty to America and importance for winning the Cold War. Two Japanese American Democrats offered their take on why Hawai‘i deserved statehood. Senator Daniel Inouye reminded viewers that Americans in Hawai‘i, of all ethnicities, did their fair share in fighting for democracy and that “percentage-wise, Hawai‘i lost more sons than any other state in the union.” Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink said there were half-a-million American citizens in Hawai‘i waiting for statehood and “deep down within [her] heart [she knew] that it [was Hawai‘i’s] manifest destiny to become a state.”202 For Inouye and Mink, Hawai‘i had proved its allegiance, earned statehood, and was already American. According to Territorial House Speaker O. Vincent Esposito, Hawai‘i was important both nationally and globally. He said, “America needs friends in the Orient in order to fortify and strengthen its foreign policy. Make us a State and America will find a door to the Orient opened that it’s never been able to open before.”203 Acting University of Hawai‘i President Willard Wilson echoed these Cold War considerations when he noted that Asian countries think of Hawai‘i as a “colony” with “second class citizens.” Statehood, in his estimation, “would do a great deal . . . to correct that.”204

Like the films’ emphasis on World War II and John Burns’s efforts to create a memorial at Pearl Harbor, Edward Murrow’s episode of See It Now emphasized a familiar American Hawai‘i vis-à-vis historic U.S. military sites. He explained that few pieces of American “real estate” are so enshrined with American history as Hawai‘i’s Schofield Barracks, Hickam Field, Pearl Harbor, and the USS Arizona. Murrow ended the episode with Gallup Poll numbers released that day which indicated that 65% favored Hawai‘i statehood while only 12% opposed it.205 The topic was gaining visibility and

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201 Eastland responded that he had found that Chinese, Japanese and Filipino people were very intelligent and patriotic and knew their fine war record. See the “Statehood for Alaska and Hawai‘i,” Transcript, 40.
202 Ibid., 28-31.
203 Ibid., 31-32.
204 Ibid., 47.
205 Ibid., 50.
more Americans seemed to be warming up to the state of Hawai‘i. The episode aired the same month that the Senate approved and President signed into law the creation of a national memorial at the USS Arizona. Not only was Hawai‘i on the minds of many Americans, so was Pearl Harbor. Congress had just agreed to build the national memorial in Hawai‘i and soon they would vote on whether or not to make Hawai‘i a state of the nation. The Hawai‘i statehood bill now had over fifty cosponsors, more than ever, it seemed likely to pass. Lyndon Johnson, who had been slow to come around to statehood, promised Burns that the bill would be a priority because he knew that Eisenhower was anxious to admit Hawai‘i and his vote could be beneficial for his relationship with the president.206 Taken together, I argue that films during the 1950s, the increased media attention on Hawai‘i and news of the new memorial at Pearl Harbor, and President Eisenhower’s public endorsement of statehood, in concert with congressional hearings, solidified America’s national and global interests in Hawai‘i. The narratives and their meanings overlapped and reinforced one another and produced powerful discourses that were interdependent, and historically contingent. Not only was statehood deserved, but the Cold War made it urgent.

Debating Hawai‘i’s Americanness

Both houses of Congress began statehood hearings in January and February 1959. Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, on January 23, recommended that since Alaska had already been admitted, Hawai‘i should also be promptly admitted as it was “our only remaining incorporated Territory” and would “fulfill a solemn obligation on the part of the U.S. to the people of Hawai‘i—first expressed in the Treaty of Annexation of 1898.”207 This reasoning went back to the 1901 Insular Cases that sought clarification for the newly gained territories as a result of the 1898 Spanish-American War and the annexation of Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i was not the only remaining American territory in 1959,

206 In a speech at the East-West Center, President Lyndon Johnson told the audience that for two decades, he had opposed Hawai‘i statehood, until the “undeniable evidence of history, as well as the irresistible persuasiveness of John Burns, removed the scales from [his] eyes.” He also said that it was “one of [his] proudest achievements of [his] twenty-five years in Congress.” See Whitehead, Completing the Union, 326.
but the wording of the Insular Cases had differentiated incorporated territories (Alaska and Hawai‘i) from unincorporated territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines). Now that Alaska had been admitted as the forty-ninth state, Hawai‘i was the only remaining incorporated territory. At the beginning of the century, however, Hawai‘i was depicted in political cartoons as being unruly and uncivilized and therefore “unfit” for self-government, just like Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Now, Hawai‘i’s statehood was being debated half a century later and the question remained, was Hawai‘i now properly assimilated?

By 1959, the Department of the Interior had decided that yes, Hawai‘i was ready for statehood. Secretary Seaton based his recommendation on Hawai‘i’s proven “Americanism”:

Hawai‘i is truly American in every aspect of its life. Its people have been citizens of the United States since 1900 [and] they have no other loyalty . . . The Americanism of the people of Hawai‘i goes beyond mere legal conformity. Hawai‘i is pervaded by American ideals and practices in its civic organizations and private charities, in its educational system and its athletics, in its press and radio, and in its way of living generally. 208

Seaton noted that a substantial proportion of Hawai‘i’s people were of “racial extractions originating in a distant continent,” 209 but he clarified that there “are no finer patriots in the Nation” as was proven by the service of Hawai‘i’s men during World War II and the Korean conflict. He continued his remarks by describing the transition to statehood as a fulfillment of democracy. Not only had the people of Hawai‘i, over many years, exercised self-government and demonstrated their “firm adherence to the ideals of free government,” but the people had repeatedly petitioned for statehood, adopted a state constitution, and voted overwhelmingly in favor of it. 210 In other words, in its time as a territory, Hawai‘i had matured and assimilated properly. Convinced of its Americanness, the United States was, according to the Department of Interior, now ready to adopt Hawai‘i as an equal member of the union.

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208 Fred Seaton, Secretary of the Interior, Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings, 17.
209 This in itself might sound quite ridiculous considering the earliest settlers to the United States also came from a “distant continent.”
210 Fred Seaton, Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings, 17-18.
The biggest obstacle for Hawai‘i statehood, according to the politicians who participated in the hearings, remained Hawai‘i’s large nonwhite population. Almost everyone that testified at these hearings made some reference to the Asian character of Hawai‘i. House Majority Leader John W. McCormack from Massachusetts noted that despite the “oriental heritage” of its population, Hawai‘i’s culture is American. He continued, “Hawaiians… look to the West for guidance and emulation.”211 By prefacing his statement with the detail that Hawai‘i was overwhelmingly Asian, it is clear that McCormack, like other whites at this time, conflated Americanness with whiteness. To him, American culture was not limited to whites, however. He asserted that the culture of Hawai‘i was indisputably American and therefore America had successfully assimilated Hawai‘i into the dominant culture.

The most successful way to counter racist claims that Hawai‘i’s Asianness disqualified them from American statehood was reverting back to Hawai‘i’s WWII history and reminding everyone of the accomplishments of the 442nd Regiment Combat Team and 100th Infantry Battalion. In doing so, they were drawing on the “cultural capital” of Japanese American war veterans whose heroism was made synonymous with patriotism. Nisei patriotism was central to the claim that Hawai‘i was both Asian and American at the same time, a trait politicians quickly learned was strategic in pursuing the cultural Cold War. In addition, by publicly discussing the patriotism of Japanese Americans, a group that had been subjected to intense wartime racism, hysteria, and internment, Americans could recast this dark history as something overcome and a lesson learned. Christine Yano explains that particularly in the continental U.S., media fascination told of a group that was once the enemy alien but had become high achieving, well assimilated, and an American success story.212 The contributions of Japanese Americans in Hawai‘i could then be celebrated as a civil rights victory, a “happy ending,” and proof that America was amending its past. This narrative was particularly salient because it contrasted with the more pronounced racial disputes between white and black Americans.

211 John W. McCormack, Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings, 23.
At the hearings, many pointed to the positive impacts statehood would have both
domestically and globally. Statehood for Hawai‘i, it was thought, would inspire racial
harmony on the mainland and would impress the East. Speaking directly to the opposition
from isolationists and racists who “sneer at world opinion,” John McCormack thought
statehood was a “meaningful demonstration of the dynamism of democracy” and that
U.S. could not afford to miss opportunities like these during the Cold War. The House
Minority Leader Charles Halleck agreed that it was now more important than ever to
approve Hawai‘i statehood or “suffer the consequences of charges of discrimination on
racial grounds.”213 Comments such as these raise the question of whether American
politicians in 1959 considered statehood a legitimate civil rights issue or just a strategic
foreign policy effort to portray themselves as committed to civil rights, regardless of
whether or not they really were. In other words, was granting statehood something they
wanted to do or something they thought they needed to do? Furthermore, if Halleck was
claiming that statehood needed to be approved because otherwise the world would
perceive the U.S. to be discriminating against Hawai‘i due to racism, was this also an
acknowledgment that the United States had been practicing racial discrimination by
keeping Hawai‘i a colonial territory since 1900? It is possible that some statehood
supporters were genuinely committed to civil rights and racial equality, but it is also
equally possible that a significant number of politicians who ultimately cast their vote in
favor of the bill were primarily motivated by the weight of the Cold War and global
opinion. Perhaps they knew that they could not afford to lose the debate over Hawai‘i, or
they understood that Hawai‘i offered an opportunity too good to pass up. Others might
have defended statehood for the sake of its Cold War benefits primarily because they
knew it would be an effective bargaining tool with politicians who would oppose
statehood on racial grounds. In other words, they knew they could not change the minds
of Southern racists, but they knew these same people were equally Cold Warriors as they
were segregationists. If they could not win the statehood debate on the virtues of racial
equality and democracy, they could win it in the name of the Cold War.

213 *Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings.*
Historicizing Hawai‘i during the Statehood Hearings

The Congressional hearings themselves proved to be a telling Cold War exercise in constructing and managing the U.S.’s relationship to Hawai‘i within the Cold War framework of “winning the hearts and minds.” It was no secret that part of the allure of statehood was related to its militarily strategic location and the Cold War itself. Statehood would make the military’s presence in Hawai‘i even easier and more seamless. McCormack mentioned statehood being especially important now that U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) had been consolidated and expanded under Hawai‘i control in 1957.

At the very same time that statehood made it even easier to expand the military’s influence over Hawai‘i and made Hawai‘i an even more important outpost in fighting the Cold War, Hawai‘i statehood was framed by politicians as anticolonial. Even though Hawai‘i’s governor William Quinn wrote to the committee on January 24, 1959, “our people are opposed to any provision which would permit an enlargement of military use of land, particularly on O‘ahu, because of land shortage and present large military holdings,” no response was given throughout the remaining debates. Instead, the benefits for Hawai‘i’s residents (the right to vote for the president, right to choose their own governor, the right to have their judges locally selected) were celebrated for ensuring self-determination and achieving democracy at a strategic time during the Cold War.214

Several variations of historical summaries of the U.S.-Hawai‘i relationship were discussed that week. They tended to begin with missionaries coming to Hawai‘i after 1820 and converting Hawaiians to Christianity and teaching them about the West. Others also referenced Americans coming to Hawai‘i to participate in the process of assimilation and gaining control over Hawai‘i’s economy. Some pointed out that the 1840 Hawaiian Constitution was modeled in part after the U.S. Constitution in an effort to point out how Hawai‘i had long looked to the U.S. for guidance. Others mentioned an unnamed king attempting to negotiate annexation in the 1850s to make the point that Hawaiian royalty even wanted American guardianship. Their historical retellings then skipped to the 1893 “Hawaiian Revolution” where Hawai‘i became a republic, then an incorporated territory

214 Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings.
in 1900, the plebiscites, and 1950 state constitution.\textsuperscript{215} This allowed Congress to historicize the relationship between the two as reciprocal and benevolent in the image the U.S. saw itself and wanted to present to the world. This narrative suggested that even Hawaiian kings had wanted to become part of the U.S. and that Hawai‘i had long sought assimilation. Many discussed how statehood would bring American democracy to Hawai‘i and “prove” the superiority of the American democratic process. These hearings became a battle over historical narrative and American politicians repeated that “Hawaiians” (the term they used to refer to everyone in Hawai‘i) \textit{wanted} to be part of the U.S. During the Cold War, when gaining credibility among the world meant so much, adopting a willing and enthusiastic populace, especially a nonwhite majority, was reaffirming.\textsuperscript{215}

The rhetorical exercise that took place in statehood hearings in January and February 1959 reiterated the narrative America wanted to hear at that time. The story politicians told emphasized Hawai‘i’s strong desire to be part of the U.S. and this held important historical significance. The Cold War was steadily escalating and the civil rights movement was gripping the nation’s attention. The crisis in Little Rock and ongoing acts of civil disobedience to protest Jim Crow segregation were easily manipulated by the Soviet Union and the U.S. needed to regain control of the global narrative. African Americans in the South were calling American democracy a sham and four thousand miles away, Hawai‘i was supposedly pleading to be included. Hawai‘i’s story was much more attractive to Congress than the ongoing crisis in the South, when no easy solution seemed feasible. Most importantly, Hawai‘i statehood seemed like a win-win solution for the people of Hawai‘i as well as for the U.S. itself. Congress knew this was the story they had to spread and they hoped that doing so would offer a counterpoint to the unresolved issues in the American South. In September 1957, at a Shriner’s luncheon meeting in Waikīkī, Hawai‘i’s territorial governor Quinn had suggested that granting Hawai‘i statehood would be a positive counter to the “sordid affair” in Little Rock, Arkansas.\textsuperscript{216} Politicians in Hawai‘i knew that framing their political goal of statehood as a Cold War opportunity elevated the issue from national to global terms.

\textsuperscript{215} See for example, McCormack’s testimony, \textit{Statehood for Hawai‘i Hearings}.
\textsuperscript{216}“Quinn Urges Statehood to Nullify Little Rock,” \textit{Honolulu Advertiser}, September 27, 1957.
Hawaiʻi statehood provided a meaningful opportunity for Americans to represent the fruition of American democracy for the rest of the world to see.

By the end of the statehood hearings, the Interior and Insular Affairs committees favored the bill. On March 11, Lyndon Johnson announced that the bill would be taken up in the Senate that day and Governor Quinn was telephoned in Honolulu and told to fly to Washington immediately. When Johnson heard that Quinn was on the way, he told several Southern senators (Richard Russell of Georgia and Olin Johnston of South Carolina) to withhold their dissenting speeches and instead publish them in the *Congressional Record.* Johnson is even reported to have said to some of his Southern colleagues, “That young S.O.B. Republican Governor from Hawaiʻi is on his way now and I want to get this bill through before he gets here.” He was successful; the bill passed quickly with a vote of 76 to 16 just minutes before Quinn’s taxi arrived at the Capitol. The next day, it passed the House 323-89 and was signed by the President on March 18.

The only thing left was a plebiscite vote, required by the bill, for the people of Hawaiʻi to accept statehood and confirm their willingness to become the fiftieth state. Held June 27, the same day as the primary for the state elections, the plebiscite was celebrated for its record turnout and its 17:1 endorsement of statehood. The 1959 plebiscite did not offer the mandated option of independence, nor did it include the option to create a “separate system of government.” By only offering the choices of statehood or remaining a territory, many argue that the plebiscite violated UN Resolution 742.

Despite claims of widespread support, the issue of statehood was much more complex. Whitehead ends his thorough history of Hawaiʻi and Alaska statehood with a quote Alice Kamokila Campbell said to friends five days after the statehood bill passed, on her seventy-fifth birthday. She told her friends, “I have always been opposed to statehood, but now it is here and many of my friends like it, I shall try to like it too.”

According to Whitehead’s account, what started as opposition to statehood ended as

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217 Whitehead, *Completing the Union,* 314.
219 Quoted in Whitehead, *Completing the Union,* 320.
apathetic optimism. Similarly, the day after the statehood bill passed, Reverend Abraham Akaka, minister of Kawaiahaʻo Church, addressed his predominantly Hawaiian congregation with his own ambivalence:

There are some of us to whom statehood brings great hopes, and there are those to whom statehood brings silent fears . . . There are fears that Hawaiʻi as a state will be motivated by economic greed; that statehood will turn Hawaiʻi (as someone has said) into a great big spiritual junkyard filled with smashed dreams, worn out illusions; that will make the Hawaiian people lonely, confused, insecure, empty, anxious, restless, disillusioned—a wistful people.²²⁰

Both Campbell and Akaka vocalize an uncertainty about statehood, but there were few options available to them at this point. Statehood had already been approved by the United States and an imperfect (and many would say illegal) plebiscite vote from the population in Hawaiʻi had symbolically told the U.S. that Hawaiians were enthusiastic about wanting to join the U.S. as the fiftieth state. In the sixty-six years since the Hawaiian monarchy had been overthrown by a small group of haole men backed by marines, Hawaiʻi had been annexed by the U.S., then became a territory, and finally the fiftieth state of the U.S. Little optimism remained for those Hawaiians who preferred to be an independent nation and an equal ally to the U.S. rather than a dependent state.

On the U.S. continent, Hawaiʻi was celebrated for becoming the fiftieth state and “completing the union.”²²¹ When President Eisenhower signed the Hawaiʻi statehood bill on March 18, 1959, he claimed that the upcoming plebiscite was a fulfillment of the “principles of freedom and self-determination . . . which this Nation was founded 172 years ago.”²²² Not only had Hawaiʻi “come of age,” but by allowing Hawaiʻi to become equal members of the union, the United States had finally lived up to its own principles and “come of age” itself. Statehood symbolized Hawaiʻi being adopted by its American

²²⁰ Full text of Reverend Abraham K. Akaka’s March 13, 1959 sermon is available at http://akakafoundation.org/sermons.html and is also printed in the Congressional Record of the 86th Congress, First Session.

²²¹ John Whitehead titles his book Completing the Union, which I interpret his choice of words to suggest that the Alaska and Hawaiʻi would inevitably become part of America and that admitting them as the forty-ninth and fiftieth state marked the completion. I think this raises more questions about remaining colonies and territories that the U.S. controls.

parent and fully incorporated into the American family. The debates in the lead up to statehood emphasized that Hawai‘i was simultaneously Asian and American. It was strategically Asian, yet sufficiently (and most importantly) culturally American.

The comments made at the hearings in support of statehood demonstrate that many had already come to see Hawai‘i as an exceptional part of America. In other words, for them, Hawai‘i had already been domesticated. However, the statehood hearings themselves also provided an important rhetorical opportunity to further domesticate Hawai‘i and historicize it as American. By emphasizing America’s long relationship with Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i’s search for American guidance, participants of the hearings argued that Hawai‘i should continue to be part of the United States. This was done by reciting Hawai‘i’s history in a way that solidified its permanent relationship to the U.S., while describing its inherent Americanism. Hawai‘i was assimilated through generations of Western contact via missionaries, businessmen, politicians, teachers, military commanders, and even filmmakers. Equally important, the statehood hearings revealed an emerging story about what Hawai‘i’s exceptional history could offer the world during the Cold War.

As Congress spent weeks debating the merits of Hawai‘i statehood, the hearings provided an opportunity to perfect the rhetoric that Hawai‘i was proof of American democracy and progress towards civil rights. This story instantly grew traction because it could convince even the most racist Cold Warriors why statehood made good Cold War sense and provided an important and decisive counterpoint to the Soviet claims that the U.S. did not practice the democracy that it preached. The U.S. could highlight Hawai‘i’s transition to statehood as evidence that America was an altruistic country and was dedicated to democracy for everyone regardless of race. Many politicians and intellectuals were convinced that Hawai‘i opened important doors to Asia and Asians and that statehood offered the U.S. a global legitimacy it needed during the Cold War. This narrative would remain pervasive in the coming years as America used Hawai‘i to engage in a diplomatic contest in both national and international courts of opinion.
Hawai‘i’s Multiculturalism and Post-statehood Films

Once statehood was achieved and Hawai‘i’s Americanness confirmed, racial and ethnic diversity became a central theme in films made in Hawai‘i. No longer something to be avoided, Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism would become a recurring theme that made Hawai‘i exceptional within America. In September 1959, less than a month after Hawai‘i was admitted as America’s fiftieth state, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. visited the newly formed state legislature. He spoke about the nation’s ongoing racial problems and Hawai‘i’s accomplishments in proving that integrated life in America was possible:

As I think of the struggle that we are engaged in the South land, we look to you for inspiration and as a noble example, where you have already accomplished in the area of racial harmony and racial justice, what we are struggling to accomplish in other sections of the country.\textsuperscript{223}

Particularly as the civil rights movement on the U.S. continent intensified, some turned to Hawai‘i and wondered if it was as harmonious as everyone claimed. In 1963, the same year as the March on Washington and King’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech, two new films—both filmed on Kaua‘i—were released that presented Hawai‘i’s racial integration and multiculturalism as more advanced than on the U.S. continent. The films were \textit{Diamond Head} (starring Charlton Heston) and \textit{Donovan’s Reef} (starring John Wayne). Before the 1967 landmark Supreme Court decision \textit{Loving v. Virginia}, interracial marriage was illegal in many states, but not in Hawai‘i. While quite different films, both took up the question of whether Hawai‘i was really as accepting of interracial marriage and interracial mixing as everyone claimed.

Both films were wildly popular, each starring a famous movie star who could bring in a crowd no matter what the film’s topic. The different trajectories of John Wayne and Charlton Heston during the Cold War add another layer to these two films that came out the same year as the March on Washington. While Wayne was known for his Cold War conservatism, Charlton Heston was more of a Cold War liberal. In the 1956 presidential election, Heston—like many Hollywood voters—supported Adlai Stevenson

\textsuperscript{223} Martin Luther King, Jr., Remarks to the Hawai‘i House of Representatives First Special Session, September 17, 1959, https://middleofthepacific.wordpress.com/2011/01/17/martin-luther-king-jr-honolulu-Hawai‘i-circa-1959/.
while John Wayne was one of a few celebrities to campaign on behalf of Eisenhower. In comparison to Wayne, Heston was liberal; however, he differentiated himself from more liberal colleagues and held strong conservative inclinations. He was a fierce anticommunist, like Wayne, but he admired Kennedy’s “hawkish Cold War stance.”

![Image](image.jpg)

Figure 5: Actors Sidney Poitier, Harry Belafonte, and Charlton Heston at the Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963. Courtesy: National Archives at College Park.

Probably more than anything, Heston’s views on civil rights made him appear more liberal than he actually was. Heston says he first got involved in civil rights in 1961 and felt the Kennedy administration was “walking a scrupulously neutral line.” As the president of the Screen Actors Guild, he accepted a breakfast date with Dr. Martin Luther King in 1963 to discuss the absence of blacks in the Hollywood technical unions. He and some other actors organized themselves to take a public stance in favor of civil rights and created a delegation of Hollywood actors to attend the upcoming March on

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The group included about twenty or so, but most famously included Burt Lancaster, Jim Garner, Marlon Brando, Paul Newman, Sidney Poitier, and Harry Belafonte. Following the march, Belafonte, Brando, Heston, Poitier, Joseph Mankiewicz, James Baldwin and moderator David Schoenbrun held a roundtable discussion about the day’s events and it was filmed for television.

In contrast, Wayne did not sympathize with the civil rights movement. In August 1965, when Duke heard news of the Watts riots between black civilians and white police in Los Angeles, Director Melville Shavelson recalled that Duke reportedly said, “Those blacks got what they deserved.”\(^{227}\) In 1968, Wayne spoke at the Republican National Convention in Miami and endorsed Richard Nixon by recording a few radio ads for his campaign. Wayne was offered a position on George Wallace’s segregationist ticket, but turned him down. Wayne reportedly responded: “You and I think the same way about what’s happening to this country,”\(^{228}\) but he preferred to support Nixon. This is not to suggest that Wayne unequivocally supported racial segregation. Randy Roberts and James Olson explain that he was opposed to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because he believed private property owners had the right to refuse service to anyone, but Wayne also blamed George Wallace and white southern Democrats for creating the conditions in which the civil rights movement persisted. He reportedly said that “If blacks had been allowed to vote all along, we wouldn’t have all this horseshit [civil rights movement] going on.”\(^{229}\) Understanding these two men’s different political views on civil rights sheds light on the differences between the two films made in Hawai‘i in 1963. Both engaged Hawai‘i’s reputation of multiculturalism after statehood, but Heston’s *Diamond Head* was more liberal than Wayne’s *Donovan’s Reef*.

*Diamond Head* was based on *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* writer Peter Gilman’s best-selling novel, *Such Sweet Thunder*, about politics and interracial romance in Hawai‘i.\(^{230}\)

\(^{228}\) Roberts and Olson, *John Wayne: American*, 567.
\(^{229}\) Ibid., 567.
\(^{230}\) In 1959, Columbia Pictures paid Peter Gilman $100,000 for the film rights to *Such Sweet Thunder*. 

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Charlton Heston, who had just won an *Oscar* for *Ben Hur*, played Richard “King” Howland (similar to *haole land*), a white pineapple plantation owner on Kaua‘i.\(^{231}\) The film is set just after statehood and King is a senatorial hopeful in the state’s first post-statehood election. Faced with the situation that his younger sister Sloan (Yvette Mimieux) wants to marry full-blooded Hawaiian Paul Kahana (James Darren), King is forced to reassess his own views on racial integration, particularly in light of Hawai‘i’s recent transition to statehood and all the attention Hawai‘i has received for being a showcase of civil rights. In addition to King’s predicament, his deceased wife’s sister Laura (Elizabeth Allen), who has been living with the Howlands ever since her sister died but is from the continent, is even more disappointed in Sloan’s decision because she thinks Hawaiians and haoles should not mix. Sloan—thinking that King will defend her decision—demands that he tell Laura that “if she had been born in the islands, she would know without being told.” Sloan is crushed to find out that Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism is not understood everywhere and even more upset that King does not support their plans to marry.

Surprised by his own response, King consults with Paul’s brother Dean (George Chakiris) who is half Hawaiian and half haole. Dean says the decision is between Sloan and Paul and that “things are getting better in the islands for folks like Paul,” referring to how statehood was improving the lives and opportunities for non-haoles. King confesses to Dean that he had expected to have that same outlook himself. However, when the time comes for King to write his acceptance speech for the senatorial nomination, he struggles between what he knows he should say—*“These islands are the showcase of the U.S. and the place where we’ve proved to all the races of the world that all men are equal”*—and what he suddenly realizes he wants to say. Clearly King knows what Hawai‘i is supposed to represent, suggesting that perhaps the narrative of racial harmony was all a ploy. Equally telling, Dean then tells King that he’s heard that speech before, implying that it isn’t necessarily true.

\(^{231}\) The film was intended to star Clark Gable, but he died before filming could start. The lead role then went to Charlton Heston but they kept the character name “King” because it was Clark Gable’s Hollywood nickname.

Even though the film’s setting is removed from a Southern black-white context, *Diamond Head* has strong reminders of Southern racial violence, particularly lynching. After one argument, for example, King orders Dean to leave and warns that he “may have to string [his guts] in a barbed wire fence some day.” King threatens this violence against both Dean and Paul. Frequently, in the period after Reconstruction, the lynching of African American men was done in response to allegations (true or not) of sexual relations (consensual or not) between black men and white women. Faced with the “threat” of his younger white sister having children with a “full blooded” Hawaiian man, King’s response is the threat of violence. *Diamond Head* also includes references to Jim Crow-like racial segregation in Hawai’i, which is rarely mentioned in film or literature and generally thought to have never happened in Hawai’i. There is a scene where the Kahanas and Howlands discuss having lunch together at “the club,” however Sloan knows that the Kahanas are not allowed to dine there; they can only work there. In *Diamond Head*, Hawai’i statehood resembles U.S. Reconstruction on the continent where the realities of recently achieved equality (emancipation and civil rights) were tested. In the film, Hawai’i is going through its own post-slavery-like transformation as it moves from territory to state. Interracial relationships specifically test the ideals of multiculturalism celebrated with statehood in *Diamond Head*. The film acknowledges both the promise of statehood, but also its limitations and imperfections.

King’s ultimate character flaw is that he himself is having a sexual relationship with an Asian woman, Mai Chen (France Nuyen).\(^{232}\) Despite her desires to marry and have children with King, he says that he has no intention of marrying again. Like John Wayne’s characters in the 1950s, King was also a widow. King eventually finds out that Mai is pregnant with their son but King refuses to recognize him, in part because he thinks he does not deserve to inherit the Howlands’ Moana Lani plantation. Eventually King’s selfish decisions leave him lonely and with no remaining family. Mai dies in childbirth and Sloan leaves Moana Lani, taking King’s son with her. Only then, after being widowed a second time, does King realize that he had made a big mistake and

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\(^{232}\) France Nuyen also starred in *South Pacific* (1958) and the theatrical version of the 1958 *The World of Suzie Wong* with William Shatner. Nuyen appeared on the cover of *LIFE* magazine in October 6, 1958. She also appeared in episodes of *Hawaii’i Five-O* from 1971-77 and *Adventures in Paradise* in 1960.
needed to get his family back. The film ends with King rushing out the door on his way to get his family back and admitting to himself that his son was “half a Howland after all.” Vis-à-vis the trope of interracial family formation, Hawai‘i multiculturalism is ultimately legitimized by King Howland in the film *Diamond Head*.

*Diamond Head* was advertised as “The Giant Story of Modern Hawai‘i” and Heston’s key role suggested it would be equally epic as his most recent roles playing Moses in *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Ben Hur* (1959). *Diamond Head* tests the strength of multiculturalism in Hawai‘i. Faced to accept his own shortcomings and contradictions, King—after losing almost everything—comes around to the idea of racial integration. Ultimately, King decides that he would rather choose love than maintain white supremacy in Hawai‘i. By placing the discussion of racial mixing in Hawai‘i (and taking it out of the continental black-white framework), the film’s topic is less controversial.\(^{233}\)

*Donovan’s Reef* also presents a multiracial Hawai‘i that is far ahead of the racial politics found on the U.S. continent, but also maintains many of the same WWII military themes that were central to Wayne’s pre-statehood films. The film is based on a series of original sketches written by James Michener for Paramount Pictures.\(^{234}\) John Wayne plays the lead role as Michael “Guns” Donovan, a WWII veteran living on the fictitious Pacific island of Haleakaloha where he also served during the war. Guns and his friends Thomas "Boats" Gillhooley (Lee Marvin) and Dr. William Dedham (Jack Warden), are also retired navy vets who fought alongside Guns and chose to remain on the island. Although not specifically identified as Hawai‘i, the fictitious name of the island purposefully conjures up Hawai‘i, as well as several common Hawaiian terms and other historical references.\(^{235}\) After the war, Dr. Dedham decided he was needed more in the islands than back in Boston and became the island’s only physician. This makes

\(^{233}\) *Diamond Head*, interracial kisses and all, is much less-known than the 1968 first interracial kiss on television between white Captain James Kirk (William Shatner) and black Uhura (Nichelle Nichols) on *Star Trek*, or even the 1967 film *Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner*.


\(^{235}\) For example, Guns and Gillhooley get together every year on their birthday on December 7, uncoincidentally the same day as the attack on Pearl Harbor, and engage in a barroom brawl. Also, many of the filming locations are easily identified as Kaaua’i.
Dedham’s presence on the island resemble a missionary whose higher calling was benevolence and service. After the war he also married Polynesian Princess Manulani and together they had several “hapa haole” (half white) children, before he became a widower. Back in Boston, where his family owns a shipping business, his daughter Amelia (from his first marriage) is on her way to Haleakaloha to prevent her father from inheriting a huge family fortune.

Once news of Amelia’s impending arrival reaches the island, they arrange for Guns to temporarily adopt Dedham’s three children because they all assume that Amelia would never accept them as brothers and sisters because they are mixed race and half-native. The eldest daughter Leilani astutely recognizes that the problem is that they are “not white.” As the plot unfolds, Guns and Amelia begin to fall for each other and Amelia learns that the three children are her half-siblings. Amelia likes the children very much, but like King Howland’s sister-in-law (Laura) in Diamond Head, who is also from the continent, Amelia similarly has a hard time adopting Hawai’i’s openness and racial tolerance. However, these are her half-siblings and through multiracial family adoption, Amelia learns to accept and adopt Hawai‘i. Amelia arrives on the island as a symbol of the U.S. mainland’s skepticism and disapproval of racial mixing, but through family adoption and learning island values, she comes to adopt Hawai‘i. Metaphorically, if the United States could learn and celebrate Hawai‘i’s values of multiculturalism (like Amelia had), it could also adopt Hawai‘i. From the American perspective, the U.S. had already legally adopted Hawai‘i in 1959. Yet the film provided a metaphor for the U.S. Cold War policy of adopting Hawai‘i’s stance on multiculturalism and interracial living—at least rhetorically—in order to gain global alliances and counter domestic and international criticisms of American racism at home.236

Hawai‘i, according to Diamond Head and Donovan’s Reef, has something to offer the United States, particularly the South. Hawai‘i’s race relations were considered far superior to the mainland and those accustomed to racial segregation (Amelia in

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236 The reason I say rhetorically is because the U.S. did not officially take a full-pledged stance against all racial and ethnic discrimination in the United States. Obviously, racism and discrimination continued for many years to come. However, rhetorically, the U.S. government in general and State Department in particular heralded Hawai‘i’s record of racial harmony in the service of gaining alliances during the Cold War.
Donovan’s Reef and Laura in Diamond Head) need only visit Hawai‘i to learn the lessons of multiculturalism. Just as pre-statehood films about Hawai‘i utilized the metaphor of adoption to soften America’s relationship with Hawai‘i, post-statehood films did the same. The earlier films emphasized that the U.S. was like a parent adopting a child, but doing so out of family love and commitment. During the Cold War, the U.S. did not want its actions in Hawai‘i to be perceived as expansionist or imperialist. Thus, it used familial terms rather than military terms to present its role in Hawai‘i as less confrontational and more reciprocal. Once statehood was achieved, Hawai‘i’s reputation of multicultural harmony was considered to have Cold War implications as an example of America’s repudiation of colonialism and racism. Diamond Head and Donovan’s Reef, produced after statehood, continued to use metaphors of family adoption and inclusion to soften America’s reputation, but also included themes of interracial marriage and multiculturalism because Hawai‘i’s Cold War potential had been realized. Now Hawai‘i was a model for the U.S. because it had advanced further in the realms of racial and ethnic integration and intermarriage. Gina Marchetti explains that historically Hollywood has used Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders as “signifiers of racial otherness” to avoid the “far more immediate racial tensions between blacks and whites.” Likewise, romance has been used as a “metaphor for interracial and intercultural understanding.”

Hawai‘i films during the 1950s and 1960s, with their themes of interracial families (created through adoption or marriage) and racial harmony among Hawai‘i’s diverse people repudiated the history of American racism while providing a symbolic opportunity for America to imagine its global power, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, as benign and reciprocal instead of colonial and confrontational. As the United States expanded its programs of cultural exchange and military capabilities during the Cold War, sentimental familial themes served both progressive and expansionist goals. Rather than exposing America’s democratic failings or limitations, Hawai‘i statehood was offered as proof that America was committed to global democracy and racial equality.

237 Gina Marchetti, Romance and the ‘Yellow Peril’: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 2, 6, 126.
238 Klein, Cold War Orientalism, 15.
CHAPTER 2:

The Newest Star: Hawaiʻi Emerges as a Model of Multiculturalism

When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. visited Hawaiʻi in September 1959, he talked about the domestic harm of American racism. During the Cold War, racism also had important global repercussions. America’s racial struggles—including segregation, lynchings, and blatant inequality—instilled doubt about the nation’s claims of freedom and democracy. To make matters worse, “Communist propaganda sheets highlighted every dreadful incident to drive the point home further.”

These considerations played an important role in the debates about Hawaiʻi statehood and as soon as statehood was achieved, journalists—both nationally and locally in Hawaiʻi—quickly announced that Hawaiʻi statehood was both a civil rights and Cold War victory. The Honolulu Star Bulletin declared that statehood would enhance American prestige in Asia and prove to the world that the U.S. practiced democracy regardless of race or color.

It’s a banner occasion for the islands . . . Land of the hula, of sugarcane and pineapple, with its polyglot population brings a colorful culture as its heritage and contribution. Perhaps most important of all, Hawaiian statehood gives the lie to communist charges of American colonialism.

The story that Hawaiʻi statehood offered a counterpoint to Soviet claims of American racism and colonialism quickly gained traction during the Congressional statehood hearings in early 1959. The logic followed that statehood proved that America did not hold colonies, nor did it deny citizenship or democracy based on race or ethnicity. For one, this was politically effective in pressuring conservative foes of civil rights to set aside their racist opposition to statehood and vote in favor of what would serve American Cold War interests. Secondly, it interpreted statehood as both a domestic civil rights and global Cold War victory. Politicians were optimistic that Hawaiʻi opened important doors

to Asia and Asians and that statehood offered the U.S. legitimacy that it needed throughout the world. In a war where cultural diplomacy, strategic story-telling, and propaganda were commonplace, the U.S. hoped its emphasis on Hawai‘i statehood would both inspire people everywhere and counter claims of American racism. More specifically, because Hawai‘i was known for its diverse population that lived in relative harmony (particularly in contrast to the American South), it proved that racism was not inherent to the United States. In this context, the story of the fiftieth state—the nation’s newest star—was spread as widely as possible.

This chapter examines several iterations of Hawai‘i’s acclaimed multiculturalism as both a domestic and foreign Cold War achievement. First, I look at popular American magazines that were written primarily for American audiences and introduced them to their newest state. Next, I look at literature and films produced by the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) for foreign audiences. Finally, I turn to white American writers in Hawai‘i who wrote about statehood and wanted to advance American interests in the Cold War vis-à-vis Hawai‘i. All three mutually reinforced one another while attempting to describe how Hawai‘i’s transition to statehood repudiated colonialism and racism. Instead, I argue, this literature actually reinforced the same racist and colonial tropes it claimed to reject.

An Exceptional State

Almost immediately after statehood, several articles in popular American magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *American Heritage* quickly introduced Americans to their newest state, such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *American Heritage*. If films in the 1950s starring actors like John Wayne helped assimilate Hawai‘i in the previous decade by portraying Hawai‘i as white and historicizing it as American, popular magazines after statehood introduced mainlanders to their newest state and emphasized the fulfillment of the American Dream in Hawai‘i. The exceptionalism of this trope suggested that Hawai‘i proved the American Dream was possible anywhere and for

Asian Americans in particular, aided by American influence, were evidence that the American Dream was not denied to anyone based on their race or ethnicity.

The first national stories published in the wake of President Eisenhower’s signing of the Hawai’i Admission Act focused on all the celebrations taking place throughout the islands. *Newsweek* reported that thousands poured into the streets dancing, shouting, and embracing, while church bells tolled, sirens wailed, and firecrackers exploded. Schools, stores, offices, and factories closed for the two-day celebration and in Waikīkī Beach, celebrators broke out the champagne, strummed ukuleles, and sang “Hawai‘i Pono‘i” in front of a huge bonfire. *Time* reported that “the volcano roared” and politicians “kicked off [their] shoes” while people danced and played music in the streets. The point was clear: Hawai‘i was ecstatic to finally become the fiftieth state and looked optimistically at its future.

In describing the celebrations, the magazines emphasized Hawai‘i as both American and Hawaiian. For example, *Time* reported that as crowds gathered at ‘Iolani Palace to celebrate, they sang both the Hawaiian and American anthems—“Hawai‘i Pono‘i” and “The Star Spangled-Banner.” The magazine went on to describe the various American and Hawaiian-influenced music one could hear at the statehood celebrations:

> Hula dancers undulated delightedly in front of the ‘Iolani Palace and city hall, high-schoolers chimed in with raucous rock ‘n’ roll. Street dancers jiggled to the beat of Dixieland jazz, the blare almost dissolving the dulcet sounds of the famed Royal Hawaiian Band playing in front of the sedate old Moana Hotel.

The references to the days of the Hawaiian Kingdom establish the trajectory of a once sovereign nation to an American state. Hawai‘i Pono‘i began as the Hawaiian kingdom’s national anthem but was eventually replaced by America’s national anthem, and the kingdom’s national anthem eventually became Hawai‘i’s state anthem. Similarly, the Royal Hawaiian Band was created during King Kamehameha III’s reign but continues to play today outside the ‘Iolani Palace, originally the seat of the Hawaiian monarchy but later used as the capitol building for the territory of Hawai‘i and eventually for the state.

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244 *Time*, March 23, 1959.
245 Ibid.
of Hawai‘i. *Time* noted in 1959 that Hawai‘i maintained its traditional culture, but through a gradual process of American settlement and assimilation, Hawaiian traditions were now mixed with American cultural influences. The story’s underlying emphasis was that Hawai‘i was multicultural—both Hawaiian and American—but its people could not be happier with statehood. In other words, American hegemony in Hawai‘i was not something to be remorseful about, but instead celebrate.

Hawai‘i’s first election after statehood, in June 1959, received significant media attention because it represented Hawai‘i’s first opportunity to perform its new citizenship. The high voter turnout was described as evidence of Hawai‘i’s enthusiasm to participate in American democracy. *Time* reported that over 93% of Hawai‘i’s registered voters voted, which was much higher than the reported all-time high of 77% on the U.S. mainland, making Hawai‘i a model for democracy that even mainland Americans ought to admire.\(^{246}\) Even more important than Hawai‘i’s exemplary show of citizenry was the fact that Hawai‘i voters had elected to office forty-two candidates of “Oriental descent.” The fact that so many candidates on the first post-statehood ballot were not white provided an opportunity for America to boast that it was embracing diversity and granted equality to everyone regardless of race. Hawai‘i’s accomplishments, which America took credit for, were said to light up the “Pacific skies like an aurora of blazing pinwheels”—suggesting that Pacific nations might take notice and celebrate.\(^ {247}\) *Time* explained that the success in Hawai‘i could reach beyond the Pacific into Asia and the U.S. continent: “As the U.S. took into the union this mixture of people, it won another kind of victory visible from Bangkok to Little Rock.”\(^ {248}\)

By highlighting the new records Hawai‘i had set for Asian Americans elected to office, Hawai‘i’s first election after statehood was portrayed as a civil rights victory, one that many hoped would counter or at least deflect criticism that the U.S. was a white oligarchy. *Time* included a story about Senator Hiram Fong’s rise to power, narrating his life as a classic American “rags to riches” story. They did this by recasting his story in familiar American immigrant narratives. Fong’s immigrant father had come from China.

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\(^ {246}\) *Time*, August 10, 1959.
\(^ {247}\) Ibid.
\(^ {248}\) Ibid.
to work on the sugarcane fields on Oʻahu for $12 per month, but Hiram had “decided . . .
to lift himself out of poverty” by selling newspapers and shining shoes in order to pay for
his tuition at the University of Hawaiʻi and later Harvard Law School. Despite following
a classic and thus predictable “rags to riches” storyline, the exceptionalism of Fong’s
story was that he was an ethnic minority achieving the American Dream. In some ways,
Fong’s rise to power was familiar within the context of U.S. history because his success
resembled a similar trajectory on the U.S. continent where African Americans had
worked in oppressive conditions on southern plantations (under slavery and later
sharecropping) before gaining equal rights as citizens. In other ways, however, the story
of Asian Americans in Hawaiʻi was intended to provide a stark contrast to the struggles
for racial equality on the U.S. continent. In other words, the story is meant to be familiar
and exceptional. The fact that African Americans in the U.S. were publicly denouncing
the American political system for excluding them from so many facets of American life
(i.e., voting, public facilities and institutions) at the very same time Hawaiʻi was
reportedly celebrating their participation and inclusion in American politics (i.e., voting,
representational democracy) was significant and self-reinforcing. Not only was this what
many white Americans wanted to hear, but they also hoped it would surpass any
domestic or international criticism, as well as undercut African American militancy on
the continent.

In addition to the economic success of Asian Americans in Hawaiʻi, their display
of patriotism and loyalty by joining the U.S. military during WWII helped reinforce the
“model minority” thesis that would become pervasive in the late 1960s. Almost every
story after statehood described AJA’s extraordinary military service. More than anyone,
Daniel Inouye was celebrated because he was a decorated member of the famed all-
Japanese 442nd Regimental Combat Team and lost an arm after being shot in Italy. After
the war, Inouye graduated from the University of Hawaiʻi and later George Washington
University Law School. He was elected to the Territorial Legislature as part of the
Democratic Revolution of 1954 and after statehood he became the first Japanese
American elected to Congress. Asian American involvement in the Democratic
Revolution as well as the decorated all-Japanese units in World War II made men like
Daniel Inouye central to the Cold War story of American equality and democracy which conflated military service with masculine citizenship.

The Asian American men elected to represent Hawai‘i in 1959 had all achieved high levels of education, many of them advanced degrees in the United States. Considering the post-statehood notoriety of Hawai‘i’s multiracial society coincided with significant racial conflict in the U.S. South, it is interesting to compare the achievement of higher education among Hawai‘i’s newest “Asiatic Congressmen.” African American students were fighting for admission to public universities in the American South, while it seemed, according to news stories in *Time* and *Newsweek*, Asian Americans did not experience the same kind of racial discrimination. *Time* wrote that after the war, Daniel Inouye “went home to attend the University of Hawai‘i, got his law degree from George Washington University, hung out his shingle and surfboarded into politics.” No connection was explicitly drawn between Asian Americans in Hawai‘i and African Americans in the South, but Hawai‘i’s rising stars were evidence that the American Dream was available for anyone despite what was happening in the South. Hawai‘i’s ability to live harmoniously amidst racial diversity provided yet another example of why Hawai‘i was an example for the rest of the country. *Time* reported, “Racial tension, in a spot where there are no fewer than 64 crossbreeds of humans, is less worrisome than that in the U.S. South.”

The exceptionalism of Hawai‘i’s story was linked to the success of Asian Americans’ assimilability into Hawai‘i as immigrants, but the kind of American Dream story it produced was color-blind because it emphasized anyone could achieve success in Hawai‘i. After Congress passed the Hawai‘i statehood bill, *Newsweek* titled a section of their cover story “We all haoles.” The story cites a conversation between two Hawaiian men who upon hearing the news, say to each other approvingly, “Now we all haoles.” The article describes to American readers that with statehood, finally Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, and the many other ethnic groups in Hawai‘i “were beginning to feel on an

\[249\] *Newsweek*, August 10, 1959.
\[250\] *Time*, August 10, 1959.
\[251\] Ibid.
equal footing with the haoles.” Even though part of the Cold War fascination with Hawai‘i depended on its reputation of racial equality, the efficacy of this argument relied on constant reminders and reinforcement of Hawai‘i’s racial and ethnic differences. For mainland audiences, Hawai‘i’s people were equally American but ethnically different from most Americans.

Although Hawai‘i had already proven its assimilability and Americanness (a requirement for achieving statehood), magazine articles still emphasized Hawai‘i’s ethnic differences by using colorful and ethnic descriptions. In portraying the people of the new state and their lifestyles, *Time* referred to its cover story in August 1959 as a “color story” while voting day itself was referred to as a “pageant” because men wore “bright aloha shirts” and women wore colorful muumuus. Their description of several local islanders included their names as well as their ethnicities—for example, “Tony Castro, 53, a naturalized Filipino-American”—in order to draw attention to Hawai‘i’s ethnic diversity and by extension America’s new diverse citizenry, or what the magazine previously referred to as “the new breed.” In addition to their names and ethnic identities, articles also noted their use of pidgin English and Hawaiian place names. For example, Tony Castro asks his friend Louie Pacheco to go fishing with him after work. He yells, “See you pau hana [after work]? Plente feesh at Kapukamo!” Adding examples of Hawaiian pidgin to explain life in Hawai‘i portrayed Hawai‘i’s residents as “ethnic” and “exotic.” The references to the men speaking pidgin could also be read as a method to infantilize Hawai‘i as a child speaking in “broken” English, making them innocuous to mainland audiences yet “exotic.”

Hawai‘i’s first election after statehood was primarily written about for its nonwhite ethnic diversity, but Hawai‘i’s white residents were also celebrated as important contributions to Hawai‘i’s “melting pot.” Particularly those who had been born on the U.S. continent but moved to Hawai‘i and successfully learned local customs—what news stories often referred to as malihinis—were important because they

253 *Time*, August 10, 1959, 12.
254 Ibid.
reassured white Americans that the American Dream was also available to them in Hawai‘i. There was no reason to be intimidated that Asian Americans’ success came at the expense of Caucasian Americans. For example, the Saturday Evening Post wrote, “[Hawai‘i’s] citizenry is an exotic mixture of Polynesian languor, Asiatic industry, Yankee enterprise.”257 One of the most cited examples of white integration into island life was haole William Quinn who became the state’s first democratically elected governor.258 Quinn had been born and raised in New York and Missouri, served in WWII, became a lawyer, and moved into a house on Portlock Road in Honolulu’s “Hawai‘i Kai” neighborhood near Diamond Head. Time referred to the neighborhood as one in which many white mainland newcomers chose to settle, suggesting the ease in which Americans (and Time readers) could settle in Hawai‘i and find success. Locally, Portlock and Hawai‘i Kai were known for being exclusive with its large haole population.259 Quinn was praised for “sinking his teeth” into island life pretty easily.260 For men like Quinn, Hawai‘i represented the new American Dream in America’s newest frontier—the Pacific. American media assured (white) Americans that Hawai‘i was ripe with possibilities and opportunities.

**Hawai‘i is Open for Business**

Coupled with the story that the American Dream was achievable in Hawai‘i were stories about Hawai‘i’s “booming” economy. For example, Time cited “self-made” millionaire Chinn Ho—dubbed the “Chinese Rockefeller”—and *malihini* millionaire Henry J. Kaiser as two of the best examples of Hawaiian enterprise.261 Ho was well known in Hawai‘i for real estate development, most famously for purchasing the Ilikai Hotel in Waikīkī in 1959, which became one of Hawai‘i’s first high-rise luxury resorts.262

258 Quinn was also the Territorial Governor of Hawai‘i at the time of statehood. He had been appointed in 1957 by President Eisenhower.
259 This area was developed by Henry Kaiser in the 1950s. Kaiser is best known for establishing Kaiser Shipyard during WWII and later Kaiser Permanente health care organization. The name Hawai‘i Kai was given to the planned community just east of Honolulu by Kaiser himself. Kaiser also created the Hawaiian Village Hotel in Waikīkī, known as the Hilton Hawaiian Village today.
260 Time, August 10, 1959.
261 Ibid.
262 Chinn Ho would also become the inspiration for the character Chin Ho Kelly in television’s hit series Hawai‘i Five-0 which ran from 1968-1980. The Ilikai would become a common backdrop on television, including the opening balcony scene of Hawai‘i Five-0.
Kaiser was best known for creating the Hawaiian Village Resort in Waikīkī and was the inspiration behind the exclusive Hawaiʻi Kai neighborhood in East Honolulu.263 Certainly Ho’s ethnicity added extra glamour to the attractive story. *Time* also described Honolulu’s brand new Ala Moana shopping center – one of the world’s largest — which was about to open in just three days (and one week before Hawaiʻi’s first date as a state). Mentioning Hawaiʻi’s booming capitalist economy and American-style consumerism reasserted Hawaiʻi’s Americanness and deflected any lingering concerns about Hawaiʻi’s propensity toward communism. Hawaiʻi was not only America’s newest star, but a shining star at that.

During the Cold War, as the U.S. promoted capitalism as the best economic system for the world, politicians and journalists may have hoped that stories about Hawaiʻi’s consumerism would present an alternative to communism throughout Asia, while Cold War politicians hoped that Hawaiʻi’s economic success could be replicated on a global scale. A month after Hawaiʻi held its plebiscite vote and first state election, Vice President Richard Nixon travelled to Moscow to meet Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev at the opening of the U.S.I.A.-coordinated American National Exhibition in July 1959. While Nixon attempted to convince Khrushchev in the so-called “Kitchen Debate” about the virtues of American democracy by impressing him with American consumer products and kitchen appliances, American volunteers provided lessons in American lifestyle, fashion, hairstyling, art, and literature. The Cold War emphasis on cultural diplomacy, epitomized by the 1959 Exhibition, sought to convince people throughout the world that American style capitalism offered the best path toward freedom and democracy. This challenge was formidable in 1959, but Hawaiʻi’s noted excitement for American democracy and presumed acceptance of capitalism offered American diplomats evidence that these goals were possible.

In celebrating Hawaiʻi’s booming economy and new domestic status, the Cold War effort to spread ideas of capitalism and consumerism were not limited to the Soviet Union. The same August 1959 *Time* article that introduced the new state of Hawaiʻi also

263 Kaiser also created Kaiser Permanente in 1945. The Hawaiian Village is now owned by Hilton and is their biggest resort.
described Nixon’s visit to Moscow and the expanding “anti-American” “black supremacist” Nation of Islam. These articles remind readers of the dangers of the Cold War (communism and the “doctrine of hate”) but also suggest comfort in America’s expanding domestic sphere (Hawai‘i and consumerism). Surrounding the articles about statehood were advertisements for new kitchen appliances and other domestic products, as well as services for future tourists or entrepreneurs seeking business opportunities in the newest state. Hawai‘i represented new consumers and new markets to target since consumerism was part of the process of domestication. Products themselves had the ability to domesticate Hawai‘i. For example, a Bell Telephone advertisement proclaimed that “Hawai‘i—the 50th star—is as near as your phone!” and calling Hawai‘i is now as “fast and easy as calling across town.” Even before statehood, they explained, “Hawai‘i has been tied to the Mainland by undersea telephone cables . . . since 1957.” This product helped domesticate Hawai‘i by bringing it closer to the U.S. and reminded consumers that the United States had a longstanding relationship with Hawai‘i.

Figure 6: This image of a bustling downtown shopping district in Honolulu appeared in Time on August 10, 1959. Photo by A. Krattiger

264 Time, August 10, 1959.
265 This advertisement for Bell Telephone System appeared in Time on August 10, 1959.
Equally important, *Time* presented Hawai‘i’s booming economy as a stark contrast against communism, while Hawai‘i’s racial integration and consumer aspirations are juxtaposed against the magazine’s depiction of radical black nationalism. The first photograph is taken in downtown Honolulu and depicts a bustling shopping district where the women appear to be demonstrating proper American femininity and consumerism. The second photo depicts Elijah Muhammad on the left speaking in Harlem, spreading “cold black hatred” to the “least-educated, lowest-paid” “urban Negroes.”266 The photo on the right depicts the segregation of the sexes within the Nation of Islam. The juxtaposition of the images portrays Hawai‘i as a model of consumer desires, democracy for women, and interracial harmony. Hawai‘i is further proof that racism is not inherent to America and that racial integration can happen through consumerism and proper domesticity. Furthermore, Hawai‘i’s exceptionalism in racial progress is again distinguished from African American struggles on the continent. This issue of *Time* uses their story about the Nation of Islam to undercut black claims of racial discrimination and injustice, while heralding Hawai‘i’s claims of racial equality.

To further demonstrate Hawai‘i’s economic potential after statehood, magazines boasted about Hawai‘i’s natural beauty and increasing accessibility. Hawai‘i had long been a popular tourist destination for elites, but Hawai‘i gained new currency after statehood because it was now domestically accessible. Coincidently, commercial jet service to Hawai‘i also began in 1959 and made Hawai‘i increasingly accessible to middle class Americans and business entrepreneurs. Popular media was many Americans’ first introduction to the newest state. Post-statehood articles usually included several maps of the islands. Rather than showing where Hawai‘i was in relation to the U.S. continent, most maps were centered on the island chain itself. In this way, Hawai‘i’s distance from the West Coast was minimized which made Hawai‘i seem equally accessible to all Americans. Those maps that did portray Hawai‘i’s location in comparison to the U.S. continent generally portrayed California and Alaska closer to Hawai‘i than it really is. One can assume this was done strategically to emphasize Hawai‘i’s proximity to America and its accessibility for potential visitors and investors.

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Figure 7: This map appeared in *Time* on August 10, 1959. Photo by A. Krattiger

Figure 8: This map appeared in *Newsweek* on February 23, 1959. Photo by A. Krattiger
With the advent of affordable commercial jet flights to Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i’s new domestic status, many businesses expected tourism to flourish after statehood. For example, Frederick Simpich, Jr. wrote in his 1960 article “Hawai‘i, U.S.A.” published in *National Geographic*:

Tourists, or “visitors” as islanders prefer to call them, are soon to become Hawai‘i’s biggest business . . . Increasing by 20 percent a year since the war, tourism is expected to flourish even faster with statehood—and with jet travel . . . [which] bring[s] Honolulu within five hours of the west coast.\(^{267}\)

Simpich’s article introduced Americans to their newest state *and* their newest tourist destinations. He suggested where to go, what to see, and what to expect. He described each island, its natural beauty, its history, and its industry. His message was that Hawai‘i welcomed tourism and enterprise and that the island chain was open for business. What readers probably do not know is that Simpich was the vice-president and director of Castle & Cooke, director of Dole Plantation and Matson Navigation, president of Oceanic Properties, and on the Hawai‘i Visitor’s Bureau board of directors.\(^{268}\) Simpich had everything to gain by encouraging investment in Hawai‘i and bringing more tourists to the islands. Simpich had financial stakes in every sector of Hawaiian business and tourism.

**Paradise of Interracial Living**

Frederick Simpich’s article was typical in portraying the traditional yet modern influences in Hawai‘i. Also typical was his emphasis on Hawai‘i’s multiracial and multicultural citizens that “typified] the world-wide mixture of peoples.”\(^{269}\) Part of Hawai‘i’s attractiveness for American audiences after statehood was its potential and promise for interracial living. Magazine articles depicted Hawai‘i as both modern and traditional, American yet simultaneously “Hawaiian” and “Oriental.” Their pages were filled with colorful photographs of whites, Asians, and Hawaiians standing side by side frequenting the same places and most importantly not in conflict with one another.

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\(^{269}\) Simpich, “Hawai‘i, U.S.A.,” 46.
Images and stories of interracial living in Hawai‘i flourished after statehood. Not only did images show a diverse Hawai‘i, photographs also depicted traditional and modern life in Hawai‘i where whites lived side by side and frequently intermingled with Hawaiians and Asian Americans. An image in *Time* showed two women walking outside a grocery store in Hawai‘i. Both women are wearing Hawaiian muumuus and near them are two tall-standing tiki statues. In contrast to these “traditional” aspects of Hawaiian life, the grocery store looks new and modern (at least by postwar 1950s standards) and the parking lot is full of new cars. The caption explicitly describes this as evidence of Hawai‘i’s melting pot and life being both “modern and traditional.” In another photograph, haoles in Hawai‘i have adopted “Oriental manner” in their dining etiquette. They are sitting on pillows on the floor and eat food from a very low table. These photographs suggest that interracial living in Hawai‘i is reciprocal and enjoyable, meaning it is something to embrace not reject.
Figure 10: This image of two women walking outside a grocery store appeared in *Time* on August 10, 1959. Photo by A. Krattiger

Figure 11: This image of a dinner party in Honolulu’s Kahala neighborhood appeared in *Time* on August 10, 1959. Photo by A. Krattiger
For those Americans who read these articles and saw the images of interracial living in Hawai‘i, even those who had no intention of coming to Hawai‘i in search of racially integrated life, Hawai‘i offered a tangible example of American multiculturalism. White Americans in particular could feel good seeing pictures about Hawai‘i’s acceptance of diversity. These stories confirmed what many wanted to believe and hoped was true; for others, it reconfirmed their beliefs in American exceptionalism during the Cold War. For tourists in particular, Jane Desmond explains that since World War II, Hawai‘i simultaneously gave American tourists a “sense of escape from domestic U.S. tensions [and] a feeling of still being in the United States.” Hawai‘i offered a “safe exoticism,” particularly for white mainlanders, because popular culture depicted it as “exotic” yet familiar and typically American. For example, *Time* described several amenities in Honolulu that made it like any other city—a quality university, a fine art academy and symphony orchestra, and new suburbs and ranch-style houses. Photographs depicted a large church-going population and the magazine described Hawai‘i’s love of baseball, soda pop, and hot dogs.

Desmond points out that Hawai‘i’s diversity was considered non-threatening particularly in how Hawai‘i’s racial makeup differed from race relations on the U.S. mainland. At this time, discourses of multiculturalism on the continent usually referred explicitly or implicitly to African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans. The first three of those seem to be absent in Hawai‘i, while the fourth invokes stereotypes of the “model minority” rendering Asian Americans in Hawai‘i as less threatening. Meanwhile, Hawaiians are simultaneously remembered and forgotten. Most mainland Americans would probably assume that the local people were simply generically “Hawaiian” and the tourism industry certainly helped create an all-encompassing category of brown and yellow-skinned “exotic” Hawaiians that stand in for the indigenous Hawaiians themselves.

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271 Ibid., 140.
While the term Hawaiian was used generically to describe either all residents of Hawai’i or any brown or yellow-skinned resident, Native Hawaiians themselves were generally omitted in these magazine stories. For example, *National Geographic* claimed that only “traces of Hawai’i’s past survive” and these “relics of royalty” can be found in Honolulu’s Bishop Museum and Kawaiaha‘o Church as opposed to on the streets. Simpich continues by explaining that “the islands have permitted much of the true Hawai’i culture to disappear.” This message that traditional Hawaiian culture has been allowed to disappear by those in Hawai’i—rather than the United States or outside forces—attempts to conceal American colonization and imperialism that strategically and purposefully promoted assimilation and Christian conversion. Hawaiians are not written about as a contemporary people, but as an extinct culture that vanished without cause. Meanwhile, this same article quotes Governor Quinn describing that Hawai’i statehood proved that the U.S. was not a colonial power:

> We are a solvent enterprise with an expanding future. More than that, Hawaiian statehood gives tangible evidence to awakening millions in Asia and Africa that the United States is no colonial power, but means what it says about equality of races and the democratic process.

Even though many journalists and politicians held onto the argument that statehood proved America respected democracy for all races, and, as the logic followed, was not colonial, the post-statehood American magazines continued the process of colonizing Hawai’i by describing Hawai’i’s transition to statehood as one of democracy, progress, and civil rights, while concealing over a century of American hegemony, imperialism, and assimilation. *National Geographic* was not the only magazine to do this. For example, *Time* wrote: “[T]he fabled land of polysyllabic kings, brown-skinned women and languorous beauty—supercharged with its brilliant mosaic of cultures—has now opened the door on a new epoch for itself.” The “new epoch” referred to statehood and the statement implies that Hawaiians themselves chose this path; no one forced it on them. Another article, printed in *Saturday Evening Post*, described Hawai’i as a racial

274 Simpich, 19.
275 Ibid., 14.
276 Ibid., 19.
277 Ibid., 45.
mixture of Hawaiians, Asians, and Caucasians, but the process of assimilation brought progress and improvement to Hawai‘i, not destruction: “The resulting citizenry is an exotic mixture of Polynesian languor, Asiatic industry, Yankee enterprise . . . But there is little languor these days on . . . Waikiki beach.” In addition to referring to Polynesians as lazy and weak, the article says that languor has been replaced by industry and enterprise, also suggesting that Hawaiians themselves have been replaced by Asian and haole Americans. Despite efforts to offer statehood as evidence that the U.S. was not racist or colonialist, stories about Hawai‘i often mimicked the same racist tropes they claimed to reject.

Hawai‘i, Cold War Diplomacy, and the U.S. State Department

Hawai‘i’s story of social and economic progress, coupled with its reputation of interracial harmony, was one that American politicians were eager to use during the Cold War. Not only was Hawai‘i’s story good for promoting economic business domestically, but Hawai‘i also had the potential, so they thought, to add currency to America’s Cold War foreign policy and rhetoric of democracy and anticolonialism. In December 1959, President Eisenhower made an international goodwill trip where he met the leaders of eleven European, Asian, and North African countries in just nineteen days. While addressing the Indian Parliament in New Delhi the president said he represented a nation that did not seek “control” or “expansion” or “power,” but instead a “nation ready to cooperate” in order to achieve “peace and freedom” and “universal disarmament.” He explained that America had much in common with India because both countries had a diverse citizenry and had “achieved strength out of that diversity.” He cited Hawai‘i statehood as one example of this achievement and asserted that Hawai‘i was an example for the world:

. . . [P]eopled by all the races of men and women of that new State having their ancestral homes in Asia and Africa and Europe, the two Americas, the islands of the earth. Those peoples are of every creed and color yet they live together in neighborly friendliness, in mutual trust, and each can achieve his own good by helping achieve the good of all. Hawai‘i cries insistently to a divided world that

279 Saturday Evening Post, May 2, 1959, 20.
280 Eisenhower visited Italy, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iran, Greece, Tunisia, France, Spain, and Morocco.
all our differences of race and origin are less than the grand and indestructible unity of our common brotherhood. The world should take time to listen with attentive ear to Hawai‘i.\textsuperscript{281}

Eisenhower’s conclusion was that Hawai‘i convinced him that “fear, suspicion, [and] prejudice can be obliterated.”\textsuperscript{282}

The statehood hearings at the beginning of 1959 allowed American politicians an opportunity to contextualize Hawai‘i statehood within the Cold War in order to counter claims of racism and colonialism. Now that statehood had been achieved, more people were tuning in and interested in hearing more about beautiful Hawai‘i. This created a captive audience for journalists, local writers, and Washington bureaucrats to capitalize on as they pursued the cultural Cold War. In addition to countering criticisms directed at the U.S., they hoped to project a global reputation of benevolence that could serve American Cold War interests.

The U.S. Information Agency (USIA), known abroad as the U.S. Information Service (USIS), had a keen interest in spreading news about Hawai‘i as a matter of Cold War diplomacy. The State Department and USIA recognized Hawai‘i’s appeal even before statehood and hoped it could counter negative publicity about racial segregation that dominated international news in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The State Department tried quite a few tactics in pursuit of this goal. Perhaps the most well known of these attempts was recruiting African American jazz musicians as American ambassadors to travel through Asia and Africa in an effort to improve America’s reputation of racial equality.\textsuperscript{283} Generally unknown, however, is the fact that USIA also used Hawai‘i for cultural diplomacy. They publicized stories about Hawai‘i statehood and its multicultural society and also recruited Hawai‘i ambassadors to help spread Hawai‘i’s exceptional story throughout the world. Hawai‘i had an ideological value unmatched by any other part of the U.S. Hawai‘i did not have the history of slavery, nor


\textsuperscript{282} Eisenhower, “Remarks,” 831.

\textsuperscript{283} See Penny Von Eschen, Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).
the black civil rights movement. Hawai‘i’s natural beauty and booming tourism industry also made Hawai‘i attractive for gaining global interest. The USIA produced materials about Hawai‘i statehood in an effort to present Hawai‘i’s recent transition to statehood as an example of America’s dedication to racial equality and democracy.  

During the Cold War, the USIA spread American cultural materials throughout the world. In 1960, it operated over one hundred fifty centers and eighty-five reading rooms in eighty countries the U.S. considered “Free World countries.” In these libraries were American magazines, newspapers, and other periodicals. They held over 2.5 million books by American authors and they were published in both English and the languages of the host country. Visitors to the USIA centers could even learn English. It also organized concerts (American classical music or Marian Anderson, for example), lectures, art exhibits, and film screenings—many of which were produced by the USIA. These projects were intended to spread American culture, in various forms, to a wide non-American audience. Prices were free or minimal in order to attract as many visitors as possible. The USIA reported that around 30 million people visited these centers annually.

Hawai‘i was one of the topics that the USIA wanted people around the world to hear about. At a USIA reading room, visitors could read stories about Hawai‘i in popular American magazines such as the ones discussed earlier in this chapter. They could read USIA-created pamphlets and leaflets, or watch films about Hawai‘i. They could also borrow or purchase a number of books published about Hawai‘i. USIA Hawai‘i content focused on Hawai‘i’s recent transition from colony to state and Hawai‘i’s exceptional

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284 Edward Murrow was appointed Director of the USIA beginning in 1961 when President Kennedy took office. A couple of years prior, he had been involved in making a See it Now special about Marian Anderson’s 1957 USIA-sponsored concert tour through Europe, India, and Asia during Eisenhower’s presidency. Much of the USIA-produced materials focused on Hawai‘i were created in the same time frame that Murrow headed the USIA.

285 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Subject Files 1961-1962, Box 1, Folder Academic Exchanges, RG 59, NACP. In 1956, the USIA began a low-priced book program that published millions of copies of significant American titles, each costing the equivalent of about 10 or 15 cents. They started by publishing hundreds of titles and within ten years had already reached over 6,000 American titles in 50 languages. The USIA also published a Russian-language magazine America Illustrated, a Polish version, a Japanese magazine Amerikana, and The American Review in New Delhi. All of these were devoted entirely to topics of American culture. USIS posts also administered the University of Pennsylvania’s examination for a certificate in American Civilization.
environment where all races and ethnicities could live in harmony together. The pamphlets and films recited the same messages that appeared in U.S. popular magazines and journals: Hawai‘i was a tropical paradise, exotic yet traditional, both cosmopolitan and modern. More than anything, Hawai‘i was hospitable in its generous and unwavering acceptance of strangers and newcomers. By focusing on the hospitality and friendliness of Hawaiians, the literature represented American acts of imposition in Hawai‘i not as impositions at all, but as welcome transactions. By presenting American hegemony in Hawai‘i as benevolent and welcomed, Washington hoped these stories could transfer to other contexts and convince people that American Cold War policies were not hegemonic at all, but benevolent and innocent.

USIA films and documents gave readers and viewers a tour of Hawai‘i and its natural beauty, in addition to a history lesson in Hawai‘i’s transition from “feudalism” to democracy. Colorful images draw attention to Hawai‘i’s natural beauty in its geographic landscape and ethnic diversity. Coupled with colorful images, Hawai‘i’s history is told as a fairy tale story where Hawai‘i escaped darkness and corruption but ultimately achieves redemption and happiness, not through force but through “gradual and voluntary change.”286 Paul Lyons has described this as “histouricism” because it blends history with travel writing in a way that sees “history as a tour.”287 By conflating the two, histouricism creates an imperial view of history that imagines democratic results and a continuous relationship between the U.S. and Hawai‘i. Furthermore, although its authors, in this case the U.S. government, imagines itself as anti-racist, histouricism often falls back into racist categorizing.288 One film produced by the USIA, Hawai‘i, USA, described the traces of Hawaiian culture (King Kamehameha statue and the Royal Palace) that America has since replaced: “. . . the royal palace now houses executive offices of a democracy, and the throne room today is used for legislative meetings.”289 The message is that Hawai‘i is a beneficiary of American democracy. Another film, Highway to Hawai‘i, which was primarily created to promote Hawai‘i tourism and sponsored by

286 Judy Rohrer, Haoles in Hawai‘i (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010), 19.
288 Ibid., 151.
289 Hawai‘i: USA, 1960, Movie Scripts, 1942-1965, Box 13, RG 306, NACP. This film shares the same title as Frederick Simpich, Jr.’s National Geographic article published in the same year, but I have found no evidence that the film is based off this article.
United Air Lines, describes Hawaiʻi’s beauty beyond natural landscape. It says that what sets Honolulu apart from other American cities is its racial blending: With two-thirds non-Caucasians, “these races, and the Hawaiians also, have freely intermarried, producing a happy brood of brown-faced children who, nevertheless are thoroughly American.”

By blending travel writing with history, the descriptions aim to be entertaining while the content seems impartial. Portrayed as “regional history,” USIA films ultimately essentialize ethnic groups and create nostalgia about Hawaiʻi’s past. Combined, any historical inaccuracies in the stories are considered insignificant because the writing is presented as travel writing with a fictional tone.

USIA films emphasized Hawaiʻi’s transition from a colony to fiftieth American state in order to credit the U.S. for bringing democracy to Hawaiʻi, but strategically concealed America’s participation in overthrowing the Hawaiian kingdom in the first place. For example, the 1962 film Hawaiʻi’s History: Kingdom to Statehood described how Hawaiʻi’s monarchy was replaced by the United States:

In a brief revolution, the queen lost her throne and Hawaiʻi asked to join the United States. But Congress did not want the Islands [yet. Five years later, the Spanish American War] showed the need for a navy base, to defend the Pacific coast. And so, in 1898, Hawaiʻi was accepted; and in 1900, became a territory of the United States of America . . . Hawaiʻi grew and became a modern American community . . . Now these islands are the fiftieth state. And the people of Hawaiʻi? One people. Americans.

The script suggests a “seamless history in which early events just naturally evolved into their latter counterparts.” Furthermore, it suggests that no one was specifically involved in the queen’s overthrow because she simply misplaced her throne; therefore, no one is to blame. The script also does not tell us who asked to join the U.S. It omits the key detail that the Americans who led the coup d’état were the same people who asked for annexation. The script also suggests that the main reason the U.S. finally wanted Hawaiʻi was out of altruistic concern to help protect the vulnerable islands. Through a seemingly inevitable and peaceful process, Hawaiʻi’s people had gone from “living in

290 Highway to Hawaiʻi, 1952, Movie Scripts, 1942-1965, Box 14, RG 306, NACP.
291 Hawaiʻi’s History Kingdom to Statehood, 1962, Movie Scripts, Box 13, RG 306, NACP.
292 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 52.
grass houses” to modern American living. The inclusion and omission of key details and actors is strategic and purposeful. This is important because the USIA created films like these to advance their claim that they did not practice imperialism or colonialism anywhere. More specifically, and quite troublingly, the USIA suggested that Hawai‘i statehood proved the U.S. did not practice colonialism in Hawai‘i. By taking credit for certain aspects and omitting culpability in others, the USIA’s act of telling Hawai‘i’s history is itself an act of American imperialism against Hawai‘i.

In the wake of Hawai‘i statehood, popular magazines and USIA-produced films combined travel writing and history to introduce Americans and global citizens to America’s newest state. This “histouricism,” as Paul Lyons has called it, seeks to entertain and inform while blurring the distinctions between fact and fiction. This ultimately disguises the politicized messages that are intended to promote American hegemony in Hawai‘i and around the world during the Cold War. By conflating Hawai‘i history with tourism promotion, readers, viewers, and consumers are encouraged to become what Marita Sturken has called “tourists of history.” Rather than encouraging active participation, Hawai‘i’s consumers are encouraged to be detached and passive, which provides them an opportunity to situate themselves innocently in relation to world history. Through these narratives of innocence, the USIA encouraged Americans to acquiesce to and disavow U.S. imperialism and visions of empire in Hawai‘i.

James Michener as Hawai‘i’s Cold War Ambassador

More than anyone else, James Michener was the most highly regarded American ambassador on behalf of Hawai‘i. Michener went on many speaking tours with the USIA and his opinions were frequently sought by the USIA’s international broadcasting arm Voice of America. Both Frances Stonor Saunders and Timothy Melley say that James Michener worked for the CIA and used his writing career as a cover for his work.

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293 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 52.
Because Michener positioned his views on Hawai‘i in the context of domestic and foreign Cold War strategy, the State Department created a platform for him to speak to the world on behalf of the United States. Michener’s fame and popularity as a writer made him an effective ambassador for catching the world’s attention. Furthermore, because his strategies ultimately promoted American exceptionalism, he was considered a safe ambassador to speak openly and “off the cuff” about Hawai‘i.

Michener’s incredibly popular novel Hawai‘i solidified his status as the foremost ambassador of Hawai‘i. Christina Klein has called the book a “manifesto for statehood” and his friend A. Grove Day referred to it as “a giant-sized salute to the fledging state.” Michener ended his three-year writing project on the day Congress voted in favor of Hawai‘i statehood and the book was published shortly after. Before Hawai‘i, Michener had already written books about Asia and the Pacific, including Tales of the South Pacific, Return to Paradise, and Sayonara. His fame as a writer and global traveler helped establish his credentials as an “expert” on Hawaiian history and affairs.

Michener writes as an American citizen in Hawai‘i while claiming insider perspective as someone who lived in Hawai‘i and had traveled the world. By 1960, over 400,000 copies of Hawai‘i were already in print and the book stayed at or near the top of national best-seller lists for twenty months.

Michener’s novel was quickly interpreted to be historically accurate even though it was a novel. The New York Times book review lauded the book and Michener’s ability to capture the history of Hawai‘i from its “volcanic origins to its recent statehood” with

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1950s included “eliminating radicals who had infiltrated one of the CIA’s Asian operations” and later working for the Asia Foundation, which had significant ties with the CIA.


297 This is according to Day.

298 Amy Reddinger also points out that Michener’s “expert” status was used to endorse Hawaiian products such as cookbooks in the 1960s, which were quite a fad. In one of the cookbooks that Reddinger discusses, The Hawai‘i Cookbook and Backyard Luau (1967), Michener wrote the introduction in order to reassure mainland readers that island cooking could be good. Also, the dust jacket included a photograph of Michener standing beside the author, an Asian American woman raised in Hawai‘i. The photograph portrayed his paternalistic authority as a white American male and “expert” on the islands that offered the author “gendered and racialized credibility” (195). Amy Reddinger, “Pineapple Glaze and Backyard Luau: Cold War Cookbooks and the Fiftieth State” in Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda, and the Cold War, Greg Barnhisel and Catherine Turner, ed. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 193-208.

such “eloquence,” becoming himself a kind of “missionary.” Although many read the book as history, the characters are only “prototypes” and he “adjusted details in Hawai‘i’s history to suit his fiction.” Those in Hawai‘i most familiar with its history would easily identify that Michener’s book was not history or even historical fiction. There are no historical figures named in the book and the book’s cover even states that it is a novel. Despite this, the book took on historical significance that would create a long lasting legacy.

James Michener was one of the earliest to promote Hawai‘i as a critical component for Cold War strategy. After moving to Hawai‘i, he wrote an editorial for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin in the summer of 1954 in which he linked Hawai‘i’s ethnic diversity with America’s foreign policy. He suggested that since America needed to understand Asia and since Hawai‘i was America’s gateway to Asia and home to the more Asian Americans than anywhere else, the U.S. should not be foolish enough to pass at an opportunity to study Asia vis-à-vis Hawai‘i. These considerations eventually played a fundamental role in advocating statehood in the late 1950s.

Michener saw for himself an important opening during the Cold War as a public intellectual, journalist, author, and cultural critic. After moving to Hawai‘i, Michener saw a foreign policy opportunity that also matched his personal interests. He predicted

300 Quoted in Day, James A. Michener, 111.
301 Ibid., 112. Michener also talks about the novel’s misinterpretation as history in his memoir, The World is My Home. One example he uses is the copious amount of mainland tourists who came to Hawai‘i looking for the book’s protagonist clergyman Abner Hale’s gravesite. James Michener, The World is My Home (New York: Random House, 1992), 400.
302 In Michener’s memoir he recalls the “fury” in Hawai‘i when his book came out. He said that local newspapers gave full pages to outraged letters vilifying him, angry discussion was rampant, and one paper carried a full-column editorial advising him to leave Hawai‘i and stay out. However, Michener compares this to the “warmth” he received elsewhere and “the fact that it brought thousands of visitors to Hawai‘i softened animosities, and as the years passed the locals realized that my book was one of the good things that had happened to the islands.” This comment reveals that the book was not written for historical truth or for Hawai‘i’s people’s sake, but for America during the Cold War. Michener, The World Is My Home, 196-7.

303 Sometimes Michener held a more official role during the Cold War. He reported from Korea from 1950-1953 during the Korean War; operated behind Russian lines during the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 by helping many reach sanctuary in Austria and then the U.S.; participated in a 1963 semisecret conference in Leningrad as a representative of the U.S. advocating for the liberation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; travelled throughout Afghanistan in 1964; accompanied President Nixon in 1972 visiting Moscow, Iran, and Poland; and visited Poland almost a dozen times from 1972 to 1981. Michener, The World Is My Home, 196-7.
that Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism could not only be a domestic civil rights victory, but also an international victory in demonstrating the strength of American democracy and freedom. To convince the world that Hawai‘i did in fact symbolize “democracy in action,” and not further colonialism and imperialism, statehood-era writers needed to control the historiography of Hawai‘i to ensure that American influence was interpreted as democratic and benevolent. Writers like James Michener, in addition to primary haole journalists from the U.S. continent, produced and perfected an historical narrative that would serve U.S. interests during the Cold War. Rather than simply omitting the history of U.S. imperialism in Hawai‘i, writers like Michener reconfigured the narrative in a way that Americans could be proud and “congratulate themselves.”

For writers in Hawai‘i who sought to publicize Hawai‘i’s contributions to the Cold War, Hawai‘i’s natural beauty and tourism became a means for “bolstering the cultural prestige of the Islands, while lauding the U.S. state for its democratic achievement.” Hawai‘i’s history needed to be historified as American from the beginning so that statehood symbolized the achieved American Dream, rather than a legacy of imperialism. Michener’s 1954 Honolulu Star-Bulletin editorial laid out his argument in “What Hawai‘i Means to Me.” He explained that he saw in Hawai‘i’s history so many of the same lessons he learned as a student of American history:

Hawai‘i is unusually representative of America in that it recapitulates the history of our extraordinary nation. Like America, Hawai‘i was settled entirely from without [emphasis mine]. The Indians came to the West coast of America from the north of Asia via Alaska; and the Polynesians came to Hawai‘i from the south of Asia via Tahiti. The English came to Plymouth and Virginia; their descendants came to Hawai‘i and Maui. The Germans brought their great talents alike to my own Pennsylvania and to Oahu. The Spaniards gave Florida and California unique customs; their Portuguese cousins did the same for Hawai‘i. Chinese formed one of the stablest foreign societies in California and our eastern cities, just as they did in Hawai‘i. And the Japanese, among whom I grew up in Colorado, were the same valuable citizens there that they have been in the Islands. I appreciate Hawai‘i because one can see here, postponed by a couple of centuries, all the influences and experiences that some generations ago combined to produce America. Like the rest of America, too, is Hawai‘i’s cultural dependence upon the strangers who came to her hospitable shores. The sweet beauty of Polynesian life, the flowering intellectual strength of New England voyagers, the industry of

304 Lyons, American Pacificism, 151.
305 Ibid., 151.
China, the instinctive art of Japan: These are the things that combine to make a culture. Just as similar borrowings from nations across the world produced a magnificent—if sometimes hypochondriac—culture on the Mainland, so one has a right to expect that today’s repetition of that borrowing will produce a magnificent, and possibly less hypochondriac, culture in the islands. It hasn’t fully arrived yet. I’d certainly like to see what develops, for it could be quite wonderful.  

Although Cold War narratives appeared new, they relied on familiar and overused narratives about the East and the West and savagery and civilization. Hawai‘i was historicized as an immigrant nation just like the United States and although it trailed behind the U.S. developmentally, it now led the U.S. in terms of American race relations. This was the emphasis that Michener wanted Washington to utilize fully in the Cold War. The State Department was happy to embrace Michener’s willingness to help spread this message around the world. After statehood, Voice of America recorded several segments specifically focused on Hawai‘i, including an interview given at Michener’s Waikīkī apartment. In this episode, Michener was asked to specifically address people in Japan. He said that he wished everyone in Japan, and other Asian nations, could even briefly visit Hawai‘i because they would see “another side” of America. This, he suggested, would prove to Japan and Asia that America was not as racist as the stories of Little Rock suggested. Michener urged those who believed that “America ha[d] great trouble over her negro population” and was “afraid of other races,” to come to Hawai‘i and see what he saw. He explained that Hawai‘i was full of “wonderful people,” the Japanese “in particular.” The reason he provided was that Japanese in Hawai‘i held prestigious positions in many different fields. They had found the American Dream in Hawai‘i and were not held back by their race or ethnicity. He clarified that the Japanese “d[id] not run Hawai‘i” however. His point was that people in Hawai‘i

307 Michener does qualify this statement when he objected to claims that Hawai‘i was completely free of segregation or a “heavenly paradise of brotherhood,” but he did recognize that in Hawai‘i all men are equal socially and legally.
308 I would add that it appears the National Archives in College Park, Maryland does not have all of these recordings available to the public. Perhaps they did not all survive or get saved, or some have been selected to remain classified. The title of the archival record is “Hawai‘i Statehood Reel” but the only ones available are numbers 57, 58, and 68. Records of the U.S. Information Agency, RG 306, NACP.
Tokyo had “no different freedoms from their brothers in Hawai‘i.” This, Michener said, was the “miracle of Hawai‘i.”

Some wondered about Michener’s political intentions regarding Hawai‘i. Confidentially to his friend and fellow writer and University of Hawai‘i English professor A. Grove Day, Michener said that he wanted readers in Hawai‘i to consider his book “in terms of history, sociology, relevancy, politics, [and] vision.” He also told Day that he was writing exclusively for Democrats about how to conduct the Cold War—“about how to do the job.” Michener had a vision for Hawai‘i’s place in national politics and was not timid about sharing his advice for Hawai‘i with Washington politicians. His recommendations were largely embraced by Washington because he framed them such that they aligned with Cold War foreign policy objectives. Michener was clear about his Democratic Party leanings, his support for candidate and President John F. Kennedy, and he fully embraced the rhetoric of civil rights and multiculturalism in the 1960s. However, he had little sympathy for Hawaiian sovereignty claims, nor did he seem particularly celebratory about the accomplishments of Native Hawaiians. For Michener, Hawaiian cultural exceptionalism was not its native people or traditions, but instead the Asian and American settlers that contributed equally to transforming Hawaiian culture into an exceptional species that he referred to in his novel as “The Golden Men.”

Michener’s novel begins with the volcanic processes that created the “vast” and “empty” new islands. The early pages of the book are scattered with the word empty and all of its synonyms. Hawai‘i was empty virgin land just “waiting” to be settled. Michener describes the different stages of Hawai‘i’s development vis-à-vis the settlers who come to Hawai‘i for various purposes and at various stages. According to Michener, not even the Polynesians were the first to arrive. Speaking of the rocks, birds, insects, and

309 James Michener, “Hawai‘i Statehood Reel #68,” RG 306, NACP.
310 Many suspected that Michener planned to run for governor of Hawai‘i. It seems that he did consider this privately, but no formal declaration was ever made.
311 Day, James A. Michener, 114
312 Michener to Day, November 18, 1959; Correspondence between A. Grove Day and James Michener, A. Grove Day Papers, University of Hawai‘i.
animals, Michener says “nothing that ever existed on this island reached it easily.”

When the islands were finally discovered, they “were destined to be widely hailed as paradises” and “few more inhospitable major islands have ever existed than this group.”

“These beautiful islands, waiting in the sun and storm, how much they seemed like beautiful women waiting for their men to come home at dusk, waiting with open arms and warm bodies and consolation. All that would be accomplished in these islands.”

Here Michener depicted Hawai‘i as both lacking and available. Ferguson and Turnbull explain: “The first explorers encountered a place they defined as largely empty of meaning, lacking in culture, but available for western expansion,” making them feel “entitled to what they see.”

One of Michener’s clearest points about Hawai‘i’s settler history was that no one had more claim to Hawai‘i than anyone else, not even the indigenous Hawaiians. Michener contended that all racial groups were equally settlers and co-contributors to Hawai‘i’s progress. Anyone that came with resources, better ideas, gods that sustained you, and a strong work ethic could “gain entrance to this miraculous crucible” that resembled Eden.

At the very same time that racial minorities in the U.S. were challenging the legitimacy of the American Dream, Hawai‘i offered Americans an opportunity to “start fresh” and reconfigure American history in Hawai‘i while promoting American legitimacy during the Cold War. Celebratory in its multiculturalism, Michener’s narrative however makes it clear that ultimately Western influence—via modern American institutions and its Anglo Saxon character—is what made Hawai‘i a model for the world. According to the beginning of Michener’s novel, Hawai‘i’s beginning is hardly exceptional. He explains that before the Hawaiian islands had finished developing, men had already erected monuments and a stable form of government in Egypt.

Similar to how American events “serve as the anchor and frame for events in Hawai‘i” in order to Americanize Hawai‘i’s history, Michener used

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314 Michener, Hawai‘i, 8.
315 Ibid., 13.
316 Ibid., 15-16.
317 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 6-7.
318 Michener, Hawai‘i, 16.
319 Ibid., 12.
320 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 52.
global events (like Egypt’s history) as anchors to frame Hawai‘i in relation to the world. In this way, Michener helped to recast Hawai‘i in global—not just domestic—terms.

To Michener, what made Hawai‘i’s contemporary race relations exceptional was the progress made by Hawaiians and Asian immigrants to assimilate to Western standards. Hawai‘i’s indigenous culture was not what made Hawai‘i exceptional according to Michener. In fact, part of Michener’s story of progress emphasized how uncivilized Hawaiians were and he wrote disparagingly of Pacific Islanders. He described the theme of Hawai‘i as “the enviable manner in which Hawai‘i had been able to assimilate men and women from many different races.”

In a 1960 issue of *Saturday Review*, Michener wrote a short piece on the people of the Pacific in which he categorized them into “three major strains” of people. He wrote that they were “some of the most primitive and ferocious human beings now alive,” citing their tribal warfare, headhunting, and cannibalism. He wrote that “judged by any pragmatic scale, the civilization of these islands is very near the bottom of known human existence.”

Michener included Polynesians in the three categories, but he distinguished them as the “most fortunate of the three” because they were the most attractive and advanced people. Michener was claiming that Hawai‘i was exceptional because it lacked racism, but he himself, in telling Hawai‘i’s story, repeated racist discourses about Hawaiians that had been used historically by explorers, missionaries, and traders to justify their exploitation of the Hawaiian islands. While Michener participated in State Department efforts to portray Hawai‘i statehood as a repudiation of colonialism, he simultaneously mirrored the same kind of imperialist tropes that he claimed to reject.

Creating a Hawai‘i Statehood Historiography

While James Michener was considered one of the most popular “experts” on Hawai‘i during the late 1950s and early 1960s, he was not alone in his motivation to engage Hawai‘i in the Cold War. Friends A. Grove Day, professor of English at the University of Hawai‘i, and Bob Krauss, columnist at the *Honolulu Advertiser* both wrote

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323 Ibid.
books about Hawai‘i’s national and international appeal.324 Day co-wrote (with Michener) *Rascals in Paradise* (1957) and alone he wrote *Hawai‘i and Its People* (1955), *A Hawaiian Reader* (1959), and *Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star* (1960). Day also collaborated with Ralph Kuykendall, a professor of history at the University of Hawai‘i and the “single most influential Euroamerican historian of Hawai‘i,”325 to write *Hawai‘i: A History from Polynesian Kingdom to American State* (1961). Bob Krauss wrote *Here’s Hawai‘i* (1960) in addition to travel guides about the islands. These six books, in addition to Michener’s *Hawai‘i*, helped draw attention to Hawai‘i and the Pacific in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Several books were formulated as responses to the recent achievement of statehood.

Another book which helped draw attention to Hawai‘i after statehood was Lawrence Fuchs’ *Hawai‘i Pono: A Social History* (1961). Fuchs’ book began as research on “territorial policies” of the U.S. government in 1951, but in 1958 he was awarded a grant by the Social Science Research Council to study ethnic tensions and “accommodation in Island politics.”326 Fuchs temporarily left Brandies University to come visit the University of Hawai‘i where extensive social science research devoted to Hawai‘i’s race relations was already happening, including at the Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory which operated from the 1920s to early 1960s.327 Fuchs’ argued in *Hawai‘i Pono* that Hawai‘i was “no longer an experiment in race relations or colonial administration.”328 It had become the “world’s best example of dynamic social democracy.”329

324 The men frequently wrote introductions and forewords to each others’ books as to lend credibility and name recognition to one another. Day and Michener also collaborated on novels, for example *Rascals in Paradise* (New York: Random House, 1957).
327 The Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory is named after Hawai‘i’s first Sociology professor Romanzo Adams who arrived at the University in 1920. From 1934 to 1961, Andrew Lind headed the Research Lab and in 1963 it was merged into Social Science Research Institute (SSRI). Hawai‘i’s ethnic diversity made UH an important place for sociologist (especially from the University of Chicago) to study race relations. Andrew Lind’s *Hawai‘i’s People* was first published in 1955.
328 Fuchs, *Hawai‘i Pono*, vii.
329 Ibid., vii.
Combined, James Michener, A. Grove Day, Bob Krauss, Ralph Kuykendall, and Lawrence Fuchs helped create Hawai‘i’s statehood historiography. Together, this literature increased interest in Hawai‘i during the early 1960s. Many of these books were kitschy (and even somewhat ephemeral) but they each exploited the statehood-induced interest in all things “Hawaiian.” That does not mean, however, that we should dismiss the genre as insignificant, trivial, or apolitical. To the contrary, this literary interest in Hawai‘i correlated directly with Cold War debates about civil rights that in turn shaped Hawai‘i’s historiography. Also, the authors intended their books to be more than just entertainment. For example, Michener and Day were very anxious to have their books be part of the history making. Day himself describes his book, Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, as an “up to date history of the state.” In Michener’s introduction to Day’s A Hawaiian Reader, he writes that the book was “admirably timed” and would serve as an “introduction of Hawai‘i to its forty-nine sister states.” Michener continued by explaining that since Hawai‘i was soon to become a state, it was important for Americans to know what happened, “from the pens of those who did the building and watched it.” Here Michener included himself and Day in the category of Hawai‘i “experts,” history makers and history reporters who actively participated in making Hawai‘i the fiftieth state.

These writers are also important because their work became the basis of much of the USIA published materials about Hawai‘i statehood, in addition to materials held at the USIA libraries around the world. Day’s 1960 Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star was quickly

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330 I have decided to include Ralph Kuykendall in this category even though his scholarship mostly focused on the nineteenth century. His three volume history on the Hawaiian Kingdom included vol. 1, 1778-1854, Foundation and Transformation (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1938); vol. 2, 1854-1874, Twenty Critical Years (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1953); vol. 3, 1874-1893, The Kalakaua Dynasty (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1967). His encyclopedia-like attention to detail has made his work the most cited history of Hawai‘i.

331 It also inspired television and film. For example, Michener’s Tales of the South Pacific popularized the Pacific and a television show was created based on the book. “Adventures in Paradise” ran for three seasons on ABC Network from October 1959 to April 1962. Also, the novel Hawai‘i was made into a two-part film. The first was titled Hawai‘i (1966) and the second was The Hawaiians (1970).

332 Bob Krauss’s Here’s Hawai‘i is the most kitschy, which probably made it less credible, but it was also quite popular. It quickly became a pocketbook edition and an instant popular seller in the United States.

333 A. Grove Day to Jim and Mari Michener, November 24, 1959, A. Grove Day Papers, University of Hawai‘i.

translated into other languages and simplified into a version for non-native speakers. Both versions were distributed in paperback by the USIA. The USIA also published short articles about Hawai‘i in their Russian-language magazine *America Illustrated* and its Polish counterpart. These articles were very brief but they repeated the same arguments made by Michener, Day, and Krauss and even used the same titles.\(^{335}\) This historiography, then, became the basis for the stories America told about itself during the Cold War about its role in the world and in Hawai‘i. For example, they insisted that American influence in Hawai‘i was inevitable, Hawai‘i was better off today because of it, Hawai‘i was happy to be a part of the United States, and statehood was the utmost fulfillment of America’s commitment to freedom and democracy.

Michener, Day, and Krauss jumped at the opportunity to put their writing skills to national service for the purpose of advancing America’s reputation vis-à-vis Hawai‘i. Their credentials as white American professors, writers, and journalists working in and living in Hawai‘i lent them authority as dependable “experts” on Hawai‘i. For mainland audiences, the fact that all three men had come to Hawai‘i from the mainland gave them credibility as Americans who understood both worlds. For white audiences in particular, their whiteness was familiar and reassuring and their gender lent them paternalistic authority. Ralph Kuykendall and Lawrence Fuchs also benefited from these privileges. Kuykendall had already established himself as a historian of Hawaiian history while Fuchs’ grant to conduct research on Hawai‘i’s race relations was most likely aided by the increasing importance of race to Cold War debates and increased likeliness of Hawai‘i statehood. Each of these men also had institutional power that granted them authority to speak for the nation and the state of Hawai‘i. Michener was well known and well published, Day and Kuykendall had the University of Hawai‘i behind him, Krauss had the *Honolulu Advertiser*, and Fuchs’ had the Social Science Research Council and Brandies University. They also of course had their publishing companies.

\(^{335}\) For example, the USIA published articles called, “Hawai‘i,” “The Fiftieth Star,” and “The Newest Star,” all by Fady Winslow. Winslow’s name appears on the articles, but it seems that the titles and content came from Michener, Day, and Krauss. Other USIA-published magazines included “Amerikana” (published monthly by USIS-Tokyo) and “The American Review” (a USIS-New Dehli quarterly). Publications about the United States, compiled 1953-1999, RG 306, NACP.
Publically they touted their “insider” knowledge about Hawai‘i, although privately they understood there were some limitations to that claim. Fuchs came to Hawai‘i specifically to study its race relations and understood that some of his conclusions could be interpreted differently. He clarifies in his preface that his book was “an interpretation—not a definitive history.” Michener also acknowledged there were limitations to his own “expert” status, but he would only admit so privately. In Michener’s foreword to Krauss’s Here’s Hawai‘i, he wrote that Krauss was “a tonic to our islands” [emphasis mine]. He went on to describe Krauss’s “inborn feeling for the rare and exotic nonsense that flourishes in the fiftieth state” and wondered how a newcomer could learn so much so quickly. Michener jokingly suggested that his name was really Ropati Kalanianakrausska and that he had gone to the mainland for a spell so that he “would not be a prophet without honor in his own land.” Michener concluded: “Hawai‘i is his land… [and] he has made the Islands his domain” [emphasis mine]. Michener, using his own “expert” status, lends credibility to his friend Bob Krauss, who despite being new to the islands, practically—according to Michener—understood Hawai‘i better than its native people. In spite of this public persona, Michener privately admitted that there were limitations to his “expertise.” In a personal letter to Day, Michener wrote that the two of them were and always would be, visitors to Hawai‘i. Despite this, both men continued to actively participate in Hawai‘i’s affairs consistently speaking for Hawai‘i’s natives and long-standing residents.

Hawai‘i’s statehood historiography, as written by Michener, Day, and Krauss, spoke from a white mainland perspective that emphasized Hawai‘i’s race relations as much better than on the mainland. They cited the lack of segregation, high numbers of nonwhites, and intermarriage rates as evidence that everyone in Hawai‘i lived in harmony. Their insistence that Hawai‘i offered the world an example of racial equality and American democracy at its best depended on their opinion that American influence in Hawai‘i had made things better and were well intentioned. They never questioned America’s imperial desires to make Hawai‘i part of America. These men ultimately

336 Fuchs, Hawai‘i Pono, vii.
337 James Michener, foreword to Here’s Hawai‘i (New York: Coward-McCann, 1960), viii.
338 James Michener to A. Grove Day, November 18, 1959, A. Grove Day Papers, University of Hawai‘i.
believed in the Cold War and America’s exceptionalism. They felt this exceptionalism was most evident in Hawai‘i and wanted to spread this awareness in order to boost America’s reputation throughout the world. In Hawai‘i they saw something much better than on the continent; but more importantly, they saw Hawai‘i statehood as a Cold War opportunity. They had privilege in Hawai‘i that helped them get noticed and institutional support to spread their message. Even though they celebrated Hawai‘i’s diversity, the voices and perspectives they consider are not diverse. Rather than verifying if nonwhites’ experiences in Hawai‘i were as equally satisfactory as theirs, Michener, Day, and Krauss focused on how great interracial living was from their own haole perspective. Together, the literature of these men continues the trend of white American men controlling Hawai‘i’s historiography and describing Hawai‘i’s history from the American point of view. In this way, the writing and negotiation of history has been at the center of American imperialism in Hawai‘i and continued after statehood.

The arguments made by Michener, Krauss, and Day were not new, nor did they depart from previous histories. They drew on the same sources, almost exclusively written by white Americans, and emphasized statehood as the ultimate fruition of American democracy and equality. Their historical overview emphasized decades of Western assimilation, Asian immigration to Hawai‘i, a long period of territorial status that prepared Hawai‘i for statehood, and World War II as a test of loyalty. Their books ended with the winning of statehood as evidence that the U.S. did not practice colonialism or deny citizenship based on race or ethnicity. For these authors to argue that Hawai‘i’s transition from sovereign nation to American state was not accomplished through imperialism or deception took some strategy. After all, why was Hawai‘i part of America in the first place? To define America’s role in Hawai‘i as anticolonial, American intervention needed to be articulated as benign and benevolent. To accomplish this, emphasis was placed on Asian Americans gaining civil rights with statehood while Native Hawaiian claims to their sovereign nation and land were de-emphasized.

Four main themes were consistently present in the statehood historiography to counter claims of American colonialism. Each of these themes overlap and mutually reinforce one another to support this historiography. First, American intervention in
Hawaiʻi was described as benign and benevolent. For example, the missionaries—who “came to do good”—not only brought Christianity to Hawaiians but also helped produce a written language, making them, according to Krauss “much better friend[s] to the Hawaiians” than the haole seamen and traders who were “hoping to make a fast buck.”

Day explained that Hawaiians were “most grateful for being taught to know the world through books” and because the missionaries had “made themselves a needed part of island life,” King Liholiho “granted them permission to stay as long as they desired.”

American Heritage even claimed that “unlike any other U.S. possession,” Hawaiʻi was first brought into America’s fold “neither by money nor by force of arms, but [instead] by an entirely unselfish impulse.” These arguments reiterated that Americans’ earliest attempts to civilize Hawaiians were well intentioned and well received.

A second theme was that America sought to protect Hawaiʻi, not dominate it. First, Americans needed to protect Hawaiʻi from an “unfit” monarchy. Michener described Queen Liliʻuokalani as “royalty of a far different sort”—“an imposing woman with a stubborn will” and “much skill in manipulating people.”

Day explained that after Americans “demanded” that the Queen surrender, the “Stars and Stripes were raised over Hawaiʻi to show that it was now under the protection of the USA.” He also flatly explained that America’s “need to protect” Hawaiʻi led to the building of military bases in the islands.

National Geographic wrote that Hawaiians felt safer with the U.S. military presence “having gone through one Pearl Harbor” already. Similarly, Kuykendall and Day posited that the “insecurity of Hawaiʻi’s future”—in the wake of the

339 Time (August 10, 1959) described that American influence in Hawaiʻi was better described as “benign paternalism” than colonialism.
340 Time, August 10, 1959; Krauss, Here’s Hawaiʻi, 34.
342 Ibid., 74.
344 Michener, Hawaiʻi, 555.
345 Day, Hawaiʻi: Fiftieth Star, 149-150.
346 Ibid., 177.
347 Simpich, “Hawaiʻi, U.S.A.,” 6 and 9. The August 10, 1959 issue of Time also makes the same claims about the military’s importance.
attack on Pearl Harbor—led many to favor statehood.\textsuperscript{348} In other words, American attempts to protect Hawai‘i were selfless (not selfish) and necessary.

The third theme was perhaps the most insidious: that Hawaiians were naturally hospitable and welcomed all foreigners to the islands. Day explains that, from the beginning, “foreigners had been welcomed by the Hawaiians.”\textsuperscript{349} Later, when the Spanish American War began, “Honolulu threw open its harbor to transports filled with the American soldiers on their way to the Philippines [and] the lads were given a Hawaiian welcome.”\textsuperscript{350} Krauss explained that “the friendly native is still friendly after 150 years of watching the foreigner take over his islands”\textsuperscript{351} and “the happy-go-lucky Hawaiian has put his stamp on every newcomer.”\textsuperscript{352} This trope extends beyond Hawai‘i’s historiography; it is also permeated by the tourism industry. The idea of Hawaiian “hospitality” is a (mis)appropriation of the Hawaiian concept of aloha, by non-natives, to further the pervasive notion that the “friendly natives” welcome everyone into Hawai‘i equally—settlers, missionaries, U.S. government and military. The use of this trope by non-natives is an attempt to downplay unwanted influence and deny any culpability.

The fourth theme was that Hawai‘i statehood brought the islands into their own and that Hawai‘i was incomplete without it. Day celebrated: “The long road had ended with Hawai‘i as a full member in the sisterhood of the Union. The lure of American ideals . . . had been victorious. Hawai‘i would benefit, and the rest of America would benefit, too.”\textsuperscript{353} He then cited Michener’s gratitude to the U.S. for doing the right thing: “Those of us in Hawai‘i well appreciate what a bold step America has taken in extending statehood to the islands” and the United States today is “a little stronger, a little more secure, a little more courageous.”\textsuperscript{354} In other words, Day and Michener praised statehood for closing the book on a difficult road, but one that worked out well in the end. They

\textsuperscript{348} Kuykendall and Day, Hawai‘i: A History, From Polynesian Kingdom to American State, 270. In this statement, they actually describe that the insecurity created by WWII led many to favor “self determination and statehood.” This use of the term “self-determination” was not common in the statehood literature, nor was it common to use it specifically to mean statehood.
\textsuperscript{349} Day, Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, 49.
\textsuperscript{350} Ibid., 157.
\textsuperscript{351} Bob Krauss, Here’s Hawai‘i, 15.
\textsuperscript{352} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{353} Day, Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, 185.
\textsuperscript{354} Quoted in Day, Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, 185.
proclaim that Hawai‘i won and so did America, therefore no reparations are needed. We also get a sense that Michener is quite proud of his part in pressuring the U.S. to grant statehood to Hawai‘i.

Only with statehood, it was argued, had Hawai‘i finally reached its full potential. *Time* described that Hawai‘i’s “vitality” began to “bubble and rise like an awakening volcano” after statehood.\(^{355}\) If volcanoes created the Hawaiian islands, then statehood was claimed to commence Hawai‘i’s democracy. By bookmarking Hawai‘i’s “democratic history” with statehood, Hawai‘i’s history was appropriated by the U.S. to enhance its reputation and annul Hawai‘i’s sovereign history. *Time* also wrote that Hawai‘i’s people were “drenched” in aloha after statehood and aloha now had an “added special flavor injected by the general awareness that Hawai‘i was on the threshold of a new epoch.”\(^{356}\) In other words, the Hawaiian concept of aloha had only reached fruition after statehood was accomplished. American democracy in Hawai‘i was not just inevitable; Hawai‘i needed America to be its best self. Therefore, Hawaiians ought to be thankful for the gift of (enhanced) aloha achieved through statehood.

Together, these four themes about America’s good intentions and Hawai‘i’s eager reception functioned to dispute claims of American imperialism. But the statehood literature also articulated Hawai‘i statehood as an issue of Cold War foreign policy. Michener and others, including Lawrence Fuchs, viewed Hawai‘i as a racial “laboratory” that was completed with statehood. Michener explained in his last chapter, “The Golden Men,” that statehood marked the “perfection” of a concept of a “new type of man . . . influenced by both west and east . . . wholly modern and American yet in tune with the ancient and the Oriental.”\(^{357}\) He was not a product of racial intermarriage but a “product of the mind,”\(^{358}\) “knowledgeable both in western and eastern values”\(^{359}\) but not confined to race because he was in a sense beyond race. He understood that he contained inheritances from all his predecessors and was what we might call a citizen of the world. Day made a similar claim to Michener’s. He explained that Hawai‘i was called the

\(^{355}\) *Time*, August 10, 1959.
\(^{356}\) Ibid.
\(^{357}\) Michener, *Hawai‘i*, 807.
\(^{358}\) Michener, 807.
\(^{359}\) Ibid., 817.
“melting pot of the Pacific” because for generations it had been a place where people of many nations and races “mingled their blood to form a harmonious new race.” This melting pot had truly “welded people of a dozen national stocks into a new sort of American, with an attitude of tolerance not found anywhere else in the world.” This new race (or the “golden man”) was, according to Michener, Hawaiʻi’s “unique contribution . . . to the rest of the world.” Day explained that the achievement of statehood in a place so distant and inhabited by so many with Asian and Pacific ancestry, “show[ed] that American democracy [would] work in places other than North America.”

Michener’s theory of Hawaiʻi’s “golden men” was important because it advanced a notion of a color-blind society where race did not matter and Native Hawaiians were strategically erased. It also framed the achievement of statehood as a civil rights victory where everyone became equal in Hawaiʻi but ignored indigenous claims to sovereignty. By portraying Hawaiʻi as a settler nation, like the United States, where each group of settlers had to earn their civil rights and prove their loyalty, statehood signaled triumph and victory. By ignoring contemporary Hawaiian claims to sovereignty and depicting Hawaiians as another ethnic group in Hawaiʻi, Hawaiians had no more claim to Hawaiʻi than any other group. Therefore, U.S. intervention in Hawaiʻi was not described as colonialism or imperialism against the sovereign Hawaiian nation, but instead helped bring progress, civil rights, and democracy.

The Cold War emphasis on civil rights and anticolonialism undercut indigenous claims to Hawaiʻi and accordingly silenced native voices. Very few native voices or perspectives appear in the literature about statehood, unless they validated Hawaiʻi statehood and American exceptionalism. One such native voice came from Reverend Akaka who appeared at major public ceremonies to deliver blessings or prayers in behalf of the Hawaiian people. His sermon on March 13, 1959, the day after the statehood bill passed in Congress, was recorded for Voice of America and broadcasted

361 Ibid., 164.
362 Michener, Hawaiʻi, 807.
364 Fuchs, Hawaiʻi Pono, 447.
internationally. Akaka did mention the ambivalence Native Hawaiians expressed about statehood, but he was a “symbol of hope” for Hawaiians and the USIA decided his comments were valuable. Akaka places the missionaries’ arrival in Hawai‘i at the center and refers to Hawaiians and Americans sharing a mutual history: “Like our Pilgrim Fathers who arrived at Plymouth… in 1620, so did the fathers of a new era in Hawai‘i kneel in prayer after a long and trying voyage.” Citing Reverend Hiram Bingham’s 1820 sermon to the Hawaiian people, the first Christian service held in Honolulu, Akaka says that the missionaries coming to Hawai‘i began Hawai‘i’s “real preparation for statehood.” Therefore, Hawai‘i’s eventual status as a full-fledged member of the United States began with pure intentions. If missionaries were ordained by God to spread Christianity to the uncivilized, then statehood was equally pure and inevitable. Akaka said specifically that statehood “lift[ed] the clouds of smoke” by providing Hawaiians an opportunity to fully affirm the true meaning of aloha. In other words, statehood provided Hawaiians the opportunity to become spiritually and culturally complete.

Most importantly, Akaka went on to express his gratitude that the “discovery and development” of Hawai‘i “was not couched in the context of an imperialistic and exploitative national power, but in the context of aloha.” Here Akaka marks the beginning of U.S.-Hawaiian relations with missionaries’ arrival in Hawai‘i rather than the interactions of two independent nations or the 1898 U.S. annexation of Hawai‘i. Instead of characterizing this relationship as imperialistic and colonial, which many historians do, Akaka summarizes Western interests in Hawai‘i as benevolent and reciprocal. Furthermore, Hawai‘i becomes an immigrant nation just like the United States, encapsulating Hawai‘i’s history as American history. The USIA who controlled Voice of America shared Akaka’s comments around the world during the Cold War. Akaka was one of very few Native Hawaiian voices offered by the State Department. It was chosen because it validated the American perspective and “adopt[ed] the viewpoint that the

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365 Reverend Akaka, Hawai‘i Statehood Reel #58; RG 306, NACP. Full text of Reverend Abraham K. Akaka’s March 13, 1959 sermon is available at http://akakafoundation.org/sermons.html and is printed in the Congressional Record of the 86th Congress, First Session.
366 Fuchs, Hawai‘i Pono, 447.
367 Reverend Akaka, Hawai‘i Statehood Reel #58; RG 306, NACP.
368 Ibid.
369 Ibid.
triumph of Anglo-Saxon systems of governance was inevitable and benevolent in comparison to other colonial situations.” This message aligned with State Department policy opinions and was therefore endorsed.

Multiculturalism Tested

Shortly after Hawaiʻi was published, Michener and his Nisei wife Mari left Hawaiʻi. Michener later said it was for two reasons. First, he said that he was warned he would no longer be welcome in the islands after his book was published and he preferred to “escape animosity.” Second, and “more imperative perhaps than the first,” was that he and his wife experienced more day-to-day racial discrimination in Hawaiʻi than in Pennsylvania. The example he cited several times was that he and his wife were denied the opportunity to buy a home in Kahala because of his wife’s Japanese ancestry. Michener’s departure tested his own loyalty to the racial harmony trope that he had been such a prominent figure in crafting, but it also tested Hawaiʻi’s reputation nationally.

In April 1961, Michener gave an interview in New York where he discussed his decision to leave Hawaiʻi and his disappointment with racial discrimination against his wife. His newest book, which was about to be published, would provide more detail, but as soon Hawaiʻi residents heard the comments he made in the interview, a media frenzy erupted. The Honolulu Advertiser reported that Michener had damaged Hawaiʻi’s reputation and that everyone in Hawaiʻi knew he had exaggerated the incident, which implied that he had done so for political purposes. In a much more dramatic story, the author regretted that Hawaiʻi had been so “hospitable” to Michener because “he ate at Hawaiʻi’s table, he praised Hawaiʻi, he revealed his eminence, and then, after leaving, he turned and spat from afar.” The New York Post article that had published Michener’s

370 Lyons, American Pacificism, 152.
373 Wershba, “Refugee from Paradise.”
disparaging remarks was entitled “Refugee from Paradise,” and the Honolulu Advertiser suggested that Michener do Hawaiʻi a favor and “keep the title.”

Daniel Inouye’s response to Michener’s comments was that the automatic “salute to Hawaiʻi days [were] over” and that Hawaiʻi now had to stand on its own:

We’ve become quite used to speaking of our near-ideal racial climate. Let’s not fall into complacency or smugness. That would retard progress in achieving even better racial relations. We don’t think much of James Michener for his comment. He knows better, or he ought to. But all the same, if his remarks snaps us into our toes, perhaps he unintentionally did us a favor.

Inouye’s comments indicate that racial equality in Hawaiʻi was not yet perfect and there was progress to be made, but conditions were still much better than on the United States continent. Most Americans were not aware of Michener’s recent comments and to them Hawaiʻi’s appeal remained stronger than ever, especially as Elvis Presley’s popular new film Blue Hawaiʻi (1961) was released. Blue Hawaiʻi became Presley’s most successful film and helped create a permanent connection between Elvis and Hawaiʻi.

Jerry Hopkins argues that “of all the foreign entertainers who made lasting contributions to the islands, Elvis Presley offered one of the most enduring. His love affair with Hawaiʻi, and its romance with him, likely never will be matched.” Presley’s on-screen interracial relationship with Maile Duval (Joan Blackman) and his friendships with local Hawaiians also maintained Hawaiʻi’s reputation of multiculturalism and interracial harmony that easily could override Michener’s recent comments.

376 “More Michener Fiction,” Honolulu Advertiser, April 9, 1961
378 Blue Hawaiʻi was one of the top-grossing films of the year and the soundtrack album was one of the best sellers for both 1961 and 1962.

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Figure 12: Elvis Presley greeted by 3000 fans at the Honolulu airport in March 1961. He arrived by Pan Am, marking Hawai‘i’s arrival into the Jet Age. Photo: http://elvisinHawaii.com/

As racial violence continued to intensify on the continent in response to the growing civil rights movement, Hawai‘i’s perceived exceptionalism seemed even more extraordinary and necessary. In June 1963, President John F. Kennedy addressed the U.S. Conference of Mayors in Honolulu. In light of the recent demonstrations that had taken place in Birmingham, Jackson, and Greensboro, Kennedy spoke about race relations as a national emergency and challenged the mayors to find legislative solutions to provide “peaceful remedies” and “move these disputes off the streets.” Upon arriving at the Honolulu airport the day before, Kennedy said that there was no place more appropriate to hold this meeting than in Hawai‘i. “Reaching into the Pacific, yet part of the U.S., this island represents all that we are and all that we hope to be… Those of us who live to the east of you look to you… who represent the best hope on earth.” 1963 seemed to be a turning point in the struggle for civil rights. Hundreds of thousands attended the August

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March on Washington in the largest civil rights demonstration in American history. Despite the growing support for civil rights, cities like Birmingham, Alabama, seemed equally committed to resisting this change. In response to demonstrations led by Dr. King in Birmingham in May, city commissioner Eugene “Bull” Connor had ordered the use of high-pressure fire hoses and dogs against the demonstrators, resulting in some of the most egregious images of the period. In September, four young African American girls were killed in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

Figure 13: This cartoon appeared in the *Honolulu Advertiser* on October 1, 1963. Artist: Harry Lyons

As civil rights became an unavoidable domestic emergency, by contrast Hawaiʻi never looked so good. For whatever reason, around this time Michener softened his criticism of Hawaiʻi’s race relations. Hawaiʻi radio personality Hal Lewis (“Aku”) shared a letter he had received from Michener after a phone conversation the two had. Michener wrote that he believed his problems arose because he was “merely a decade ahead of [his]
time.” He suggested that there were much more serious racial quarrels to worry about than his incident. He said, compared to what was happening in places like Little Rock and Birmingham, anything that happened in Hawai‘i was “small potatoes” and “rather trivial.” Hawai‘i, “judged against the national average,” remained an important reminder of what was possible. Even though Michener’s complaint about racial discrimination in Hawai‘i most likely did not travel far beyond Hawai‘i, his point is still instructive. As one of the most famous Cold War ambassadors for Hawai‘i’s racial harmony, Michener acknowledged that race relations in Hawai‘i were not as perfect as he and others had previously suggested. Like elsewhere, prejudice, racism, and discrimination existed in Hawai‘i. In some ways, Hawai‘i’s race relations seemed less complicated than on the mainland because there were few African Americans, but in other ways, they were equally complicated by the legacies of American empire and settler colonialism. Michener’s decision to downplay his criticism highlighted the fact that the Cold War emphasis on Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism was dependent on its juxtaposition against more fraught racial tensions on the continent.

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382 “Michener Sees His Quarrel With Isles as Nothing More than a Lover’s Spat,” Honolulu Advertiser, September 29, 1963.
383 Ibid. In addition to saying that Hawai‘i’s racial discrimination was “trivial” in comparison to the U.S. continent, Michener also summarized what had happened in the past. He wrote: (1) I seriously considered buying a house in the Islands and was told by a real estate person that certain areas were restricted. (2) I was constantly appalled at the idea of social clubs in those delightful islands being restricted, not only because I was now affected but also because of (3) and most particularly I was frightened when I attended a gala dinner for the President of one of the Asian countries at a club to which By 1965, Michener offered his approval for the progress made by Hawai‘i in handling its racial problems and seemed to dismiss the idea that racial discrimination in Hawai‘i had bothered him. He joked that prejudice didn’t bother him—only the prices of Hawai‘i real estate. He also said that it had always been his intention to return to Hawai‘i and that he was in conversation with Hawai‘i businessman Chinn Ho about an apartment at the Ilikai in Waikīkī. Michener specifically praised Governor John Burns and Burns responded that Hawai‘i appreciated Michener’s kind remarks. Burns also said that it had always been his feeling that Michener “fully understood” Hawai‘i and that his much-publicized remarks a few years ago were “blown out of proportion and perhaps misunderstood.” Michener continued, “I was sure that sooner or later some smart newsman would catch hold of such shenanigans, someone in Asia, and the fat would be in the fire for all of us. I think Hawai‘i was damned lucky it didn’t have a very embarrassing incident explode in its face, but the islands have always been fortunate and some kindly spirit saw them through…. Hawai‘i could not have permanently preaching one thing, holding itself up before the world as an example of brotherhood when it was secretly practicing something else.” Clearly, Michener felt a strong urge to maintain the pulse of Hawai‘i’s reputation on racial discrimination. He figured criticism from him was much preferable than from other nations. Honolulu Advertiser, May 31, 1965
CHAPTER 3:

Cold War Laboratory: The State Department Recruits Hawai‘i

In 1958, World War II navy vets Eugene Burdick and William Lederer published *The Ugly American*. A novel about Americans living and working in Southeast Asia, it became an immediate bestseller and significantly influenced the Cold War for at least the next decade. It educated readers about America’s Cold War role in Asia and asserted that compassionate and well-trained ordinary Americans who were willing to learn the local language, eat local food, and live according to local customs, were the most effective American ambassadors and diplomats. Lederer and Burdick intended *The Ugly American* as a critique of what they understood to be Eisenhower’s foreign policy failures in order to suggest a new way to win the hearts and minds of the developing world. In addition to changing America’s outlook on the success of the Cold War, it also changed the discourse about America’s potential to win. Burdick taught Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley and Lederer was a career naval officer who became a public information officer in the Pentagon, and eventually retired as a captain in Hawai‘i as special assistant to the commander in chief of the Pacific (Adm. Felix Stump). *The Ugly American* was based on each of their experiences serving in Asia during WWII, as well as the knowledge Lederer gained serving as an Asia specialist after the war. They said their book was “written as fiction, but based on fact.”[^384] It was incredibly popular, spending seventy-six weeks on the best-seller list with roughly five million copies sold.[^385] In 1963, the book was also made into a film starring Marlon Brando.

The novel takes place in a fictional Southeast Asian country called “Sarkhan” but was meant to resemble aspects of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Vietnam. The novel’s title refers to the plain-looking hero, Homer Atkins, who is an American engineer working overseas. Atkins opts to live among the local people and in the process of learning to understand the local needs, he and the community members gain mutual respect for each another. He is considered “ugly” because his hands are calloused and

covered in grease; he is literally not afraid to get his hands dirty and work with the people. The other ugly American, the real ugly American, is the American who represents the U.S. government and practices ugly behavior. He chooses to isolate himself from the local people and live more pretentiously and ostentatiously. The book’s clear message was that America was failing in Asia because its agents did not work with the people and failed to live up to America’s full potential.

The book was a wake-up call to American citizens as well as politicians. The “ugly American” represented the American traveler abroad who was not only oblivious, but disrespectful and uninterested in learning from foreign people and cultures. More importantly, the book critiqued politicians and members of the foreign service who arrogantly represented the U.S. and made no attempt to learn from the country in which they served. Lederer and Burdick argued that the U.S. needed more Homer Atkinses. When The Ugly American was published, politicians in Washington were hotly debating Hawai‘i statehood. The book’s message resonated with those who argued that Hawai‘i had unmatched potential to serve Cold War goals. If Washington needed more culturally sensitive agents, there was no better place than Hawai‘i to train agents on their way to Asia.

The most innovative idea to come from the book was that ordinary Americans could make the best ambassadors. Up until then, conventional wisdom was that highly trained government officials were the only ones capable and trustworthy enough to represent American interests around the world. In contrast, according to Lederer and Burdick, Homer Atkins was exactly the kind of ambassador the United States needed. Senator John F. Kennedy was so inspired by The Ugly American that he sent a copy to each of his colleagues in the Senate in January 1959. Taking the book’s lessons seriously, Kennedy drew on its suggestions for transforming international diplomacy and recruiting ordinary Americans who were committed to achieving mutual respect in the Third World. Historian Robert Dean explains that as an aspiring politician, Kennedy valued the book’s ideological underpinnings. In turn, this helped shape his campaign

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rhetoric, which, according to Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, became “emblematic of Kennedy’s ‘New Frontier.’” The Ugly American also helped shape his administration’s foreign policy programs which included the U.S. Army Special Forces, “counterinsurgency” doctrine, covert warfare techniques in Cuba, and the Peace Corps.

During Hawai‘i’s statehood hearings, it became clear that Washington recognized Hawai‘i’s Cold War potential. Chapter one explained that Cold War concerns about maintaining America’s reputation of democracy and equality—aimed at countering claims to the contrary—became the most effective way to gain support for Hawai‘i statehood. Chapter two described how eager Washington was to share Hawai‘i’s success story around the world. In the wake of The Ugly American and the policy debates it sparked, the fiftieth state was recognized for its potential to become a Cold War “laboratory” for social experiments aimed at improving relations between the East and West, and as a place to implement the ideas of The Ugly American.

In early 1960, The New York Herald-Tribune invited readers from across the nation to suggest new ideas for promoting world peace that they would pass along to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The Honolulu Advertiser printed the invitation and urged Hawai‘i readers to respond. Days later, the Advertiser staff published its own editorial in response to the New York paper’s inquiry. While it is not clear if the editorial’s ideas came only from the Honolulu Advertiser staff or if they included readers’ own suggestions, it is clear that the Honolulu newspaper wanted to seize the opportunity to share its views with readers in New York and across the nation. The Advertiser said that there were many roads to peace, but Hawai‘i’s citizens proposed only one: that the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace “sponsor a tour of ‘aloha ambassadors’ from Hawai‘i to the countries of Asia.” The “aloha ambassadors,” they suggested, would include Americans from all of Hawai‘i’s ethnic groups, both citizens by birth and naturalization, and of all ages. They would be “living examples for Asia of what our

387 Robert Dean, Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 173-4; Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 21.
388 Dean, Imperial Brotherhood, 174. Dean also says that the book helped popularize counterinsurgency theories that were popular in academic think tanks in the 1950s (178).
389 Dean mentions that The Ugly American has been compared to Uncle Tom’s Cabin and The Jungle in its “importance as a catalyst of American political debate” (172).
country means by equality and opportunity.” Responding to the types of concerns raised in *The Ugly American*, the editorial clarified that the ambassadors would not partake in elaborate guided tours, spend too much time in diplomats’ offices, or socialize at cocktail parties; instead they would maximize their time in homes, villages, and on farms, listening to the local people.  

Ideas such as these were commonly offered by Hawai‘i politicians, public figures, academics, and journalists around the time of statehood. The basic concept was that Hawai‘i could be the place where white Americans would come to be assimilated and trained before beginning foreign service in Asia (to be the kind of representative *The Ugly American* promoted), or Asians would be introduced to American culture in Hawai‘i where it was considered to be less hostile to non-whites. Hawai‘i’s ethnically diverse residents (the “ambassadors”) were central to the plan because they would either teach white Americans about Asia or teach Asians about America. The goal was that Hawai‘i’s Asian Americans would validate American claims about American democracy and equality, while white Americans could boast about the joys of Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism and racial harmony. This chapter describes the various implementations of this framework in Hawai‘i’s post-statehood era. I examine foreign policy projects aimed at cultural diplomacy and bridging the “East” and the “West,” including the University of Hawai‘i’s East-West Center (EWC) and Hawai‘i’s Peace Corps training centers. I argue that the efforts to create these two programs were directly related to the statehood movement and included many of the same people. The goals of cultural diplomacy sought by the EWC and Peace Corps relied on the conceptualization of Hawai‘i as equally Asia(n) and America(n), which often disregarded and marginalized Native Hawaiians. I also argue that the two programs regularly struggled to maintain their foreign policy objects without damaging their reputation of promoting peace and mutual respect abroad. They also struggled to avoid being accused of pursuing imperialism while maintaining their claims of being committed to civil rights.

Hawai‘i’s International Cooperation Center

In chapter one I described the expanding arguments about Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism as a Cold War weapon of the late 1950s. While particularly useful in achieving statehood, Hawai‘i’s potential had been recognized by the early 1950s when Hawai‘i was still a territory. In 1954, the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) entered into a contract with the Territory’s Republican governor Samuel Wilder King, to establish an International Cooperation Center in Hawai‘i (ICC/H).  

King was an early statehood supporter and active member of the Hawai‘i Statehood Commission. The ICC was mostly staffed by local people in Hawai‘i, but it was financed primarily by the federal government. According to ICC brochures, Hawai‘i afforded ICA participants from Asia a firsthand opportunity to study the American democratic way of life but where both the East and West “blend[ed] harmoniously.” This was promoted as an asset because Asian visitors would feel “at home . . . living among Americans whose forefathers came from their part of the world. They [would] see for themselves that the philosophy of the American Republic truly and fully extend[ed] . . . justice and equality . . . to all people, regardless of race or creed.” Participants, they claimed, would see firsthand that the mantra “Freedom for All” was a fact, not just a propaganda slogan. Hawai‘i, the ICC boasted, was a place within the U.S. “where racial harmony [was] an accepted way of life,” where “an understanding and appreciation of things Oriental [existed], but also an abiding faith in the free way of life of the Western world.” In other words, Hawai‘i was considered exceptional and strategic because of its Asian character but intrinsic Americanness.

The purpose of the ICC was to provide training and hospitality in Hawai‘i for foreign visitors. Most visitors were sponsored by the ICA, though others came to Hawai‘i

391 The ICA was established by the U.S. State Department; its predecessor was the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA). In 1961, the ICA was abolished and its functions were transferred to USAID, a new agency created by President Kennedy’s executive order.
392 East-West Center files, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library, Hawaiian Collection.
393 The ICA brochures also include a summary of Hawai‘i’s history which resembles the same kind of narratives that I described in chapter two. Some of the details are blatantly false, for example, that the “Hawaiian Islands became a territory of the U.S. as the result of a treaty of annexation between the two sovereign nations.” Other details predictably recite Hawai‘i’s reputation of passivity and hospitality, for example: “For many years the friendly Hawaiian people have extended their hospitality to peoples who come here from many parts of the world. Present day residents of the Islands feel that they are the heirs to this delightful spirit of Hawai‘i and ‘aloha’ and welcome visitors to their shores with friendly hospitality.”
through arrangements with the Departments of State and Defense, the United Nations, foreign governments, private organizations, and other agencies.\textsuperscript{394} In the first two years of operation, over 1400 participants from 29 different countries were welcomed by the Honolulu Center.\textsuperscript{395}

By September 1957, local politicians boasted that federal officials in the ICA were “sold” on Hawai‘i and predicted that “friendly islanders” could expect to be doing a lot more entertaining of important foreign visitors.\textsuperscript{396} Up until this point, Hawai‘i’s role in international aid had primarily been a place to welcome foreign visitors (mostly from Asia) on their way to the continental U.S. In 1957, a new contract called for all Asia-bound federal ICA officials to stop in Honolulu for a briefing on Asian ways.\textsuperscript{397} The new contract also designated funds to create a film about Hawai‘i’s training resources that could be used for recruitment and publicity purposes. Excited by the prospects, the Hawai‘i ICC Director Dai Ho Chun told newspaper reporters: “We have to make more use of Hawai‘i now!”\textsuperscript{398} A few months later, speaking at an ICC event in Hawai‘i with several hundred community leaders in attendance, Governor Quinn echoed Chun’s prediction that the Territory could expect much more federal involvement coming. He said that Washington had begun to realize the significant role Hawai‘i could play in cultivating understanding between the people of the U.S. and Asia. Huntington Gilchrist, a United Nations representative, spoke very enthusiastically about the role of Hawai‘i and its people. No other part of the U.S., he said, offered such a “wealth” both technically and personally to “combat the efforts of Communist agents in the battle for the support of underdeveloped nations.”\textsuperscript{399} During the Cold War Hawai‘i functioned as an ideological outpost training new troops and foreign service workers.

\textsuperscript{394} Participants included, for example, engineers from Vietnam and Thailand, agriculturists from Formosa, entomologists from Greece and Nicaragua, and nurses from Costa Rica.

\textsuperscript{395} The breakdown of participants according to the ICC brochure was 33\% related to tropical agriculture, 13\% in education, 14\% in public health, and 10\% in public administration. Local businesses that were involved included banks, the Bishop Museum, pineapple and sugar plantations, radio stations, newspapers, schools, coffee plantations, and hospitals.

\textsuperscript{396} Sam Freae, “Isle ‘Sold’ U.S. Officials As Friendship Center,” Honolulu Advertiser, September 22, 1957.

\textsuperscript{397} “Pacific Cultural Bridge,” Honolulu Advertiser, September 26, 1957.

\textsuperscript{398} Freae, “Isle ‘Sold’ U.S. Officials.”

During Hawai‘i’s statehood hearings, American politicians learned more about existing international cooperation programs. Those who supported Hawai‘i’s new opportunities and felt that they could not be duplicated anywhere else in the country, hoped to expand Hawai‘i’s diplomatic role in the Cold War. According to Paul Hooper, the legacy of the ICC was that it “aroused the interest of certain faculty members and administrators in transcultural training and education and led to an involvement in a series of even more ambitious training programs in the 1960s.”

Creating Hawai‘i’s East-West Center

In April 1959, then-Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson—who had played a crucial role in getting the statehood bill to a Congressional vote only a month earlier—publicly suggested the concept of a new permanent international center during a speech at the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, D.C. In June, Johnson introduced a bill in the Senate that called for “a Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange Between East and West in Hawai‘i.” An identical bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on behalf of Hawai‘i’s territorial delegate John Burns. On July 24, 1959, Public Law 86-108, also known as “The Mutual Security Act of 1959,” was passed, officially beginning the process to create the Center, which would eventually be named the East-West Center (EWC). Either as a branch of an existing institution or as a separate one, it would be a place where scholars and students could meet, study, and exchange ideas. Without a doubt, the creation of the EWC in Hawai‘i was propelled by the momentum of approving statehood. Moreover, the record of Hawai‘i’s ICA, IES, and HEW pre-statehood contracts also laid the foundation for expanding Hawai‘i’s role after statehood. Central to Hawai‘i’s exceptional potential (pre and post-statehood) was its distinctive ethnic composition. Washington saw in Hawai‘i an unparalleled number of

400 http://www.eastwestcenter.org/about-ewc/origins
402 http://www.eastwestcenter.org/about-ewc/origins
403 The Mutual Security Act of 1959 declared the purpose of the Congress to establish in Hawai‘i a Center for Cultural and Technical interchange between East and West primarily in support of the objectives of the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC 1960; RG 59, NACP.
American ambassadors that were both “ethnic” and “American.” Hawaiʻi’s potential to serve American interests during the Cold War was, thus, unparalleled.

Many of the same figures attempting to draw national attention to statehood were also publicly endorsing programs like the East-West Center. James Michener and A. Grove Day both thought Hawaiʻi’s people should be “tapped as goodwill ambassadors” and that cultural exchange could significantly impact diplomatic relations with Asia. In November 1960, Michener referred to the EWC as a “unique experiment” in education and understanding, one which “[could] do more for U.S. relations with Asians than any other plan yet concocted in the marble halls of diplomacy.”

Bob Krauss wrote two editorials on the topic for the Honolulu Advertiser in January 1959, when the 86th Congress began to debate statehood. He suggested that Asian Americans, in particular, would be the best ambassadors because they would ultimately be more effective than Caucasians. They were more useful, he and others argued, because Asians could best train and advise other Asians, plus many of them already had the language skills, saving time and money in training. Krauss easily connected this to foreign policy objectives. He saw the use of Hawaiʻi as a solution to the problems raised in The Ugly American, namely the fact that so few U.S. representatives spoke the language of the country they were assigned to serve. Not only that, Asians coming to Hawaiʻi would feel “at home” because Hawaiʻi’s geography and people would look familiar. Krauss wrote that there was no other place in the U.S. where this plan could work so well.

Although there were fears about political backlash from too closely associating the East-West Center with the State Department, the story of the East-West Center, just

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404 Grove to Michener, June 27, 1960, Correspondence between Day and Michener, A. Grove Day Papers, University of Hawai‘i; Bob Krauss, “America Can Use Hawai‘i’s Unique Talents,” Honolulu Advertiser, January 3, 1959.
407 Hawai‘i residents’ Asian language skills were often cited as one of the reasons that they would be effective ambassadors to Asia. In this case, this suggestion was coming from a white resident who did not speak an Asian language. It is not clear what percentage of Hawai‘i’s residents in 1959 could fluently speak an Asian language, but certainly a large portion of Hawai‘i’s residents were at least second and third generation and English (or pidgin English) was likely their first language. Many, if not most, who publically supported Hawai‘i’s residents to serve as “ambassadors of aloha” were whites living in Hawai‘i and they often times were volunteering Asian Americans in Hawai‘i (not themselves) and speaking for Hawai‘i as a whole (not themselves).
like the story of Hawai‘i statehood, was too good to pass up in the cultural realm of the Cold War. The invaluable potential of the Center to the Cold War was one of the most unifying and uncontroversial reasons to support the federally funded EWC, just as it had been in the statehood debates. Once the idea of the EWC was approved, $10 million was initially appropriated to the State Department, which would then establish a contract with the University of Hawai‘i.\footnote{Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC; RG 59, NACP.} Before signing the contract, the Secretary of State, Christian Herter, in collaboration with an inter-agency working group, began researching Hawai‘i’s resources and creating a blueprint for the EWC to move forward with.\footnote{Members of the group included Dr. Oliver J. Caldwell (Assistant U.S. Commissioner of Education for International Education, Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare); Dr. Robert Jacobs (Chief, Far East and South Asia Program Division, Office of Educational Services, International Cooperation Administration); Mr. N. Paul Neilson (Deputy Assistant Director for the Far East, US Information Agency); and Dr. Francis J. Colligan (Director, Cultural Policy and Development Staff, Bureau of International Cultural Relations, Dept of State) who served as Chairman of the Group. Other members included several people from Hawai‘i.} The plan was finished by the end of the year and sent by Secretary of State Christian Herter to Congress and Lyndon Johnson in December 1959.\footnote{Governor Quinn proposed that the Center have two mutually supporting and complimentary programs, one aimed at higher learning and the other technical training for Asian students, somewhat resembling the ICC. He envisioned the higher learning component administered by an “International College” and the technical training program by an “International Agency” but centralized by the Center itself. William Quinn to Christian Herter, October 19, 1959; Box 2, Folder EWC 1960; RG 59, NACP.}

The attractiveness of Hawai‘i for the EWC was certainly unmatched. In 1960, President Eisenhower spoke at the Honolulu airport about statehood and the new EWC. He emphasized the importance of “using” Hawai‘i for American interests. He said, “I can't imagine anything better than for us to use this place.” He went on to explain that he meant “Hawaiians using this opportunity in this area to bring about a better feeling between the peoples bordering the Pacific all the way around.”\footnote{Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Remarks Upon Arrival at the Honolulu International Airport," June 20, 1960, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=11846.} Anxious to utilize Hawai‘i for Cold War projects, and confident that this was a good opportunity for the people of Hawai‘i, Eisenhower offered similar support for statehood and the EWC.

Some of the same concerns about Hawai‘i’s “Americanness” raised during the statehood hearings resurfaced in the early stages of creating the EWC. One issue was the physical distance between Hawai‘i and the U.S. continent. While this distance was...
quickly diminishing with the expanding availability of faster flights brought on by the Jet Age, some foreign students and visitors had regretted its sense of isolation from the rest of the United States. The State Department decided this was a “relative matter” however. Considering Washington was looking for a place figuratively and physically in between Asia and America (the “East” and “West”), Hawai‘i was the best option available. The U.S. had other colonies at this time, but Hawai‘i was preferable because of its location and Asian character. Additionally, the U.S. considered its relationship to Hawai‘i solid and dependable and statehood certainly made this choice even more convenient.

Another early concern was Hawai‘i’s “territorial heritage.” Secretary Herter’s plan noted that Hawai‘i’s residents tended to look to mainland universities for higher education. Perhaps they were worried about a potential lack of support for the EWC among those in Hawai‘i, or a lack of qualified personnel to attend and staff the Center. With Hawai‘i’s history of being a U.S. territory, they also worried that it might be difficult to get local financial support because the residents of Hawai‘i might want the federal government to bear the financial costs. In this regard, Hawai‘i’s colonial (territorial) history was simultaneously a Cold War asset and potential risk. Despite these concerns, the State Department’s conclusion was that statehood was changing and intensifying “civic pride” in Hawai‘i, which they hoped would override any problems with sustaining support for the Center. The plan sent by the Secretary of State to the Congress in December 1959, only four months after Hawai‘i was admitted as the fiftieth state, foresaw the EWC as a meaningful and valuable facility for orienting both American employees heading to the “Far East” and Asians heading to the U.S. mainland.

Historical scholarship about Hawai‘i statehood itself is quite minimal; furthermore, it generally overlooks the role of the State Department and the concurrent development of the East-West Center. Local officials in Hawai‘i had been calling for the

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413 Secretary of State to Congress, “A Plan for the Establishment in Hawai‘i of a Center for Cultural and Technical Interchange between East and West,” January 1960; Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC 1960; RG 59, NACP.
expansion of Hawai‘i’s role at the same time it was petitioning for statehood. While statehood certainly added momentum to the discussion of creating the EWC in the summer of 1959 and statehood was achieved before the EWC was approved, politicians advocated for both simultaneously and supporters used the same arguments in advocating for both. Advocates emphasized Hawai‘i’s ethnically diverse population and its exceptional record of racial harmony. The federal government was already using Hawai‘i for Cold War purposes of cultural exchange and technical training, but few Americans were aware of this. Once statehood was confirmed, and Hawai‘i’s potential in the Cold War was realized and popularized, establishing the EWC was even more attractive. Neither statehood nor the EWC would have held such prominence without the other and they both benefitted from that simultaneous momentum.

The East-West Center and Triumphant Multiculturalism

The EWC officially began operation in 1960 with a small interim staff and students from fourteen Asian and Pacific countries. At the end of 1960, five UH officials went on a two-month tour of twenty countries, primarily to recruit and inform other nations about the newly established Center. Upon their return to Hawai‘i, Y. Baron Goto spoke of their travels. He joked, “Wherever we went, we were most happy to see ‘ugly Americans’ and particularly ‘ugly Hawaiians.’” EWC officials saw the potential of their diplomacy and directly linked it to fulfilling the goals put forth in Lederer and Burdick’s *The Ugly American*. By February 1961, ninety-one Asian and Pacific students and nine American students were already attending classes at the University of Hawai‘i under EWC scholarships. In April, the ICC was officially transferred to the EWC and Dai Ho Chun remained its director. In May, Vice President Lyndon Johnson came to

416 Those traveling included William Wachter, Kenneth Lau, John Stalker, Thomas Ige, and Y. Baron Goto. They visited Seoul; Naha, Okinawa; Tokyo; Taipei, Formosa; Hong Kong; Manila; Saigon; Bangkok, Thailand; Rangoon, Burma; Calcutta India; Dacca and Karachi, Pakistan; Katmandu, Nepal; New Delhi and Madras, India; Colombo, Ceylon; Singapore; Jakarta Indonesia; Sydney and Melbourne, Wellington NZ. They were unable to visit Laos, Cambodia, or South Vietnam because of political turmoil, although they had planned to.
418 Murray Turnbull served as the first (interim) director until January 1962 when Alexander Spoehr was hired as the first Chancellor. Before taking the lead of the EWC, Spoehr, an anthropologist specializing in Oceania and Southeast Asia, had been working as director of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu.
Hawai‘i to mark the official groundbreaking ceremony of the EWC’s new buildings. The Center’s Imin International Conference Center, Kennedy Theatre, and dormitories were designed by the internationally renowned Chinese American architect I.M. Pei.\textsuperscript{420} In a cartoon editorial published in the \textit{Honolulu Advertiser} after Johnson’s visit, a caricature of the Vice President is depicted attempting to bottle the “aloha spirit” because he wanted to send it to countries around the world.\textsuperscript{421} It seemed that Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism would be a matter of Cold War foreign policy.

![Cartoon of Vice President attempting to bottle aloha spirit](image)

\textbf{Figure 14}: This cartoon appeared in the \textit{Honolulu Advertiser} on May 10, 1961 following Johnson’s visit to the East-West Center. Artist: Harry Lyons. Photo by A. Krattiger

Shortly after the Center’s establishment, a Consultive Meeting was held in Honolulu in late February 1961. Its purpose was to bring in advisors from the continental U.S. to meet with EWC officials in order to evaluate the Center’s initial progress and make recommendations for its future.\textsuperscript{422} At the conclusion of the meeting, a report was published by the University of Hawai‘i, which among other things described why

\begin{itemize}
  \item Pei is most famous for designing The Louvre in Paris, France.
  \item \textit{Honolulu Advertiser}, May 10, 1961.
  \item Participants included academics from University of Oregon, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Columbia University, University of Puerto Rico, Stanford, and Harvard (and people from the Ford Foundation)
\end{itemize}
Hawai‘i was an appropriately symbolic place for the East-West Center. The report largely repeated the same tropes that had been so effective in gaining support for statehood (chapter one) and spread around the world in an effort to gain Cold War credibility (chapter two). The report celebrated Hawai‘i as a “brilliant symbol of the day by day success of the democratic processes” in the United States. It boasted that the new state provided a “tangible demonstration” of the cooperation accomplished in Hawai‘i and potentially achievable throughout the United States. Hawai‘i was a “living community laboratory,” it boasted, with an active role to play in the development of democratic society. According to University of Hawai‘i President Laurence Snyder, who welcomed guests to the meeting, what made Hawai‘i remarkably suited for the Center was Hawai‘i’s long history of accepting newcomers. Referring to this as the “aloha spirit,” he explained there was no reason why people from all Asian countries could not come to Hawai‘i and feel completely accepted and learn about each other with minimum friction. Snyder further explained that the “aloha spirit” of the EWC and State of Hawai‘i were “one and the same.” His comments demonstrate the interconnected goals of the two movements, but also the belief that Hawai‘i’s role was to serve larger national goals during the Cold War.

The promise of the Center, the report continued, was not just formed on speculation or casual goodwill, but came “naturally” out of Hawai‘i’s refreshing climate, “innately friendly people,” and an “extraordinary social mixture of several nationalities.” These kinds of comments were predictable because they reflected common themes persistent throughout Hawai‘i’s colonial historiography, which has insisted that “Hawaiians”—from the arrival of Captain Cook and Christian missionaries, to the overthrow of their Queen and annexation, to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and statehood—accepted all newcomers and wanted American protection. The trope of Hawaiian hospitality has been constant yet it has not been without contention. For those who see the U.S. as an occupier, particularly Native Hawaiians, the very act of Americans inviting additional guests (the State Department, tourists, the military, etc.)—

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423 Report on Progress,” University of Hawai‘i, March 1, 1961; Box 2, Folder EWC 1961, RG 59, NACP.
424 Laurence Snyder, “Welcoming Remarks,” National Consultive Meeting, February 27, 1961; Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, folder EWC; RG 59, NACP.
whom Hawaiians have not given permission to invite—is an imperial gesture. Similarly, the misappropriation of the Hawaiian concept of “aloha” to represent Hawaiian contentment and hospitality has been used to attract groups like tourists, soldiers, and foreign diplomats during the Cold War. At the EWC Consultive Meeting, haole and Asian settlers welcomed the mostly white Washington diplomats, bureaucrats, and academics to Hawai‘i. They told the new visitors about “Hawaiian hospitality,” but in the absence of Native Hawaiian participants to validate these claims and welcome the guests themselves, they used the Hawaiian concept of “aloha” to stand in for Hawaiians and their generous hospitality.

The civil rights discourse mobilized by statehood and the EWC—which emphasized the success of Asian Americans and ability of white Americans to live harmoniously among them—marginalized Native Hawaiian sovereignty. Candace Fujikani’s examination of Asian settler colonialism is helpful for explaining the contradicting claims of civil rights and indigenous rights in Hawai‘i’s colonial context. She explains:

[E]thnic histories written about Asians in Hawai‘i demonstrate an investment in the ideal of American democracy that is ideologically at odds with indigenous critiques of U.S. colonialism . . . [T]hey recount Asian histories of oppression and resistance in Hawai‘i, erecting a multicultural ethnic studies framework that ends up reproducing the colonial claims made in white settler historiography.  

The significance of Hawai‘i’s Cold War story—which emphasized that statehood finally rectified the exclusion of Asians from full participation in American democracy—legitimates both Asians’ claims to winning civil rights and Americans’ claims of honoring civil rights, all while ideologically transforming the violence of American colonialism into “democracy.” Therefore, the mobilization of civil rights in place of indigenous rights has sustained U.S. imperialism in Hawai‘i.

It is also worth pointing out that the very concept of the East-West Center figuratively and symbolically erases Hawaiian people and history from the configuration. Arif Dirlik explains that geopolitical terms like the “Pacific” and “Pacific Rim” are

426 Ibid., 3.
contested sites for power where the native peoples themselves are lost and “erased from history” while those in power seek to reconstitute the region in their image.\textsuperscript{427} The Cold War concept of the East-West binary works similarly because it emphasizes the global competition between the East and West, but erases the people in the middle—the Hawaiians in this case. The concept behind creating the EWC—based on ideas that gained traction during statehood debates—was that Asian Americans in Hawai‘i could be tapped as goodwill ambassadors to showcase their success in “America” and defend American equality and democracy. Related was the idea that whites in Hawai‘i had effectively demonstrated their ability to live harmoniously among many ethnic groups, making them strategic counterpoints to racial segregationists on the continent. Nowhere in the concept of the East-West Center were Hawaiians necessary. For example, when Governor Quinn wrote to Secretary of State Christian Herter about Hawai‘i’s “enthusiastic support” for the EWC, he described the people of Hawai‘i as “both Asian and Occidental peoples” and described Hawai‘i as getting “its cultural inheritance” from Asia, Polynesia, and the Occident.\textsuperscript{428} Quinn’s phrases implied that the people of Hawai‘i hailed only from Asia and Euro-America and he only mentioned Polynesia only in terms of where Hawai‘i inherited its culture, as if Hawaiians no longer existed in Hawai‘i. Quinn’s remarks also implied that Hawai‘i was no more Hawaiian or Polynesian than it was American or Asian. Washington’s Cold War conceptualization of Hawai‘i was that it was uniquely and simultaneously Asian and American: for Asians, Hawai‘i offered a glimpse of America; for Americans, Hawai‘i offered a glimpse of Asia. Lost in this conceptualization are Hawai‘i and Hawaiians.

\textbf{Avoiding Claims of Imperialism and Propaganda}

When EWC Interim Director Murray Turnbull spoke to attendees at the Consultive Meeting in early 1961, he responded to what he perceived to be a general over-emphasis on what Asian students would learn about/from America/ns and not enough about what American students would learn about/from Asia/ns. He reminded attendees of the reciprocal nature of the term “mutual understanding:”

\textsuperscript{428} William Quinn to Christian Herter, October 19, 1959; Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC 1960; RG 59, NACP.}
We desire to utilize every useful means we can . . . so that not only we at the University become better acquainted with them but that we in the U.S. may have a much better understanding of the areas of the Pacific and the people of the Asian nations. We have insisted that it be as important in the objective of the Center that we obtain an understanding of who the peoples of Asia are . . . as that they should gain such knowledge of us. This, without question, underlies all of the organization of the Center.429

Many agreed with Turnbull’s efforts to avoid the EWC becoming a hegemonic, one-sided, one-way institution. Dr. Edward Weidner, one of the participants invited to the meeting, representing the Institute of Research on Overseas Programs at Michigan State University, wrote to Philip Coombs that he agreed the Center should emphasize mutuality in dealing with Asia, not the helping of “our little brown brothers.”430 Dr. Claude Buss of Stanford University opportunely pointed out that as a result of admitting Hawai‘i as the fiftieth state, “the Far East became the Near West.”431 Buss’s geopolitical mapping of the East and West was certainly optimistic about Hawai‘i’s potential, but he was also sensitive to what he termed the “political implications.”432 He explained:

Asian governments are allergic to outside interference of any description; perhaps it is the heritage of what they call the Age of Imperialism . . . The Center must not be identified as an arm of American political policy; nor should it lend itself unwittingly to the ambitions of politicians who might be seeking every opportunity to muster support in their exercise of power. The control of students desiring to go abroad is a factor in the politics of some Asian countries.433

Buss’s comments cautioned EWC staff about the potential backlash that could result from too closely aligning with official U.S. foreign policy abroad. He also urged that it remain detached from Washington so that politicians would not use the Center specifically to achieve their foreign policy goals.

429 Murray Turnbull, “Welcoming remarks,” National Consultive Meeting, February 27- March 1, 1961, Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC, RG 59, NACP.
430 Edward Weidner to Philip Coombs, March 23, 1961, Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files; Box 2, Folder EWC 1961, RG 59, NACP.
431 Claude Buss, “Relations with Nations of Asia and the Pacific,” Consultive Meeting, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary; Box 2, Folder EWC 1961, RG 59, NACP.
432 Ibid.
433 Ibid.
In contrast, many mainland participants thought that the Center needed to be aligned with the State Department because, after all, it was a federally-funded Cold War diplomatic project created by Congress. They repeatedly urged the EWC to maintain its national and global character. Some proposed that it needed to be national institution, while others focused on the creation of a national advisory board with federal assistance in planning and executing activities. At least one participant expressed concern that the Center would be used as a device to expand the University of Hawai‘i at federal taxpayers’ expense. Participants generally agreed that careful consideration was required to balance Washington’s foreign policy objectives in Hawai‘i’s EWC.

While it may have been assumed by many, particularly national politicians, that the EWC was specifically intended for U.S. foreign policy purposes, others disagreed about its purpose and format. Some in Hawai‘i were proud to showcase their model of multiculturalism; others were skeptical about the connection between the Center and the Department of State. Some worried that the primary motivation for the EWC was global competition, not mutual cooperation. An editorial cartoon published in the Honolulu Advertiser on August 4, 1960 demonstrates an early concern that the EWC was set up to compete with the People’s Friendship University in Moscow, which was established only three months prior to the EWC. The cartoon depicts a turtle [the East-West Center] fiercely chasing after a hare [the Friendship University.] The Soviet counterpart, named after Patrice Lumumba, recruited students from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The article that accompanied the cartoon reported that the Soviet’s “big red school house” was scheduled to open in the fall and its author warned readers that the U.S. was falling behind. Another editorial published in the Honolulu Advertiser expressed anxiousness.

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434 Summary of Proceedings, National Consultive Meeting, February 27- March 1, 1961, Secretary of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, Box 2, Folder EWC, RG 59 (General Records of the Dept of State).
435 Dr. Benjamin Fine, “Soviets Ahead in Training Race,” Honolulu Advertiser, August 4, 1960. There was even concern about the Soviet’s recruitment of African students. In a public hearing in June 1960, William Wachter, Vice President of the University of Hawai‘i, said that EWC students would be drawn from Asia and the Pacific and “hopefully Africa.” Memorandum from Francis Colligan to Donald Ferguson, June 28, 1960; Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; Box 2, folder EWC 1960; RG 59, NACP. The State Department considered the suitability of providing scholarships for Africans and Latin Americans (like the Soviet Union did). It was the recommendation of the legal advisor in 1961 that because the definitions of East, West, and Asia and the Pacific in the Mutual Security Act (of 1960) were ambiguous and “undefined,” it was difficult to determine if the Act could refer to those from Africa and Latin America. He
about getting Hawai‘i’s goodwill project into orbit, while drawing parallels between the Cold War space race and battle over the hearts and minds. The accompanying article described that Hawai‘i took an “implied pledge” to be “the causeway between America and the Orient” when it accepted statehood. In other words, the writer saw it as Hawai‘i’s duty to act as ambassadors between the East and the West; at the same time they suggested that statehood would not have been possible without the Cold War. Both cartoons emphasized the perceived importance of the EWC and linked it directly to Cold War policy objectives.

![Cartoon Image](image)

Figure 15: This cartoon appeared in the Honolulu Advertiser on August 4, 1960. Artist: Harry Lyons. Photo by A. Krattiger

concluded that Africa could not be considered East or West, and only countries in Latin America that border the Pacific Ocean could be considered West. He then went on to conclude, quite oddly, that if the term West was not restricted to the U.S., then West would geographically and culturally include Latin America and “perhaps Africa as well.” Having said this, however, he concluded that it was not the intent of Congress to authorize grants to Africans and Latin Americans. In his assessment, he saw no reason that the Smith-Mundt Act or Fulbright Act could not be used to provide grants to these students, even if they were used to study at the EWC. Fred T. Teal to Abram Chayes, April 11, 1961; Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; Box 2, folder EWC 1961; RG 59, NACP.

In the article that accompanied the first cartoon, University of Hawai‘i Economics professor Robert Kamins offered his own comparison of the EWC to the Friendship University. He defended the EWC by charging that the Soviet institution was more focused on government indoctrination and control than the EWC. Kamins spoke about visiting the university twice and talking with many students. His conclusions were that the Soviet program was directly tied up with their government, focused on technical training (engineering and medicine), and not as much “cultural exchange” as the EWC. The biggest difference, according to him, was that the EWC was bringing foreign scholars to Hawai‘i in order for Americans to learn something of their civilization.\footnote{“UH Professor: Russian ‘E-W Center’ Arm of Kremlin,” \textit{Honolulu Advertiser}, September 20, 1961.} This difference set Hawai‘i’s EWC apart from the Soviet’s version. However, the two institutions certainly had many similarities and Washington officials were very cognizant of the fact that the two could easily be compared. Washington maintained that the
American institution was benevolent, while the Soviet one was imperialistic and totalitarian.438

In October 1961, noted author and war correspondent Richard Tregaskis offered some of the harshest criticism of the EWC and said the U.S. was not doing enough to compete with the Soviet’s Friendship University. Speaking to the Hospital Association of Hawai’i in a Waikīkī hotel, he suggested that the federal government was not investing enough resources into the EWC to adequately compete. He also criticized what he interpreted to be America’s lethargic responses to the Soviet Union. He said that Americans were “acting like scared rabbits” and that “Khrushchev must be laughing.” One of his suggestions was that the U.S. should invest much more money into making the EWC a central part of the Cold War “idea selling contest.”439 A week after Tregaskis’ comments, the Institute for American Studies sponsored a panel discussion with him and two East-West Center students for the television program “Free For All.” The program was televised on KHVH-TV, produced by the American Studies Institute, and moderated by Professor Gerry Stuart Brown. Tregaskis repeated his criticism that the EWC had “bungled it.” Moderator Brown defended the Center by explaining that it was caught in the grips of a democratic process and he reminded people that Americans could not even agree among themselves on how to best promote good relations with Asia.440

A couple months later, the EWC was again accused of not adequately responding to Cold War challenges. Brooklyn Congressman John Rooney, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee for the State Department, reignited the firestorm of publicity when he suggested that the EWC was accepting “left wing” “foul balls” into the program. His opinion was that the Center was not properly screening applicants and because of it, some students were coming to the EWC just to “stir up trouble.”441 To add to the controversy, three months after Rooney’s disparaging remarks, Newsweek published an article entitled “Trouble in Hawai’i.” It was based largely on information

438 One concern related to the name of the EWC. Some suggested that the name too explicitly referred to the two opposing Cold War powers. See Joanne Braunberns, “Asians Urge Non-Political E-W Choice,” Honolulu Advertiser, December 25, 1960.
Tregaskis had provided the magazine so it was largely a rehashing of his earlier complaints; however, the magazine referred to the EWC as “little more than an educational stepchild of second-rank university.” Newsweek published the article in anticipation of a forthcoming State Department report marking the Center’s first year. Referring to criticism that would be published in the forthcoming report, Newsweek cited “administrative rigidity” of Center officials, an inefficient student screening process, and the Center’s tangled relationships with the university. The article also referred to a public memorandum—written by EWC students and published in Hawai’i’s newspapers—which criticized both the reputation of the Center and University. Both the chancellor of the EWC (Alexander Spoehr) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Cultural Affairs (Philip Coombs) wrote letters to the editor defending the EWC and criticizing the magazine for inaccurate reporting.

443 Examples cited were a student who was forced to live on campus away from his family and a Filipino student who arrived in Honolulu to study judicial administration only to find out that the EWC offered no courses on the subject.
444 Reginald Rajapakse, president of the student association, was one of the contributors who said that “Hawai’i is known in Asia as the playground of the Pacific. Back home, if you say you are studying in Hawai’i, they laugh at you.” The article speculated that “this friction was especially embarrassing to the State Department because the Center is inevitably compared with Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow (enrollment: 3,000 students) and the Foreign Institute in Peking (more than 20,000 students) which seem to operate far more smoothly.” The new chancellor quickly wrote a response to the article. He defended and clarified the accusations, but spent a bulk of his letter responding to accusations that the Center attempted to stifle criticism. He wrote that in response to the public memorandum, acting chancellor Murray Turnbull thanked the ten students involved and assured them that he had examined their concerns carefully.
445 Alexander Spoehr to Newsweek, April 9, 1962, East-West Center Files, RG 84, NACP; “Asian Students’ Pride in East-West Center Related,” Honolulu Advertiser, May 9, 1962.
Figure 17: As this editorial cartoon published in the Honolulu Advertiser on June 24, 1962 suggests, residents of Hawai‘i had heard about Tregaskis and Rooney’s criticisms, as well as the Newsweek article. Artist: Harry Lyons. Photo by A. Krattiger

It is safe to assume that Rooney was not the only one concerned about the screening procedures for EWC students, although it is unclear how many shared his concerns. Considering how widespread assumptions were about Hawai‘i’s proclivity to communism in the decade before statehood, it should not be surprising that some would continue to harbor doubts about Hawai‘i’s loyalty and potential to live up to its full Cold War potential. It remains unclear how concerned Washington and the State Department were about the students recruited by the EWC, but there is certainly evidence that they wanted to assign their own staff members to keep an eye on things in Hawai‘i. This, of course, would be risky because it would jeopardize the State Department’s efforts to maintain a separate—and credible—public identity aimed at cultural exchange and not foreign policy.

On at least two occasions, reports that the State Department placed foreign service operatives at the EWC surfaced. One was Dr. Seymour Lutzky, who had spent the last ten years working for the CIA and was appointed to be the Assistant Director of the Institute for American Studies under Patrick Hazard. He was assigned to teach “Arts in America”
and was also in charge of Foreign Student Liaison for the Institute. Hazard suspected, as did many others, that Lutzky was specifically placed in this role to monitor both the EWC and the IAS for “lefties” and “reds.” Another example was Howard P. Jones who served as the EWC’s Chancellor from 1965-1968. Before coming to the EWC, Jones had worked for the State Department in Germany, Taiwan, and Indonesia; then was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Far East Affairs; and then the ambassador to Indonesia. After the EWC, he went on to work at the Hoover Institute. He was very much a State Department figure and headed the EWC at a particularly precarious time when the Vietnam War was become a major liability for the U.S. government and EWC. Many felt that Jones had viewed the EWC in terms of what it could do for the Department of State and many saw this as a significant conflict of interest. Similar accusations came from students themselves at the EWC who claimed that the Center was “infiltrated” with State Department staff.

The Peace Corps

Washington wanted to draw as much attention as possible to the cultural diplomacy taking place in Hawai‘i, but it did not want this to be mistaken for propaganda. The United States also did not want its Cold War military expansion which was aimed at containing the Soviet Union and communism to be criticized as imperialist. Recognizing cultural diplomacy’s potential and militarism’s limitations, the Kennedy administration sought to appeal to the people of the developing world directly by asserting the “New Frontier’s” chivalry, charity, and volunteerism. Early Peace Corps Malaysia volunteer, James Gould, saw a very clear connection between the Peace Corps, Cold War, and the long overdue criticisms suggested in The Ugly American. He was

446 East-West Center News, December 1961, 9; EWC Files, University of Hawai‘i Archives.
447 This is according to a personal email exchange between me and Hazard and public comments written about this on his blog http://myglobaley.e.blogspot.com. I have also discussed Dr. Lutzky with other professors at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa; several have acknowledged that these claims were well-founded and not really debated.
448 This is described in more detail in Everett Kleinjans, interview by Phyllis Tabusa and Terese Leber, March 20, 2006; East-West Center Oral History Project Collection, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawai‘i.
449 Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 503.
optimistic that peaceful understandings could be achieved through cultural diplomacy and personal interactions:

The Peace Corps is a direct reaction to the novel *The Ugly American*. [It] made the American public aware of the defects of the overseas programs of the U.S. government, particularly those in Southeast Asia. Those of us who had worked in the government in the area had been conscious of these shortcomings for some time. It required the shock of this social novel not only to draw attention to the defects, but to suggest positive remedies. Although nearly everyone has forgotten that the Ugly American was a positive character, he became the prototype of what the overseas American should be. He should work with people, appreciate their culture, and speak their language. 450

The Peace Corps told Americans what was best about their country: the promise of youth, humanitarianism, the pioneer spirit reborn, and America’s unwavering desire to spread democracy. 451 Similarly, *The Ugly American* was popular in part, according to Robert Dean, because of its abundant nostalgic tropes, including the American frontier myth, self-reliant pioneers fulfilling manifest destiny, and whites bringing civilization to a desolate wilderness while overcoming native savages. 452 In just the first few months after candidate Kennedy had proposed the Peace Corps, even before he was inaugurated, over 25,000 Americans sent letters to Washington inquiring about how to join the new program. The Peace Corps was overwhelmingly popular; a Gallup Poll found that 71% of Americans favored it and only 18% opposed it. 453 The idea’s immediate popularity quickly set the program into motion. The day following Kennedy’s inauguration, his brother-in-law R. Sargent Shriver was put in charge of the program. 454

Under Shriver’s recommendation, Kennedy seized on the proposed program’s popularity among young Americans and established the Peace Corps by executive order on March 1, 1961 by using contingency funds from the Mutual Security Act. 455 Shriver recommended the Peace Corps be a semi-autonomous department to avoid a political or bureaucratic identity and specifically suggested that it should not be part of the

451 Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 1.
452 Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 177.
453 Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 41.
454 Ibid., 42.
455 Ibid., 44.
International Cooperation Agency (ICA) to avoid association with the very people criticized in *The Ugly American*. He also suggested Kennedy stick with the name Peace Corps even though the State Department warned that “Corps” sounded militaristic and “Peace” too closely resembled Soviet projects such as the Peace Wall in Berlin. Kennedy quickly acted on Shriver’s recommendations and established the program under Executive Order 10924 with Shriver heading the agency. However, the Peace Corps was not made an autonomous agency and instead it was subsumed by the new Agency for International Development (USAID). Kennedy hoped this would help improve the reputation of the foreign aid system and more specifically revitalize the State Department.

The Peace Corps sought to demonstrate America’s morality at a time when frequent military intervention around the world had the potential to dominate America’s foreign policy reputation. The Peace Corps Act established three goals: to help interested countries meet their needs for trained men and women, to promote a better understanding of Americans among those it served, and to promote a better understanding of foreign people among Americans. Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman says that the U.S. was the first nation to adopt volunteerism as official foreign policy in an attempt to demonstrate an alternative to power politics. Washington hoped that the Peace Corps’ humanitarianism would provide a counterpoint to American affluence and expansion, while giving Americans pride in their country.

Like the East-West Center, the Peace Corps had to be careful about maintaining its reputation and avoiding accusations of propaganda and imperialism. From the beginning, Shriver emphasized that it would be detrimental if the Peace Corps was seen as a direct arm of the State Department and there were strict policies put into place in

456 Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 49.
457 Ibid., 45.
458 Ibid., 49. Predecessors of AID were the Mutual Security Agency, the Foreign Operations Administration, and the International Cooperation Agency. US AID was created under the Foreign Assistance Act, which was passed by Congress on September 4, 1961, at the urging of President Kennedy. See also http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html
459 Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 53.
460 Ibid., 8-9.
461 Ibid., 3.
September 1961 to keep spies out of the organization. Each applicant was required to obtain a national security clearance and screened to ensure they were not a spy for the “other side” or for the United States. Anyone who had previously worked for the CIA or married to someone who had, was automatically disqualified. Furthermore, volunteers were prohibited from joining the intelligence service for at least five years and even if they did so after five years, they could not serve in a nation where they had been trained or served as a Peace Corps volunteer. However, the U.S. Information Agency tested returning Peace Corps volunteers and offered jobs to nearly one-third of them. In 1962, Soviet Premier Khrushchev denounced the Peace Corps when he called it a “tool of imperialists.” He said the program was an “imperialist trick to maintain colonial influence.” Knowing it was incredibly risky to have CIA people representing the Peace Corps, Secretary of State Dean Rusk notified all ambassadors in countries where the Peace Corps operated in order to avoid this. Despite rumors and accusations, no Peace Corps volunteers were ever found to be linked to any foreign intelligence operation.

Despite the popularity of The Ugly American and how it inspired ordinary and unpretentious Peace Corps volunteers, there was concern about whether young college-aged Americans were mature enough to handle the task of representing America abroad. Hilo Peace Corps official John Allison recognized the problems of having the Peace Corps under the direction of the State Department, but he also wanted to make sure that relationship was mutual and civil. Even though the majority of the volunteers would have no direct contact with the department itself, Allison was worried that the two groups failed to understand each other. Specifically, he worried that PC volunteers looked at the Foreign Service as “snobbish . . . dilettantes” while the Foreign Service similarly looked down upon PC volunteers as “sentimental and naïve.” Allison was nervous that PC

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462 Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 92.
463 Ibid., 93.
464 Ibid., 118.
466 Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 94-95.
467 John M. Allison, “The Peace Corps and the State Department,” in Robert W Clopton and University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, Training Americans for Overseas Service: Criteria of Relevance (Hilo: Peace Corps Training Center, University of Hawai‘i, 1965), 32.
representatives could create devastating problems, but knew that they should not be involved in the “official relations between governments.”

Murray Turnbull, the first Director of the East West Center, had hesitancies about the basic premise and organization of the Peace Corps. Devoted to the mission of cultural exchange and reciprocity, he thought the EWC was an important model for the Peace Corps, but that the Peace Corps had a fundamental flaw. In March 1961, speaking at a National Conference on Higher Learning in Chicago, he said it was his opinion that the success of the Peace Corps would depend on a basic revision which would include a plan to bring to the U.S. from other countries young people to teach Americans something about their own countries. Turnbull advocated that both the PC and EWC should be based on reciprocity and not just Americans teaching other countries how to do things. Framing his suggestion in a Cold War context, he said this alteration would signify to other nations that the U.S. was interested in mutual development and “[did] not view itself as possessor of all of the important and useful knowledge in the world.” He continued:

It is vital for our own welfare that we acquire from other peoples knowledge and information which would assist us in our own growth. Some humility on our part, sincerely expressed, coupled with a genuine desire to acquire from others from the richness of their traditions both knowledge and ideas which would strengthen our own values, seems to me to be utterly essential. This is important if the Peace Corps is to be useful and accepted abroad as something more than an instrument of American foreign policy and an expression of self interest. The countries of the world need us no more than we need them. It is on this principle of mutual understanding that our own EWC is based.

Hawai‘i Volunteers for the Peace Corps

While the State Department was expanding its programs of cultural and international diplomacy, many in Hawai‘i realized that the same assets used for the EWC could also be used for the Peace Corps. The University of Hawai‘i displayed early interest in Peace Corps participation, in part because it had already had experience in similar training programs like the ICC in 1954 and Overseas Operations Program in 1959. The director of the Overseas Operations Program, John Stalker, in cooperation with

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468 Allison, “The Peace Corps and the State Department,” 34.
469 EWC Bulletin, March 23, 1961, East-West Center Files, 1959-1962; Box 3, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, RG 84, National Archives, NACP.
the leaders of the Associated Students of the University of Hawai‘i, created a plan of action to make Hawai‘i’s suitability evident to Kennedy’s new organization. The group talked to Governor Quinn and formed a special study committee where they highlighted characteristics they thought were assets to the Peace Corps program and would provide a kind of “realism” for volunteers on their way to Asia. These characteristics included Hawai‘i’s large non-Caucasian public school population (a good place to train teachers) as well as Hawai‘i’s public health officials and agricultural experts who had experience in Asia and most of whom had “Oriental backgrounds.”

The final efforts to secure Peace Corps training were made at the federal level by some of the same politicians who were cited after statehood for demonstrating Asian American success in Hawai‘i. Senators Hiram Fong, Oren Long, and Congressman Daniel Inouye presented Hawai‘i’s case before the Peace Corps officials in Washington. Their efforts paid off and the Hilo Peace Corps Training Center began operations in June 1962 and remained active until September 1971. Hawai‘i’s inaugural training program prepared volunteers for Sabah and Sarawak (now part of Malaysia on the island of Borneo) with later programs training those headed to the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaya, and Nepal. Approximately 1300 volunteers trained annually in Hawai‘i, totaling more than 12,000 during its nine-year history. Hooper says that by

470 John Stalker, “Peace Corps Training in Hawai‘i—Retrospect and Prospect” in Robert W Clopton and University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, Training Americans for Overseas Service: Criteria of Relevance (Hilo, Hawai‘i: Peace Corps Training Center, University of Hawai‘i, 1965), 13.
471 Ibid., 14.
472 Additional Peace Corps training centers were housed at the Northern Illinois University, Cal State College at Los Angeles, and Camp Crozier in Puerto Rico for those going to Ecuador; UCLA, Harvard, Michigan State University for those going to Nigeria; Northern Illinois University for Malaya (because of its expanding program in Malayan studies); University of Michigan for Thailand; Ohio State University for India (extensive study of the Punjabi language and Indian culture); Puerto Rico for Sierra Leone (already established ICA program); Colorado State University for Pakistan; Texas Western, Rutgers, and Arizona State for Colombia (in 1962, those going to Colombia were trained in Arizona from the Pima and Maricopa Indians on the Gila River Indian Reservation near Phoenix); and Pennsylvania State University and Puerto Rico for the Philippines. Seven Washington DC-area schools (American University, Johns Hopkins, George Washington, Catholic University, Howard University, Georgetown, and the University of Maryland) and three in Puerto Rico (the University of Puerto Rico, Inter American University, and Catholic University) pooled their resources to make their faculties and facilities available for those heading to Latin America. Trainings were held in the continental U.S., in U.S. colonies, and on Indian reservations. Peace Corps News, Vol. 1, No. 3, November 1961 and Vol. 2, No. 3, March 1962.
the time these training programs were phased out in favor of “in country” training, more Peace Corps volunteers had been trained in Hawai‘i than at any other single location in the nation.475

In order to provide a local environment that resembled the country they would be living in, like The Ugly American encouraged, Peace Corps volunteers in Hawai‘i needed to experience local conditions. Officials decided that it was important to keep the training center locale away from Honolulu with its proximity to Waikīkī and tourist attractions. The island of Hawai‘i was considered ideal because of its rural character, largely non-Caucasian population, topographical diversity, and the communities’ willingness and enthusiasm for hosting and teaching mainlanders heading to Asia.476 The Hilo campus could not accommodate everyone so they found separate sites close to Hilo. The recently abandoned Hilo County Hospital, for example, was converted to handle two hundred trainees at a time.477 In addition, a remote site in Waipi‘o Valley served as a “transition camp” that offered primitive living conditions modeled after the “pace and tempo” of rural Southeast Asian life in an almost completely unpopulated jungle area where they could “create [their] own style of a Southeast Asian village.”478 There were also auxiliary

anniversary-peace-corps.html. The figure of 12,000 cited in Lauer’s article is significantly higher than numbers cited by Paul Hooper. He says in all, some 5,000 people passed through Hawai‘i’s program.475 Hooper, Elusive Destiny, 154.


477 Ibid., 16. There was a little known Peace Corps memorial located at the old Hilo County Hospital site near Rainbow Falls. Apparently, upon hearing of Kennedy’s assassination, members of the Peace Corps training units donated a dollar each from their $10.50 weekly salary to pay for a plaque bearing the words “And So, My Fellow Americans, Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You, Ask What You Can Do For Your Country,” from his inaugural address. The memorial was dedicated to the memory of Kennedy on Christmas Day, 1963. On November 19, 2011, the monument was relocated and rededicated in front of the University of Hilo’s Mookini Library during the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps. Dan Boylan, “Peace Corps Reunion’s Significance,” Midweek, November 30, 2011. See also: http://www.rpcvhi.org/monument

478 Stalker, 11; 18-19. The site of Waipi‘o Valley is very interesting. In the late 1800s there were more than 2000 inhabitants of Waipi‘o Valley (many rice and taro farmers), but tsunamis in 1946 and 1960 caused many inhabitants to flee. Since the 1960s, reports claim that numerous “hippies” and Vietnam War veterans have moved into Waipi‘o Valley. It is difficult to accurately estimate the number of inhabitants and difficult to ascertain their objectives, however there are reports of many Vietnam War veterans attracted to its remoteness and similarity to the jungles of Vietnam. Interestingly, there is a non-profit group called “Veterans Hawaiian Healing Project.” Formed in 2009, but in its “embryonic stage,” their aim is to “provide a retreat and readjustment experience for combat veterans of Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, who are suffering from PTSD.” The projected stay for these veterans would be 2-4 months, would provide group and individual therapy, recreational therapy, and vocational guidance. They plan to build eight small units and two larger units, in addition to green houses and a large community center. Their target population is Hawaiian vets who would participate in agricultural apprentice programs in traditional Hawaiian taro cultivation, tropical agriculture, and greenhouse horticulture. Their website reports that there
sites near Hilo at Kurtistown, O‘okala, Hakalau, Honohina, Pepe‘ekeo School, Honomu, Ninole, and Waiakea-Uka. On the Kona side of the island, the former Keauhou School and Kohala Girls School (now the Bond Estate) were also used.⁴⁷⁹ On Moloka‘i, there was also a training site at Ho‘olehua. After statehood, Hawai‘i was celebrated for its inclusion in the “First World,” but the decision to train Peace Corps volunteers in rural Hawai‘i depended on its resemblance to the “Third World.” Dr. Williams, a Peace Corps Borneo specialist from California, said that Hawai‘i’s climate and plateaus were almost identical to North Borneo and the university’s buildings looked “just like” the nation’s government buildings.⁴⁸⁰ Hawai‘i’s exceptionalism during the Cold War was based on it occupying a liminal space between the West and East and First World and Third World, a place where one stops on their way to the other.

Figure 18: Peace Corps volunteers in a taro patch practicing carabao plowing in 1969. Photo by Paul Conklin. Source: National Archives. Permissions: Michael Thomas http://www.flickr.com/photos/rpcvhi/

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Curriculum topics in Hawai‘i’s Peace Corps training villages were aimed at easing the transition for American volunteers headed to Asian countries. Topics included: farm mechanics; building with locally available materials; community health and sanitation; water purification; malaria prevention; plumbing; community education and communication. Other skills included: net fishing; fish pond construction; care, feeding, and butchering of animals and poultry; tropical agriculture; soil conservation; pest control; sanitary food techniques and preparation; and food preservation. The objectives of this curriculum were to prove that a basic Asian diet could be both palatable and nutritious to a Westerner unaccustomed to such foods, to ensure the trainees knew how to prepare such foods in a healthy and appetizing manner, and to provide basic knowledge necessary for the trainee to carry out a simple food education program.\footnote{David Englund, “Transition Training: the Curriculum Design” in Robert W Clopton and University of Hawai‘i at Hilo, \textit{Training Americans for Overseas Service: Criteria of Relevance} (Hilo, Hawai‘i: Peace Corps Training Center, University of Hawai‘i, 1965): 204.}

In some ways, Peace Corps volunteers resembled missionaries because their goal abroad was to teach people in less-developed nations the ways of the more “superior”
developed world. Some volunteers’ desire to help improve the lives of people in the Third World “implied that [they] knew how to live a better life.” For those that wanted to help, yet also wanted to respect the culture of the people they were helping, “it was not often possible to do both.”482 Similar to missionaries, PC volunteers often had very little understanding of the culture or people they would be “serving.” In the very beginning of the PC training, specific goals were unclear and trainers often did not know much about the Third World themselves.483 In spite of The Ugly American’s insistence on learning the local language, language skills were the trickiest because most volunteers had less than three months of training before going abroad. As a result, very few had working knowledge of the country’s local language.484

Although the majority of Peace Corps volunteers lacked the religious zealousness characteristic of missionaries, some people did see similar objectives. For example, an article in Catholic World in 1969 described that many Peace Corps volunteers joined because of “a realization that man is lovable and redeemable, and a conviction that each man is his brother’s keeper.”485 Most volunteers did not seek to spread religion, but they did represent an organization that in part sought assimilation through doctrines of nation-building and anticommunism. However, Fischer’s thorough analysis of participants’ own stories, evaluations, and interviews throughout the 1960s reveals that they showed very little loyalty toward the government agency they represented and they sought to separate themselves from previous “inflexible [and] old-fashioned bureaucrac[ies].”486 This did not mean that they conceived the program to be completely ahistorical or a radical departure from America’s past; in fact, it was quite the opposite. The agency’s leadership believed they were sending American youth into the new frontier of the Third World and training programs were meant to “create a cadre of old-stock pioneers from the American youth of the 1960s.”487 Recruiting brochures specifically conjured up “pioneer life” and recruits consistently expressed firmly held beliefs in individualism.488 This individualism led them to “reevaluate” many of their previously held assumptions and create their own

483 Ibid., 34.
484 Ibid., 36-7.
485 Quoted in Ibid., 62.
486 Ibid., 104
487 Ibid., 46.
488 Ibid., 48, 104.
new understandings of both the Third World and liberal international development policies.\textsuperscript{489}

The Cold War and the University

Both the EWC and the Peace Corps sparked debates about what the “behind the scenes” objectives were and whether or not there was any CIA involvement. Oftentimes the lines between military and academic purposes were not so clear. The University of Hawai‘i, with local government assistance, had considerable experience conducting research and training programs for the federal government, even before 1959. The ICC provided training and hospitality for Asian diplomats, politicians, military leaders, and non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. The State Department indicated interest in utilizing some of Hawai‘i’s resources—including area studies and Asian language programs at UH—for federal, international and non-governmental organizations such as Title VI of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) “Third Major Project” in 1958 (aimed at facilitating international understanding and cooperation).\textsuperscript{490} UH had already contracted with the Department of the Army with the Ryukyus (Okinawa), the International Educational Exchange Program (IES), and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). In addition, both IES and ICA already maintained reception centers and offices in Honolulu.\textsuperscript{491}

The utilization of Hawai‘i’s university resources after statehood reflected national trends during the Cold War. Richard Lewontin explains that “both by its material manifestations and through the ideological atmosphere that it was instrumental in creating, the Cold War was responsible for an unprecedented and explosive expansion of

\textsuperscript{489} Fischer, \textit{Making Them Like Us}, 3.

\textsuperscript{490} When the EWC was created, they recognized that they needed more scholarly research done on critical cultural, political, and economic problems of the Asian/Pacific region. This included linguistic studies of little known Asian languages. This was a goal already identified by the 1958 National Defense Education Act which recognized that additional federal money needed to be spent promoting particular fields in an effort to compete with the Soviet Union. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was passed in 1958 in response to the Soviet launch of Sputnik. Title VI of NDEA was the “Language Development” section which focused on uncommonly taught languages. It supported language area centers such as National Resource Centers (NRCs), Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (FLAS), and International Research and Studies (IRS).

\textsuperscript{491} East-West Center files, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library, Hawaiian Collection.
Many of the contracts between the University of Hawai‘i and the federal government had dual academic and military functions, but it is not entirely clear exactly what the contracts included because much of the research has been classified. It is also worth stating that the projects the federal government considered beneficial for its reputation were widely advertised; those that could be harmful were not. For example, it is much easier to find information on the EWC and Peace Corps than it is on military training or dangerous research.

It is clear that Cold War interest in Hawai‘i brought together a whole slew of academics, researchers, and diplomats to the university. Between 1966 and 1977 the university engaged in over one hundred contracts with the U.S. military, worth over $20 million. Some of these contracts included polytoxin research, herbicide and jungle defoliation research, anthrax testing, and anti-submarine activities. They involved a dozen academic departments, eighty-seven professors, and hundreds of assistants. There were many contracts that were less explicitly connected to the military, although many had specific foreign policy objectives. In 1959, the legislature created an integrated Asian Studies and Overseas Operations program, headed by John Stalker, which combined academic and practical training for those who intended to go into the Foreign Service. The Overseas Operations Program organization would be an impetus for Hawai‘i’s Peace Corps training in 1962 and the success of that program would lead to another contract with Agency for International Development (AID) in 1966 to train personnel assigned to Vietnam and other Asian nations. This established the Far East Training Center (later called the Asia Training Center) in Honolulu, but it was “quietly dropped in 1969.” Training was not limited to American diplomats and agents. From 1962-1965, the EWC helped organize “small arms training” for Indonesian military officers, just before the coup against Sukarno. The EWC also established relationships

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493 Noel Kent, *Hawai‘i Islands Under the Influence*, 145.
494 Paul Hooper, *Elusive Destiny*, 147, 154. Hooper explains that a “combination of University politics and Washington’s decision to deemphasize the role of developmental assistance in the Vietnam conflict” led to its short term existence (156).
with the Rand Corporation and the Asia Foundation—an NGO primarily financed by the CIA—but the details of all these collaborations are not clear.\textsuperscript{495}

By the late 1950s, behavioral and social sciences played a central role in many major institutions. Sometimes this research would be used to pursue foreign policy interests. For example, Sargent Shriver insisted that the most advanced concepts of behavioral sciences be used to select, train, and assess Peace Corps volunteers.\textsuperscript{496} Psychological techniques were used to define the best volunteers and disqualify those inflicted with certain maladies such as psychoses, neuroses, and “weak personalities.”\textsuperscript{497} Social scientists had been long interested in studying ethnic relations in Hawai‘i’s “human laboratory.” Most notably, the Social Research Laboratory was established at the university in the 1930s. It was begun by University of Chicago-trained sociologist Dr. Romanzo Adams who became the university’s first professor of sociology.\textsuperscript{498} In 1934 when Adams retired, Dr. Andrew Lind took it over. During World War II, when Hawai‘i was under martial law, the laboratory was converted to the War Research Laboratory and focused on issues like morale, race relations, and labor. After the war, it remained devoted to studying racial issues in Hawai‘i. Statehood brought renewed interest in studying what Lawrence Fuchs would refer to as an “experiment in race relations and colonial administration.”\textsuperscript{499} A Professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University, Fuchs was appointed Director of the Peace Corps in the Philippines in 1961. Before that, Fuchs spent 1958-9 in Hawai‘i as a Social Science Research Council grantee studying ethnic tension and accommodation. During this time, Fuchs wrote his comprehensive book—\textit{Hawai‘i Pono}—on Hawai‘i’s political and economic conditions. Academic and military research and training was often connected even if the connections were not publicly disclosed or evident. Social scientists also played important roles in government policy during war and peacetime. In Hawai‘i, during the 1950s and 1960s, there was tremendous exchange happening between the University of Hawai‘i, the Territory and State of Hawai‘i, the State Department, the U.S. military, and CIA.

\textsuperscript{496} Fischer, \textit{Making Them Like Us}, 70.
\textsuperscript{497} Ibid., 70.
\textsuperscript{498} http://libweb.Hawai‘i.edu/libdept/archives/univarch/colsch/rasl/bio.htm
\textsuperscript{499} Lawrence Fuchs, \textit{Hawai‘i Pono}, vii.
Teaching American Democracy and Fighting Racism

The three stated goals of the Peace Corps were to (1) provide trained manpower, (2) promote better understanding of Americans, and (3) increase American knowledge of other peoples and cultures. The third part was something volunteers were expected to gain while abroad, but trainers often focused on this goal in the training before they left because it was the easiest and because they feared that naïve young Americans would damage America’s reputation if they were unable to engage in political debates. Early critics, including Richard Nixon, disparaged it as nothing more than a “kiddie crusade.” To defend American values, trainees would need an understanding of American history and democracy, including the “factors which have made it possible for the United States to rise to a position of world leadership and great wealth.” In order to advocate American democracy as a counter to communism, students needed an understanding of Marxism and communist theory. Fischer says that although the Cold War was “de-emphasized” by Shriver and other PC officials, volunteers were given a “heavy dose of Cold War propaganda during their training,” particularly in the early years. They were taught to accept all values except communism, and to reject communism but accept those who might believe in it. It is interesting that the training approach to learning about other cultures was ultimately tied in practice to learning about one’s own culture in order to promote it. The order that the objectives were listed also made it clear that mutual understanding was secondary to promoting American exceptionalism.

Since the Peace Corps and EWC shared so many overlapping goals and concerns, there was significant overlap between staff members in Hawai‘i that served both programs. The clearest example of this was the creation of the Institute for American History and Culture. Since the Peace Corps and EWC shared so many overlapping goals and concerns, there was significant overlap between staff members in Hawaiʻi that served both programs.
Studies (IAS).\textsuperscript{505} The IAS was established at the EWC in the fall of 1961 to help explain the nature of American civilization to EWC students from Asia.\textsuperscript{506} The EWC wanted to make sure that Asians studying in Hawai‘i were not just welcomed and made comfortable, but also learned the principles of American culture and values. In addition to educating Asians about America, the Institute also served Americans in both the EWC and PC. For them, the IAS would educate them in American history and democracy so they would be prepared to defend American values while abroad. The Institute’s first Director was Patrick Hazard; others involved in its earliest inception included Assistant Director Seymour Lutzky and Professors James M. McCutcheon, Stuart Gerry Brown, and Reuel Denney. The field of American Studies (usually called American Civilization at this time) predated Hawai‘i’s own Institute, so the EWC recruited professors from the U.S. mainland who had experience in well-established American Studies programs like the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse, Brandies, and the University of Chicago. Those recruited to help establish the IAS in Hawai‘i helped link it to the historical roots of the discipline, but Hawai‘i’s own Institute for American Studies originated as a Cold War institution.

The new Institute for American Studies sought to attract a wide group of students. Its programs included weekly screenings of American television, public lectures on American popular and mass media, conversations and debates on controversial issues such as racial segregation, modes of economic development, Americanization, colonialism, militarism, American films in Asia, nuclear war, neutralism, the Peace Corps, and others. The IAS also broadcasted a local radio program called “Studio 50” to explain American ideas and institutions.\textsuperscript{507} Some university classes were opened to all students (free of tuition), including Lutzky’s “The Arts in America,” Brown’s

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\textsuperscript{505} Later it would become the American Studies department separate from the East-West Center.

\textsuperscript{506} “News from the East-West Center,” December 1961, EWC Archives.

\textsuperscript{507} “Studio 50” ran while Dr. Patrick D. Hazard was the director of the IAS, in the fall of 1961. Hazard was recruited by sociologist David Riesman.
“Contemporary American Civilization,” Denney’s “Criticism in the Mass Media Age,” and a seminar in History and Literature. Other activities focused on exposing grantees to the diverse local culture. These events included leisure activities, art events, visits with local families in Honolulu, guided trips to stores and industrial plants to see how Americans work, and informal discussions with faculty members on their impressions of America. 508

One of the biggest challenges to teaching about American democracy during the Cold War was well-publicized stories of racial segregation and violence. EWC and Peace Corps training wanted to make sure that Americans abroad could adequately respond to questions about and criticisms of American racism. The EWC also wanted to make sure that while in Hawai’i, Asian visitors—students and diplomats—could learn about American democratic principles and experience American multiculturalism firsthand. Assuming that Asian visitors in Hawai’i, as well as Asians hosting Peace Corps volunteers, would have questions about American race relations, Peace Corps training and the IAS educated trainees so they would be prepared to answer such questions. In particular, Peace Corps training included a heavy emphasis on contemporary issues. Volunteers were taught founding documents like the Declaration of Independence, but a greater emphasis was placed on contemporary issues since they expected those topics to come up more often when living abroad. When William Sloane Coffin, one of the designers of the first Peace Corps training program, traveled to Africa in 1960, he found that “Little Rock seemed to be the best-known town in America.” 509  Students watched documentaries on civil rights and analyzed civil rights laws. They also studied American popular culture because it was considered to be the primary medium in which people around the world learned about American culture and values. 510 Fischer’s analysis found that several volunteers mentioned the “unnecessary emphasis” placed on the communism classes and described the American Studies courses as “a lot of academic garbage.” 511

508 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, Box 2, Folder EWC, RG 59, NACP.
509 Quoted in Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 28.
511 Fischer, Making Them Like Us, 65.
International criticism of racial segregation in the South had strongly influenced the movement for Hawai‘i statehood and the East-West Center, as well as the emergence of the Peace Corps. Because Kennedy saw the Peace Corps as an opportunity to repair claims of U.S. racism, he created an advisory board early on that drew on informal yet strong connections to the civil rights movement. Participants included prominent African Americans including Harry Belafonte, Benjamin Mays (President of Morehouse College), and James Robinson (Director of Crossroads Africa, one of the first American programs to send young teachers abroad). New Deal icons Eleanor Roosevelt and David Lilienthal were also on the board. The agency pledged to recruit from “every race and walk of life,” but accomplishing this would prove to be an ongoing obstacle. The first group of volunteers that went to Ghana and Nigeria reported that local Africans wondered why there were so few African Americans in the group and if this was a matter of official government policy. In response to these types of incidences, Peace Corps officials sent recruiters to black colleges with the objective to recruit as many African Americans as possible.

The EWC also faced criticism for its inability to live up to its rhetoric of racial equality. As a matter of policy, the EWC had decided not to recruit African students. The American grantees at the EWC also did not include a large number of black students. In relatively small numbers, African and African American students did come to study in Hawai‘i, however. The first African student to graduate from the University of Hawai‘i was President Barack Obama’s father, Barack H. Obama from Kenya. He was not a student at the EWC, but as an international student awarded an Afro-Asian Institute fellowship, he was familiar with the EWC and many of its students. Upon graduating and just before leaving the islands, he was asked about his experiences in Hawai‘i. Although he lived off-campus himself, he suggested that the EWC treat the visiting students more like adults and not “herd them together in dormitories.” He felt that by requiring EWC students to live in the dorm, they did not get to know the community or the way people lived in Hawai‘i. Instead, they often refrained from socializing and the various ethnic groups tended to stick together and co-existed peacefully. He said he had pleasant...

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512 Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 28.
513 Ibid., 48.
514 Ibid., 63.
memories of Hawai‘i but mixed views on the islands as an East-West meeting ground. Conceding that groups got along better in Hawai‘i than on the mainland and in parts of Africa, “Hawai‘i [was] not really a melting pot” like it claimed. He also said that discrimination did still exist in Hawai‘i. What other nations could learn from Hawai‘i, however, was that all races could work together toward common goals.515 It was not clear from Obama’s comments which groups he thought were specifically discriminated against, but his remarks did suggest that Hawai‘i’s race relations were not perfect as typically claimed.

In designing the Peace Corps, the Kennedy administration wanted to show the world that America was not a racist nation. However, the majority of its volunteers were white. The number of African American volunteers never exceeded five percent during the 1960s and even fewer American Indians joined.516 The PC leadership believed minority volunteers had a special role in building friendships and building nations in the Third World, but recruiting racial and ethnic minorities was not as easy as they had hoped.517 The agency attempted to diversify its ranks with little success. They called their Indian recruiting efforts “Operation Peace Pipe.” It was such a disaster that most of their trainees quit and one of Kennedy’s earlier chief aides criticized their efforts and “cultural insensitivity.” Only a few native recruits stayed on, while others felt that the recruiting efforts were nothing more than disingenuous attempts to promote Indian assimilation.518

It turned out the Peace Corps had little control over who signed up, but they could control how they presented the Peace Corps domestically in relation to civil rights. Sargent Shriver made clear from the beginning that no contracts would be granted to segregated institutions, nor would minority volunteers be expected to visit institutions in places where off-campus racial attitudes would interfere.519 Some officials also urged the

516 According to Fischer, the first group of volunteers recruited had only 4 African Americans, of 124 total. These numbers stayed consistent throughout the decade. By 1967, only about five percent of the total number of volunteers who had served the PC were African American; in 1968, the percentage was about one percent. Fischer explains that recruiting efforts of Native Americans were a failure, and that there were efforts to recruit Hispanics, but there are no statistics provided for Hispanic and Asian American volunteers. Fischer, Making Them Like Us, 100-101.
517 Ibid., 172.
518 Ibid., 102-3.
519 Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 64.
Peace Corps to not set up training centers anywhere in the South. In addition to recruiting as many minorities as possible, it was a priority to be selective in the white students it accepted. The Peace Corps wanted to control, as much as it could, the desired image of America. This meant seeking white men and women with no prejudices.

Officials at Hawai‘i’s Peace Corps training center advertised that Hawai‘i’s racial and ethnic diversity would be a good place to expose white Americans to the type of diversity they would encounter as a volunteer traveling abroad. Particularly for those who had little experience with minorities, they hoped that Hawai‘i would provide positive experiences interacting with non-whites and that after studying American civil rights, they would be more likely to defend civil rights abroad.

Recruiting Asian American Ambassadors

Throughout the Cold War, the State Department considered how its actions would look both domestically and globally in terms of civil rights. This attention to race had influenced the State Department’s decision to specifically recruit nonwhite ambassadors whom they hoped would hold more credibility when they spread the message that racial discrimination was improving in the U.S. and not as bad as it appeared on the news. The most well known example of this strategy was the recruitment of Louis Armstrong and other African American jazz musicians who toured throughout Asia and Africa during the Cold War. Less well known is the fact that many Asian American cultural producers were also hired by the State Department. Some taught Asian languages in the U.S. for diplomats, some wrote for USIA’s Radio Free Asia, some went on speaking tours, while others were hired to join the Goodwill Ambassadors tour of Asia as part of its cultural exchange program. Hawai‘i served a similar function because of its large nonwhite population and Hawai‘i’s recent notoriety after statehood. Christina Klein writes that Washington employed “ethnic” American ambassadors as “agents of expansion” in an effort to legitimate American expansion during the Cold War and deflect criticism from Asian and African nations. She explains that Washington valued these “ethnic Americans” as “protectors, representors, and explicators of the nation precisely

520 Hoffman, All You Need is Love, 64.
521 Ibid., 64.
522 Klein, Cold War Orientalism, 241-2.
523 Ibid., 241.
because… it sought to tap into and mobilize their ethnicity and cultural difference in support of internationalism and expansion.”

Washington felt that “ethnic” Americans had the best potential for swaying global public opinion. Hawai‘i’s reputation as a “racial melting pot” explains part of the reason that Washington looked to Hawai‘i for help. There were early calls—for example by James Michener, Bob Krauss, A. Grove Day, and the Honolulu Advertiser staff—to use Hawai‘i’s residents as “ambassadors of aloha” in Asia, particularly Asian Americans whom they felt could be more effective than haoles. It is important to point out that these ideas were most often coming from prominent white Americans, many of whom came to Hawai‘i as adults, who had interests in using Hawai‘i to shape foreign policy and enhance America’s reputation during the Cold War. As chapter two described, Michener, Krauss and Day worked in cooperation with one another, at times in connection with the State Department, USIA, and perhaps even the CIA to push for a Hawai‘i-centric Cold War policy. Speaking as an “expert” in support of a trans-Pacific airlines route, Michener said, “I think that the job of the State Department is a little easier because of Hawai‘i.”

In place of sending “ordinary” Asian Americans from Hawai‘i to Asia to speak on behalf of American multiculturalism, Washington representatives were strategically mobilized in their place. For example, EWC staff members traveled throughout Asia to create awareness about Hawai‘i’s unique multiculturalism and opportunities by recruiting students for the Center. Asian American EWC staff members, particularly those involved in the many training programs, as well as Hawai‘i’s Asian American politicians, were also useful ambassadors of Hawai‘i’s progress in civil rights. Civilian residents of Hawai‘i also had an important role to play in Hawai‘i; PC and EWC officials relied on them to offer their hospitality and model the harmonious living conditions that had gained recognition during Hawai‘i’s statehood efforts. The State Department also heavily relied on its publicity mechanisms, particularly the USIA and Voice of America.

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524 Klein, Cold War Orientalism, 242.
USIA, Voice of America, and Spreading the News of the EWC

Despite ongoing debates about the relationship between the EWC and the State Department, Washington was committed to using its media arm to promote EWC projects throughout Asia. The State Department, was after all, heavily invested in Hawai‘i and knew that the success of its Cold War diplomatic strategies depended on the notoriety and credibility of the its programs of cultural exchange. In March 1961, the USIA visited Honolulu to interview and photograph EWC students so that an exhibit could be created and shared across Asia.\textsuperscript{527} USIA also helped to disseminate information about the EWC throughout Asia. This required the EWC to regularly inform the USIA about events by sending them copies of press releases, brochures, bulletins, and other materials. Also in 1961, EWC representatives travelled to the U.S. continent and numerous Asian countries to supply information and meet with potential students.

Voice of America also helped spread the news about Hawai‘i, beginning in the fall of 1961.\textsuperscript{528} VOA correspondent Sydney Paul came to Honolulu in September for the 10\textsuperscript{th} Pacific Science Congress and recorded several EWC students speaking in their own language about their experiences in Hawai‘i. Paul also produced a half-hour feature on the EWC for broadcast in Asia.\textsuperscript{529} Hawai‘i-based VOA journalist Alex Noh taped two separate interviews that October with Murray Turnbull and Vietnamese EWC student Vu Thi Thu Diem.\textsuperscript{530} Other EWC students—from Vietnam, Fiji, Korea, and Indonesia—were

\textsuperscript{527} EWC Bulletin, March 23, 1961, East-West Center Files, box 3, RG 84, NACP.
\textsuperscript{528} Interestingly, Hawai‘i had played a central role in the establishment of Voice of America. It first went on the air in 1942, seventy-nine days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, which was the very reason for its creation. Within four months of being on the air it became part of the Office of War Information (OWI). When the war ended, many assumed VOA would go off the air, but the State Department put together a commission of private citizens, chaired by Columbia University Professor Arthur McMahon, which recommended that the US continue the program. An advisory committee was created and legendary CBS broadcaster Edward R. Murrow held the chair. In 1953, when the U.S.I.A. was created, Voice of America was passed from the State Department to the newly created organization. These efforts followed the debacle of the McCarthy hearings and were an attempt to distance VOA from the State Department. In the mid-1950’s, a motion picture and television service was established within the VOA. Later in the decade, they expanded their programs to include music and theater. Even though they were trying to distance VOA from the State Department, this reorganization moved the headquarters from New York to Washington, DC, a move that alarmed some. Alan L. Heil Jr., \textit{Voice of America} (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 32-34, 58-63.
\textsuperscript{529} News from the EWC, September 1961.
\textsuperscript{530} News from the EWC, October 1961.
interviewed by Gene Sawyer and broadcast around the world via Voice of America. Many of the students talked about their early impressions of Hawai‘i and its diverse society. For example, Korean Yu Han Dong, pursuing his M.A. in Psychology, described Hawai‘i’s large and successful Korean American population. He explained that many Korean Americans in Hawai‘i had high levels of education, worked in white-collar jobs, and that many had become doctors, lawyers, and educators. He also added that there was a strong Korean American community in Hawai‘i and that the Korean Community Council met once a month to discuss how they could better “introduce Korean culture to Hawai‘i.” He also spoke very favorably about his own experiences creating good relationships with people from other cultures, including his roommate from New Guinea and local residents. He also expressed hopeful optimism that the EWC would expand to allow more people the opportunity to come to Hawai‘i and share their experiences back home.

Yu Han Dong’s comments generally confirmed the reputation that Washington hoped to maintain about Hawai‘i’s East-West Center. He explained that Korean Americans were successful, implying that they did not face major discrimination. He also described that Hawai‘i’s ethnic groups had distinct communities but solid relationships with the entire community. Of course, this is not to suggest that all EWC students felt equally satisfied with the program or its potential to promote international peace. Nor were all ethnic expressions endorsed by the government. To the contrary, only those that could be safely subsumed under a larger national identity and that did not question the fundamental principles of American “democracy” or foreign policy were circulated by the State Department. This also does not mean that everyone who participated in these efforts—the EWC, the Peace Corps, other cultural exchanges, or Voice of America interviews—were simple propagandizers or fully supported the policies of the U.S. government. Participants created their own meanings and interpreted their experiences according to their own values. They also drew their own conclusions and found ways to negotiate their goals within the system available to them. It is instructive to consider

531 Asians in America Interviews, USIA, Voice of America Files, RG 306, NACP.
532 Yu Han Dong, Interview #12, April 11, 1967 [translated by Su Jin and Jeff Tripp], Asians in America Interviews, USIA, Voice of America Files, RG 306, Records of the US Information Agency, NACP.
some cases where EWC students attempted to use the tools and discourses available to them at the same time criticizing their limitations and contradictions. More than any other event, the Vietnam War highlighted these nuances.

EWC Students Protest the War in Vietnam

Washington hoped that sustained efforts at the EWC could improve relations between the U.S. and Asian nations. More than anything else, the Vietnam War strained those relationships and presented the biggest obstacle for America’s reputation abroad. The war also disrupted progress in Hawai‘i at the EWC. Like most American campuses at the time, the University of Hawai‘i had its fair share of protests, rallies, and teach-ins. Other campuses like UC-Berkeley are more notorious for their student activism and the emergence of the New Left, but Hawai‘i was also a place of significant political activism in the 1960s and early 1970s.

One of the most worrisome cases for the EWC and the State Department came in 1966 from an American grantee from New York. Noel Kent came to Hawai‘i in 1965 from the University of Wisconsin where he was studying history. In his application to the EWC, Kent described that he sought admission in order to gain a greater knowledge of Southeast Asian and its history, meet students from Asia, and gain a greater appreciation for the region and its people. He also wrote that he might want to join the U.S. Foreign Service or the USIA. When Kent arrived in Hawai‘i, he was already opposed to the war in Vietnam. In January 1966, Kent picketed outside the EWC while Vice President Humphrey, returning from a visit to the Far East, delivered a speech addressing American desire for peace in Vietnam. Kent’s protest apparently also included defacing an image of President Johnson and then posting it on a university bulletin board. In March 1966, he

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533 The National Archives folder which holds these documents is named “Problem Case.”
534 Advisory Council to Howard Jones, May 12, 1966; Subject Files of the Asst Legal Advisor for Cultural Relations and Public Affairs, folder Problem Case: Noel Kent; RG 59, NACP. The letter was signed by Y. Baron Goto (Vice Chancellor of Institute of Technical Interchange), John R. Hendrickson (Vice Chancellor, Inst of Student Interchange), Minoru Shinoda (Acting Director), and Arthur Goodfriend (Special assistant to the Chancellor).
535 During his procedural interview by a fellowship advisor at the University of Wisconsin, before his acceptance into the EWC, when he said that he was potentially considering a career in the Foreign Service or USIA, he was asked how he would handle working a job advocating policies in Southeast Asia to which he was so definitely opposed. Evidently, the EWC knew from his application materials that Kent was fully opposed to U.S. policies in Vietnam. Problem Case: Noel Kent compiled 1943-1972, RG 59, NACP.
was also accused—and arrested for—desecrating an American flag. Fellow EWC student John Witeck described that Kent had “desecrated the American flag by displaying a poster at an anti-war rally that depicted the flag with red, bloodied daggers as stripes and dollar signs as stars.” While the charge related to flag desecration was being handled by the Hawai‘i courts, the EWC and State Department had to determine if he had broken any EWC rules. Key to this determination was their understanding that they had a responsibility to fully respect his “rights of dissent as an American citizen,” but even more important to them, the “special obligation imposed on him as an EWC grantee.”

In an effort to assess the situation and gain as much information on Kent as possible, officials looked back at his application to the EWC, his letters of reference, and talked to people that knew him. The EWC had to determine how to best neutralize the situation while honoring his “freedom of speech.” As Kent became a more public war protester on campus, the EWC officials on the advisory council, regretted the publicity that his activism brought the EWC. The investigation that followed Kent’s arrest reported many anonymous phone calls and letters by “irate citizens demand[ing] to know why their taxes were being spent . . . [on] dissidents, ingrates and traitors.” They also wrote about his “slovenly appearance” which “personified the beatnik cult anathematized by many Americans.”

EWC officials even had a counselor speak to psychiatrists and psychologists in Hawai‘i in order to evaluate Kent’s emotional stability and suitability for going abroad as an American representative. However, they wrote that they were cognizant of the mixed feelings society had about psychiatry at the time and doubted that the public would accept their recommendation that he be denied based on his emotional state. They did not know how to revoke his grant without the appearance of bias against his political opinions and encroaching on his political rights.

Despite the efforts to delegitimize Kent, the East-West Center and the State Department conceded that he seemed to be within his rights as an American citizen expressing his opinions. Moreover, the EWC took advantage of the opportunity to use

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536 Advisory Council to Howard Jones, May 12, 1966.
539 Advisory Council to Howard Jones, May 12, 1966.
Kent as proof that the Center had no intention to restrict or censor the thinking or remarks of any affiliates, no matter how they might diverge from government policy or from the views of the Center. They also extended this opportunity to advocate that their handling of the situation offered a good example of the difference between a democracy and dictatorship.\textsuperscript{540} They reasoned that the U.S. and the EWC were being watched in Asia and revoking Kent’s grant would be regarded in Asia as an official effort to deprive him of his freedom of speech. This public position did not mean, however, that EWC officials were indifferent to his actions. The State Department was concerned enough about Kent that they kept a special file on his protests and labeled it “problem case.” After many formal and informal discussions were held about his conduct, the EWC concluded that as long as his academic performance met the standards and he did not break any rules or laws, he was protected by his freedom of speech.\textsuperscript{541} Ultimately, they hoped that by preserving Kent’s rights to free speech, they would showcase the Center as a place of democratic ideals.\textsuperscript{542}

As the Vietnam War became increasingly unpopular, the number of EWC students willing to speak publicly in opposition to it also increased. Many came to understand the war as more than just antithetical to President Johnson’s War on Poverty, but as fundamentally racist and imperialist. Many Asian students who had come to Hawai‘i to study at the EWC fundamentally believed in the power of cultural diplomacy over military aggression and they had a hard time accepting the American government’s actions in Vietnam. Together with American students who equally opposed the war, EWC students used their position as students sponsored by the State Department to call on the U.S. government to end its war in Vietnam. In doing so, they articulated themselves using the discourse and privileges of the EWC to oppose American foreign policy and suggest an alternative.

The Vietnam War presented the most challenging obstacle to the EWC. More specifically, it became the most crude example of Cold War foreign policy seeking domination and destruction, rather than diplomacy and negotiation. As America’s Cold

\begin{footnotes}
\item[540] Advisory Council to Howard Jones, May 12, 1966, Problem Case: Noel Kent, RG 59, NACP.
\item[541] Ibid.
\item[542] Noel Kent went on to become a Professor of Ethnic Studies at UH-Mānoa.
\end{footnotes}
War strategy became consumed by militarism and violence, while the values of the EWC were disregarded, criticism grew nationally and locally in Hawai‘i. Many EWC grantees decided to use their status to place pressure on the American government to prioritize diplomacy over militarism. After the invasion of Cambodia in late April 1970, the EWC Student Association (EWCSA) wrote an official position in opposition to the decision to escalate the war. They specifically highlighted the fundamental contradiction between the principles of the EWC and U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam:

Whereas the E-W Center is an institution dedicated to the promotion of mutuality and understanding among peoples of Oriental and Occidental cultures;

Whereas the E-W Center is sponsored by the foreign policy apparatus of the US government;

Whereas the US government is currently engaged in a war that ranks as one of the principal impediments to mutuality and understanding among Orientals and Occidentals;

Whereas that war is currently being extended to other portions of the Indochinese peninsula;

Let it therefore be resolved that our affiliation with the East-West Center in no way involves assent to or concurrence with current policies pursued by the US government in Asia. Moreover, we regard the extension of the current war as a direct contravention of the principles to which those of us gathered here at the E-W Center are dedicated.  

Hoping that their status as EWC grantees could help change U.S. foreign policy, they sent copies of the resolution to the President, Secretary of State and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the US Senate. In a more detailed statement, they wrote that their criticism was based on President Nixon’s “one-man policy” without consultation from members of Congress, its disregard for legal and humanitarian conditions and indiscriminate killing, and his failure to negotiate. Individual grantees also wrote their own statements offering more personal thoughts on their discontent. Each statement was written with clear reference to their national identity, using the rhetoric of the EWC itself to promote better relations between the East and the West, but written in

543 Resolution, EWC Student Association, May 5, 1970, EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawai‘i Archives.
clear criticism of American foreign policy. For example, Indian student Shekar Iyer wrote that no military solution to this conflict was possible and that no peace would be guaranteed until American troops were withdrawn. Singaporean student Cheng Eng Ng questioned why America actively interfered in the internal affairs of other countries, asked what they could possibly achieve, and asserted that there should be no further escalation. Indonesian student Dimyati Vangji wrote that any Asian problem must be solved by Asians themselves without any interference from foreign powers. Similarly, Filipino student Samuel Gregorio posited that a nation must decide for itself what form of government it wishes to have regardless of what suits the more powerful nations or the “puppets” of such nations. He added: “No nation has any right to impose their ideology upon other nations; Asians are capable of governing themselves.” It seems that the imperialist war in Vietnam had demonstrated to them that America was unwilling to cooperate with other nations and was not committed to ending the war through cultural diplomacy. More specifically, they were inspired by decolonization movements around the world and saw their own situations in “global terms,” not as ambassadors for or representatives of the United States. They called on the United States to end the war in Vietnam, but also to stop interfering in the affairs of Asia.

With their official group resolution, and their beliefs that the invasion of Cambodia under President Nixon violated and directly contradicted the principles of the East-West Center, the EWCSA endorsed a general strike by the University community as an “expression of deep opposition” to the current strategy. They urged members of the EWC to not only participate in the strike but also in activities “leading toward a better understanding of the sources and ramifications of the developments in Cambodia.” They wanted to make clear their opposition to American foreign policy, but true to the rhetoric of the East-West Center, they wanted to advocate for mutual respect and capitalize on their relationship to the State Department via the East-West Center. EWC officials may have found this embarrassing considering the students were criticizing the State Department for not following its own principles.

545 EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawai‘i Archives. 546 Resolution, EWC Student Association, May 5, 1970, EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawai‘i Archives.
As protests against the Vietnam War reached their peak in Hawai‘i around 1970, and more reports of mingling between the CIA and the EWC became commonplace, the East-West Center’s official ties to the State Department became more of a liability. Hence, there were increasing calls to separate the two. Patsy Mink introduced bills in 1970 and 1971 to transfer the EWC to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) because it was dedicated to education not foreign policy. She felt that the EWC was increasingly becoming dominated by the State Department, or at least its reputation was, and becoming more tied to the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Part of the same bill was another suggestion to create a new institute of Asia Studies because she felt that these topics had been neglected by the Center. She commented:

It seems to me that our nation has much to learn from the art, culture, and accomplishments of Asians. This communication should be both ways at the center, whereas currently the curriculum is based on Caucasian instructors telling Asians how to solve their problems.

Despite sincere efforts by many in Hawai‘i to ensure that the EWC was about mutual reciprocity between the East and the West, critics like Mink echoed earlier concerns by Murray Turnbull that the EWC and State Department generally were less interested in learning from Asia as they were about asserting American dominance in Asia.

In the spring of 1972, the Nixon administration escalated the bombing of North Vietnam. April saw seven hundred B-52 raids and a sustained 48-hour attack on Hanoi and Haiphong. On May 8, Nixon ordered a major escalation of the bombing of all military targets in the North and the mining of Haiphong Harbor. In response, the EWC grantees again met to vote on an official resolution. They again voted overwhelmingly to “condemn” the recent escalation, calling for an immediate end to the bombing, immediate withdrawal of all troops, and a return to the Paris Peace Talks for negotiation. Again, they sent copies of their resolution to the President, Secretary of

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548 Patsy Mink to Garth Hunt, January 17, 1972. EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawai‘i Archives.
550 Resolution, EWC Student Association, April 24, 1972, EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawai‘i Archives; “Unofficial EWC Anti-Escalation Vote,” Honolulu Advertiser, May 12, 1972.
State, Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of both the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committee, as well as Hawaiʻi’s Congressional representatives. Hawaiʻi Senator Dan Inouye, Congresswoman Patsy Mink, and Congressman Spark Matsunaga, as well as Senator J.W. Fulbright (Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) wrote back in support of the EWC’s resolutions condemning the escalation of the war in Vietnam. The students’ positions largely matched those of many in Congress, particularly within the Democratic Party.

On May 11, 1972, Vice President Agnew was visiting Hawaiʻi and protesters gathered outside the Kahala Hilton, where he was staying. UH Professor Oliver Lee was one of the protesters outside. Also protesting outside Agnew’s hotel were seventy-five others. Honolulu police, apparently at the request of a Secret Service agent, arrested 23-year-old EWC student Jan C. Ting. The newspapers described Ting as an EWC grantee, which added to the general concern that the EWC was full of students now opposed to U.S. foreign policy. Ting was wearing a shirt that said “Agnew Medium Grade Hogwash” and was arrested when he ran toward the vice president’s car in an effort to display his shirt for Agnew. Two days later, the EWCSA organized a march from UH to Ala Moana Beach Park where they planned to join the Citizens’ Committee-sponsored rally. Together, the groups protested the war’s escalation and stood in solidarity with Hawaiʻi’s three Congress members who had publicly announced their opposition by this point (Mink, Matsunaga, and Inouye).

The State Department failed to anticipate that East-West Center grantees might act in unforeseen ways. Both American and Asian grantees came together in opposition to the war in Vietnam. In the wake of their protests and the anxieties this exposed, the EWC was formally separated from the University of Hawaiʻi in 1977 in order to give it a more “national purpose.” From the very establishment of the EWC in 1960, its biggest

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551 Spark Matsunaga, Memo, “We are at a Crossroads in Vietnam,” April 18, 1972; Patsy Mink to Garth Hunt, May 17, 1972; Daniel Inouye to Garth Hunt, June 9, 1972; J.W. Fulbright to EWCSA, May 19, 1972; These are all part of the EWC Student Association Files, Box 23, University of Hawaiʻi Archives.
554 This was done under University President Everett (“Ets”) Kleinjans’ tenure with support of Hawaiʻi politicians. Efforts began in 1974 but the process was not complete until 1977. Kleinjans believed that the “EWC [was] a national institution and not a local one” since it was created by the federal government and
liability was the inherent relationship between the University of Hawai‘i and the State Department. This chapter has described some of the iterations of this “conflict of interest.” EWC grantees brought their own perceptions, agendas, and aspirations to the Center and became transformed in the process. Because they had been selected as American Cold War ambassadors, they gained “unprecedented authority to speak and act as political subjects.” When they realized the contradictions between the State Department’s rhetoric of diplomacy and military actions, they used the framework available to them—the State Department’s own rhetoric—to advocate for de-escalation, diplomacy, and peace. EWC grantees were not Cold War pawns for Washington, nor did they surrender their right to protest government policies. Instead, EWC students negotiated and articulated their platform as they saw most effective. This story is also significant because it demonstrates the limitations of Washington’s Cold War policy for Hawai‘i. The islands were not only used for cultural diplomacy; Hawai‘i was a crucial staging ground for the war and the site of significant military training and research. The intense military buildup during the Vietnam War exacerbated concerns and cast doubt on Washington’s commitment to Cold War diplomacy and peace. Beginning with statehood and then Hawai‘i’s East-West Center and Peace Corps Training Center, Washington strategically emphasized Hawai‘i’s role in promoting peace through diplomacy, but ultimately the escalation of the war in Vietnam proved that military functions took priority over diplomacy.

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funded mostly from Congress. Dave Gamble, “EWC Seeks Separation as Independent Institute,” Ka Leo, April 3, 1974 in EWC Student Association, Box 3, University of Hawai‘i Archives. The Peace Corps also suffered from the unpopularity of the war in Vietnam. In the late 1960s, many countries began to reject the Peace Corps. By 1971, eleven nations had expelled the organization. The first was Guinea and later Indonesia, Ceylon, Libya, Mauritania, Gabon, Somalia, Turkey, Tanzania, Bolivia, and Malawi followed. Only seven of these would later ask the Peace Corps to return. Hoffman, 119.

555 Penny Von Eschen, Satchmo Blows Up the World, 255.
CHAPTER 4:

Military Entanglements: Cold War Militarism in Hawai‘i

“As the sirens screamed, offices, schools, industrial plants began to disgorge jubilant hordes of people. Confetti swirled down from Honolulu’s office buildings, and a flight of Air Force jets swept low across the city in a deafening salute.”

—Time magazine, March 23, 1959

“Of all the places I’ve been to in 23 years of service, Hawai‘i has the most unique relationship with the military. There is no separation. People see us every day. We’re part of the daily life here.”

—Col. Mike Lundy, commander of the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, quoted in The Honolulu Advertiser, Sunday, August 16, 2009

In the 1963 film Donovan’s Reef, Amelia Dedham (Elizabeth Allen) joins “Guns” Donovan (John Wayne) and his best friend’s three children on a daytrip to Kaua‘i’s Waimea Canyon to cut down a Christmas tree. Amelia has only recently come to Hawai‘i from Boston and she is overwhelmed by the breathtaking views of the canyon and distant waterfalls. She stumbles upon a nearby memorial that marks the spot of a Japanese “sneak attack” during WWII. Amelia sees Guns’ name, among others, etched into the stone. Amelia asks, “Does this mean there was actual fighting on this island?” Guns explains the battle that ensued. Looking out again at the landscape, Amelia says innocently, “It’s hard to believe that war has ever been within a thousand miles of a place as peaceful as this.” Like Amelia, many who come to Hawai‘i are surprised how Hawai‘i’s natural beauty and embedded militarism co-exist. They seem to stand in such stark contrast with one another.

Even though the memory of Pearl Harbor and WWII are so pivotal to Hawai‘i within the popular American imagination, the pervasive narrative reinforced by the tourism industry is of peace and harmony. The visual imagery of Hawai‘i as a tourist paradise is equally paramount to Pearl Harbor iconography and has largely replaced the former since statehood. Brian Ireland says, “Normally, the accoutrements of war would
not sit comfortably with the Edenic imagery propagated by the tourist industry: in fact, they should work to shatter it. However, militarism has been so ingrained in Hawai‘i that, to a large extent, its presence has come to be seen as natural and necessary.”

Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull describe the military in Hawai‘i as “hidden in plain sight.” Similarly, Adria Imada writes that, “Empire as a ‘way of life’ in the islands remains visible yet nearly unspeakable even today, manifesting itself as the most ‘militouristic’ zone of the United States.” Here Imada draws on Teresia Teaiwa’s use of the term “militourism” to describe the phenomenon in which the military itself creates and sustains a tourist industry while that same tourist industry “masks the military force behind it.” Despite the success to which militarism has become both simultaneously invisible and naturalized, undeniable efforts have been utilized to achieve this result.

The U.S. military had played an important role in Hawai‘i’s path up until statehood and few doubted that it would continue to do so. U.S. marines in Hawai‘i backed the 1893 overthrow of Hawai‘i’s Queen and five years later the military used the islands during the Spanish-American War. Hawai‘i’s strategic proximity to two of America’s newest possessions—Guam and the Philippines—helped rally support for annexation that same year. Hawai‘i’s annexation ushered in a period of unprecedented military expansion—including a naval base at Pearl Harbor, Fort Shafter, Fort Ruger, Fort Armstrong, Fort DeRussy, Fort Kamehameha, Fort Weaver and Schofield Barracks all before World War I—creating a “ring of steel” in the words of the Commander of the U.S. Army in 1911. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, the U.S. entered World War II and Hawai‘i was put under martial law. The militarization of Hawai‘i increased during the Cold War, signaling the military’s intensions to maintain a hub of

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557 Ferguson and Turnbull, *Oh, Say, Can You See?*, xiii.
American empire in the islands. In 1956, the military established the Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA) on the “saddle” between Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa for bombing and artillery training. It is the largest military training area in Hawai‘i and the largest outside the continental U.S. In 1957, the Pacific military command was reorganized and Hawai‘i became the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM). By 1959, the military had secured its position as Hawai‘i’s premier industry and, as the epigraph at the beginning of the chapter indicated, the Air Force joined residents in celebrating President Eisenhower’s signing of the statehood bill by flying over the city in a “deafening salute.”561 Hawai‘i’s introduction to statehood was immediately marked by its financial entanglements with the military and the presumption that this would remain the “norm.”

Figure 20: This photo was disseminated by the USIA to draw attention to the news of Hawai‘i becoming the 50th state and subsequent celebrations. Without context, it is difficult to distinguish if this is a celebration or military training exercise. Source: National Archives (USIA “Picture Story” Photographs, compiled 1955-1984; Box 5; RG 306, NACP.)

Throughout the 1960s, Hawai‘i served several military functions during the Cold War, such as training, commanding, weapons testing, and rest and relaxation. In 1963, plans were introduced to build a freeway connecting the Kāne‘ohe Marine Corps Air Station and Pearl Harbor on O‘ahu—the most densely populated and heavily militarized island. The plan was contentious and provoked considerable protests from Native Hawaiians and in the process of building the freeway, several heiaus were either partially or completely destroyed.\footnote{562} The fact that the freeway took over thirty years to construct and cost a total of $1.3 billion represents the long-term commitment the U.S. military has made to Hawai‘i. During the war in Vietnam, Hawai‘i was used as an important outpost, staging ground, and training center. In 1964, over the objections of Hawai‘i’s governor, President Lyndon Johnson signed an executive order authorizing that Mākua Valley—on the Wai‘anae Coast—would continue to be used as a training facility despite ongoing land disputes between Native Hawaiians, the Territorial and later State government, and the military.\footnote{563} The island of Kaho‘olawe was also used extensively for weapons testing and bombing target practice throughout the 1960s, despite significant Native Hawaiian protest. Hawai‘i was also used as an official “R and R” (rest and relaxation) destination during the Korean and Vietnam War. The first American R and R troops from Vietnam arrived in 1966 and were taken to Fort DeRussy to reunite and vacation with their families. Today it remains the most developed and popular military recreation center in the Pacific.\footnote{564}

\footnote{562} The freeway (called H-3) was eventually opened in 1997 with a final cost of $1.3 billion, or $80 million per mile. It has been claimed that mile for mile, it is the most expensive roadway ever built. See Kajihiro, “The Militarizing of Hawai‘i,” 182.

\footnote{563} President Johnson’s Executive Order 11166 set aside for the United States a major portion of Mākua Valley’s training area. The portion of the training area not set aside by the Executive Order was included in a lease arrangement between the Assistant Secretary of the Army and the Bureau of Land and Natural Resources, and the State of Hawai‘i. The terms of the August 17, 1964 lease described that the U. S. Government obtained control and use of the remaining area for a period of 65 years, a period ending in the year 2029. It has been used extensively since 1943 as a live fire area. The valley has been subjected to air bombing, ship to shore firing, amphibious operations and live firing of all infantry and artillery weapons. See Kajihiro, 185; Marion Kelly, Cultural History Report of Mākua Military Reservation and Vicinity, Mākua Valley, Oahu, Hawai‘i (Honolulu, Hawai‘i: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1977); http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/makua.htm

\footnote{564} Imada, 242. In 1975, the Hale Koa Resort was opened at the Fort DeRussy Armed Forces Recreation Center in Waikīkī. It serves only military personnel (active and retired) and their families, for both recreation and affordable R and R. Prices are set according to military ranking and are set below market value. The name of the resort literally translates to the house of the warrior. Ferguson and Turnbull write
Despite clear evidence that the U.S. military was heavily invested in Hawaiʻi during the Cold War, Hawaiʻi’s military history tends to overemphasize World War II and underemphasize the Cold War. Just as Hawaiʻi’s notorious natural beauty has helped conceal the embedded militarism, Hawaiʻi’s Cold War reputation of racial harmony and cultural diplomacy helped conceal the simultaneous military buildup in Hawaiʻi. As a follow-up to the previous chapter’s discussion of diplomatic projects centered in Hawaiʻi, this chapter hopes to shed light on the military uses. Both diplomatic and military projects in Hawaiʻi were based on the rationale that Hawaiʻi was similar to Asia—one of the places the U.S. was fighting the Cold War—and therefore offered a “realistic,” thus necessary, laboratory for Cold War training and testing. I focus on Hawaiʻi’s military roles during the Cold War to animate the contradictions of Washington’s Cold War strategies in Hawaiʻi. The U.S. government intensified its military use of Hawaiʻi at the very same time it also cited Hawaiʻi as an example of its dedication to cultural diplomacy and international cooperation. By analyzing these contradictions, I argue that the U.S. maintained its imperial legacy in Hawaiʻi during the Cold War and used the islands to aggressively accelerate its military position and imperial policies abroad.

**Militarization as a Process**

My analysis of the Cold War military buildup relies upon the logic that militarization is a process that takes work and requires reinforcement. In other words, militarization does not take place over night, nor does it occur naturally. This also means that militarization is not inevitable. Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull explain that militarization is a “dynamic, contested process of constituting a particular kind of order, naturalizing and legitimating that order, while simultaneously undermining competing possibilities of order.” More specifically, they offer this useful definition of militarization:

(1) The process by which people, land, ocean, institutions and resources are organized around military activities and priorities;

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that this “casual appropriation [does] more than insult the local people, although they accomplish that outcome also; . . . [t]hey transform Hawaiian spaces into objects of military knowledge” (99).

(2) The process by which national security becomes a consuming anxiety, undermining other ways of thinking and living;
(3) The process by which war and its fellow travelers become naturalized, so that we all get used to it and children grow up thinking preparations for war is normal;
(4) The opposite of demilitarization.  

These definitions imply the struggles inherent in the process of militarizing a place. For example, part one above emphasizes that militarization requires land, people, institutions, and other material resources. These are generally not easy resources to obtain, so militarizing often involves some level of struggle or debate. Part two reminds us that militarization is often most effective when there is anxiety and fear about what could happen if security is not prioritized and militaries are not made ready. Part three indicates that for militarization to be effective, soldiers and their families need to become camouflaged so they are not seen as “out of place.” Considering the difficulties in accomplishing this, militaries often strive to remind civilians that soldiers need to be there because they are essential for keeping people and places safe. Taken together, when these efforts are successful, militarization becomes naturalized over time with each new generation growing accustomed to seeing militarism around them and not knowing anything different. If we look at Hawai‘i’s ongoing process of militarization in particular, we see ongoing struggles over land use, economic priorities, institutional support, and maintaining peace between soldiers and civilians. This chapter elaborates on how Hawai‘i was militarized during the Cold War at the very same time that the United States sought to downplay its military roles abroad during the Cold War.

Thinking about militarization as a process—as opposed to a singular event—is also helpful because places become militarized over time through the actions of many—not individual soldiers. One of the most consistent mediums for naturalizing the militarization of Hawai‘i has been the historiography produced about Hawai‘i. Writers like James Michener, A. Grove Day, and Bob Krauss, who used their notoriety to advance Hawai‘i statehood as a Cold War policy, also wrote about the importance of the military to Hawai‘i. For example, in Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, Day directly linked the “long road” to statehood with military goals. When statehood was finally achieved, he said,

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566 This process was described in Ferguson and Turnbull’s “The Securitization of Hawai‘i,” International Studies Association annual conference, 2005.
Hawai‘i and the United States benefited because it made the United States “a little stronger [and] more secure.”\textsuperscript{567} In addition to writers, other authoritative narrative producers during the Cold War included journalists, politicians, capitalists, tourists, and soldiers. Taken together, these groups played a significant role in maintaining America hegemony in Hawai‘i by naturalizing U.S. military interests in Hawai‘i. Foucault reminds us that power is not individual, but rather relational. It becomes permanent, repetitive, and self-reproducing when it “exercised from innumerable points,” becomes intelligible to many, and appears logical in relation to other discourses.\textsuperscript{568} In other words, militarization does not happen because or when the U.S. military simply says it wants to militarize Hawai‘i. Understanding Hawai‘i’s history of militarization requires us to ask how narratives enter into discourse, become spoken and understood, and then either contested or accepted as facts.\textsuperscript{569} In chapter two, I described the common themes present in the statehood historiography: U.S. influence in Hawai‘i was benign and benevolent, America wanted to protect Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i was naturally hospitable to outsiders, and statehood allowed Hawai‘i to reach its full potential. These themes were easily transferred and mobilized to describe the U.S. military’s relationship to Hawai‘i after statehood. Because these themes were familiar, repetitive, and self-reproducing, they became intelligible to many and seemed credible particularly in relation to other shared discourses.

Just as American diplomatic projects centered in Hawai‘i during the Cold War were portrayed as benevolent and cooperative, similar efforts were made to avoid claims that military projects in Hawai‘i were imperialistic and coercive. Adria Imada points out that the historiography produced about Hawai‘i—both within the islands as well as in the metropole—has maintained that American “colonization and military occupation was achieved with the tacit, if not willing, consent of Native Hawaiian and local populations.”\textsuperscript{570} Because Cold War rhetoric required powerful nations to repudiate imperialism and colonialism, specific efforts were made by military leaders,

\textsuperscript{567} Day, Hawai‘i: Fiftieth Star, 185.
\textsuperscript{569} Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 3.
\textsuperscript{570} Imada, Aloha America, 10.
spokespersons, soldiers, diplomats, politicians, and journalists in Hawai‘i to emphasize that the ongoing relationship between the U.S. military and Hawai‘i was democratic and consensual. Chapter three describes the efforts of Washington to draw attention to projects like the East-West Center and the Peace Corps. By virtue of their stated goals aimed at achieving international cooperation, Hawai‘i’s diplomatic projects were easier to describe as anti-imperialist than military research and training. Furthermore, because Washington wanted to publicize its commitment to diplomacy and play down its use of force, it is much easier to research projects like the East-West Center and Peace Corps compared to military training and research that is often secret and classified.

To understand the process of Hawai‘i’s Cold War militarization and the attempts made to portray the military’s intentions as benevolent, it is necessary to analyze the common themes articulated in Hawai‘i. I argue that three pervasive themes can be found in the discourses both spoken and written in Hawai‘i during the Cold War. They are familiar because variations of them were cited as reasons for supporting Hawai‘i statehood. The first is the assumption that Hawai‘i benefits financially from the military’s continued presence; the second is that Hawai‘i is happy to host the military; and the third is that Hawai‘i is an important and necessary place to train the military. My goal is not specifically to disprove (or debate) them, but to highlight their prominence within the historiography and daily narratives. They are important because they help naturalize the military’s presence in Hawai‘i by positing three common tropes: Hawai‘i needs the military, Hawai‘i wants the military, and Hawai‘i is unsafe without the military. These three tropes not only reinforce one another, but they also imply a democratic—not imperialist—process at the core.

**Economic benefits of the military in Hawai‘i**

At the local level, considerable efforts were made to convince Hawai‘i’s residents that the military’s impact on Hawai‘i was utilitarian and therefore necessary. In January 1956, Hawai‘i newspapers heralded that military spending in 1955 had reached a postwar high, well above $300 million and nearly matching the combined income of the
Territory’s three major industries—sugar, pineapple, and tourism. By 1959, the military was spending more than any of these industries. Just because Hawai‘i’s introduction to statehood coincided with the military becoming the number one industry, did not mean that this was necessarily permanent. Perhaps this can explain why there was such effort devoted to describing the importance of the military to Hawai‘i’s security. Just as statehood proponents sought to explain why Hawai‘i offered unmatched resources during the Cold War, military advocates focused on how Hawai‘i would benefit from the military.

Hawai‘i’s newspapers published regular reminders that Hawai‘i needed the military for employment and economic investment, and that Hawai‘i would suffer terribly if this relationship ended. Such constant reminders indicate the amount of effort put into establishing the military’s necessity, but also suggest apprehension that the military’s role would remain unquestioned in Hawai‘i. The consistent emphasis on the economic benefits of the military and the jobs it would bring to Hawai‘i’s residents, suggests that many assumed this would be the most effective reason to support a growing military industry. In 1961, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin described that other states were looking enviously at Hawai‘i and its “military plum.” It claimed that “almost every other state is casting competitive eyes” at Hawai‘i’s most lucrative industry and wanted a “slice of [the] pie.” Reminders such as this emphasized that Hawai‘i was grateful to the military and workers ought to be as well. If not, Hawai‘i was in jeopardy of losing this crucial support. The article claimed some in Washington expected Hawai‘i’s days as a military “bastion” to be on the way out, no doubt instilling fear that Hawai‘i workers would suffer.

Not only did local print media repeat that the military was needed in Hawai‘i, but that an end or de-escalation of the Cold War would be harmful for Hawai‘i’s residents. The Honolulu Star-Bulletin expressed concern that if the Cold War “thawed,” it would

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572 In 1958, around $327 million was spent. “Standby Program Urged, if Military Spending Nears Top Industries’ Income,” Honolulu Advertiser, November 4, 1959.
cause military spending to drop in Hawai‘i and could lead to an “economic crisis.” The article was in response to the recent summit meeting between President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev held in Washington, D.C. in September 1959. It reminded readers that 21% of all employed people in the islands were military personnel and an additional 9% were civilians employed by the military. The article cited the Bank of Hawai‘i’s vice president James Shoemaker’s suggestion that Hawai‘i needed a stand-by program—an “insurance policy”—in the event that military spending was reduced. It needed to be “complete and ready for action,” he said, in order to provide immediate employment. 574

Fears that the decline of the Cold War would have devastating impacts on Hawai‘i’s economy persisted, but not all residents accepted that dependence on the military was beneficial. For example, the educational director of the ILWU Local 142, David E. Thompson, told the Honolulu Advertiser that the union supported “complete world disarmament.” He explained that their position was that military spending “takes as much out of taxes as it puts in” and prevents spending more money on education, while the Cold War “turns the attention of people from hopes to fears.” Despite quoting this voice to the contrary, the article’s headline boldly proclaimed as fact “Disarmament Would Hurt Isle Economy.” 575

The notion that Cold War disarmament would hurt Hawai‘i directly contradicted the principles of the East-West Center, which sought reconciliation and cooperation. In early 1962, a national report on the economic impacts of disarmament was released to the new U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The report, which represented business, labor, and government interests and was headed by Emile Benoit of Columbia University, identified twenty-two states (Hawai‘i included) that would face major economic readjustment if disarmament were to happen. In response, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin labeled this possibility a “problem,” while inferring that at least from an economic standpoint, Hawai‘i should have little interest in ending the Cold War. 576 This seems to run counter to the principles of the East-West Center and other federal

investments in Hawai‘i that sought diplomatic solutions to the global conflict. Locally, Hawai‘i civilians were told repeatedly that ending the war would cost them their jobs. My intention is not to suggest that Hawai‘i civilians passively accepted these narratives, or that they did not resist them, but rather, to point out that there were contradicting messages about America’s desire to resolve the Cold War and Hawai‘i’s role in achieving that goal. One message was that Hawai‘i could help the East and the West find common ground and help reach diplomatic solutions to the Cold War. Another competing yet contradicting message was that a resolution would hinder Hawai‘i’s role in the Cold War and directly harm Hawai‘i’s economy. It seems that President Eisenhower’s famous farewell remarks in January 1961, where he described the military-industrial complex, could aptly describe Hawai‘i’s increasing reliance on the military industry for investments and jobs:

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes.577

The “toil, resources, and livelihood” of Hawai‘i’s people were so entangled with the military by this point that maintaining a dangerous global conflict [the Cold War]—with “grave implications”—was considered worthwhile if it proved profitable, despite “endanger[ing]… the democratic process.”578

578 These are of course excerpts from Eisenhower’s farewell address given January 17, 1961.
“Friendly Natives” and Imperial Hospitality

Together, the military and tourism industries have dominated Hawai‘i’s economy since statehood. The two industries have a symbiotic—rather than competitive—relationship and both share the idea that Hawai‘i is inherently friendly to all visitors including soldiers and tourists alike. When Hawai‘i was chosen to became the headquarters of USPACOM in 1957, it was clear that the military wanted Hawai‘i to play a crucial role in America’s military affairs. This would mean an increase in troops coming to Hawai‘i and with statehood subsequently, it would also mean an increase in military spouses and children accompanying them since Hawai‘i was a U.S. state and not a “foreign” or “overseas” post. Following the reorganization of USPACOM, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin commemorated the 182nd “birthday” of the U.S. Army and said that this year was particularly significant because of Hawai‘i’s new position as the leader. They wrote:

Hawai‘i’s relations with the American Army, established before these Islands came under the American Flag, have always been friendly. Now, more than ever, is there need for mutual support and cordiality. Hearty greetings go to the Army, to all its officers and men, on this notable anniversary!

The Honolulu-based paper presumptively and paternalistically spoke for Hawai‘i civilians by saying that they unanimously appreciated their 182 years of service, including those in the islands, while specifically suggesting that Hawai‘i residents continue to support and welcome the military in Hawai‘i. I think Adria Imada’s term “imperial hospitality” is particularly valuable here because it emphasizes that the exchanges between Hawai‘i’s civilians and soldiers were in fact rife with imperial power dynamics, but visualized as mutually agreeable. Although looking specifically at films made by the U.S. military to show Hawaiian and local hula dancers performing for American soldiers, I turn to Imada’s concept because she describes how hospitality is generally portrayed as consensual and kind, yet achieved through imperial impositions. In this specific example, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin praised Hawai‘i’s populace for being friendly in the past but also pressured them to be supportive and cordial in the future. I

579 The military became number one by 1959 and was replaced by tourism in 1972. Ian Lind, “Ring of Steel”, 38.
think Imada’s term is also quite fitting to describe the practice of non-natives inviting other non-natives—or settlers inviting other settlers—to Hawai‘i without ever being given permission to be there themselves or to invite others. Rather than asking civilians how they thought, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin spoke for Hawai‘i’s civilians. This message echoed the kinds of statements made by statehood proponents and writers, for example Krauss’s claim that Hawaiians were so “happy-go-lucky” that “the friendly native is still friendly after 150 years of watching the foreigner take over his islands.”

Making Hawai‘i Safe

The third trope is that Hawai‘i needs the military in Hawai‘i for security and protection. As chapter one indicates, the memories of Pearl Harbor and World War II, were a consistent feature of Cold War era films made in and about Hawai‘i. I argued that WWII was important for historicizing Hawai‘i as inherently American, which ultimately helped lead to widespread support for Hawai‘i statehood. The achievement of statehood gave new meaning to Hawai‘i during the Cold War, but this did not mean that WWII would no longer hold significance. In some ways it might seem counterintuitive to find meaning during the Cold War by referring back to World War II. In other ways, it makes perfect sense that WWII would forever hold significance in America’s Hawai‘i. Up until 2001, Pearl Harbor was the one place the United States was attacked. Furthermore, Pearl Harbor remains the most visceral symbol linking Hawai‘i to the United States. Chapter one described Hawai‘i’s delegate John Burns’ early efforts in Washington to make political allies vis-à-vis Pearl Harbor. He was successful in 1957 and 1958 by advocating for a USS Arizona national memorial and used it as an opportunity to introduce himself and make an early case for Hawai‘i statehood. John Whitehead refers to “the symbolism” of Pearl Harbor as Burns’ “calling card to Congress.” Congress approved the plans to create a national memorial in March 1958 and efforts to raise the necessary funds began.

The USS Arizona memorial could have been authorized at any time after 1941, therefore it is worth considering the historical context of when it was authorized. Hawai‘i

581 Bob Krauss, Here’s Hawai‘i, 15, 35.
582 Whitehead, Completing the Union, 305.
was on the verge of statehood and experiencing a surge in the tourism industry. Visitors to the new memorial would include civilians and soldiers, tourists and locals, Americans and non-Americans. To create the memorial, funds were raised both privately and publicly as well as locally and nationally. The Territory of Hawai‘i contributed the initial $50,000; the popular television series *This is Your Life* hosted by Ralph Edwards raised another $95,000 in 1958; Elvis Presley helped raise over $64,000 through a benefit concert at Pearl Harbor’s Bloch Arena in March 1961; and freshman Senator Daniel Inouye secured the final $150,000 in federal funding to complete the construction in September 1961. The memorial was completed in May 1962 and dedicated on Memorial Day. Today, more than 1.5 million people visit the memorial each year, making it one of the most visited sites in Hawai‘i.

Chapter one discussed the significance of Pearl Harbor as a recurring theme in the films made in and about Hawai‘i during the 1950s; here my interest in the USS *Arizona* memorial is in how it merges the second and third tropes about the relationship between the U.S. military and Hawai‘i—that Hawai‘i wants the military and is unsafe without it. Other scholars have done an exceptional job analyzing the memorial itself and the messages it presents. I am interested in the timing of the memorial and what it meant during the Cold War. I argue that the development of the USS *Arizona* memorial was important for reminding visitors why the Cold War was necessary and why Hawai‘i needed the U.S. military. By creating a space where visitors from all over the world could come to be reminded of America’s innocence—before 9/11, the only place on “American soil” where the U.S. had been attacked—the USS *Arizona* memorial viscerally reminds visitors that another attack is possible, either in Hawai‘i or elsewhere. The combination of fears—about “another Pearl Harbor” mixed with immediate Cold War threats of

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584 Presley’s benefit concert in Hawai‘i raised not only money, but also public interest in the memorial and Hawai‘i. After the benefit concert, Presley stayed in Hawai‘i to start filming *Blue Hawai‘i*.
585 http://restore.arizonamemorial.org/creating-a-memorial.html
nuclear warfare and escalating rivalries—reminds visitors that the U.S. military needs to remain in Hawai‘i, continue fighting the Cold War, and protecting American interests abroad. The three tropes that I mention overlap and reinforce one another, making them even more powerful as they gain familiarity. For example, Hawai‘i needs the U.S. military not just because of economic benefit but also for security and protection. Similarly, Hawai‘i wants the U.S. military for economic benefit, security and protection, and because of Hawaiians’ “natural” disposition to friendliness and hospitality. All three tropes are pervasive throughout the Cold War, but certainly contested.

“Keeping the Peace” between Locals and Soldiers

Quite regularly, Hawai‘i officials wondered if the locals and soldiers were getting along. When issues did arise, authorities tried their best to minimize and repair the situation. In January 1962, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin published local responses to answers received at the Armed Services Y.M.C.A. about whether the life of a Hawai‘i soldier was good or bad. Seaman Wilbur J Gentry said, “As a single man I don’t think it is so hot . . . and girls don’t want anything to do with you if you are in the service. As long as the people don’t know you are in the service, they are okay.” Another seaman, Robert Pickner, told reporters that he liked the weather, but not the local people’s attitudes. He said “he had a little bit of trouble now and then with the local boys, especially when [he] first came.” Both were white men from the U.S. mainland and their comments suggest that there was local resentment of soldiers and vice versa. Other soldiers said that they got along well with locals. For example, Ahn Chung Sung, a Korean Merchant Marine said that he liked Hawai‘i and the people.\footnote{“Serviceman’s Life in Hawai‘i: Is it Good or Bad One?” Honolulu Star-Bulletin, January 23, 1962.} Not all white soldiers had negative things to say about being in Hawai‘i, but the frequency of the comments did suggest that there were real tensions between the predominantly white military population and the predominantly non-white local population. It also seems plausible that white soldiers were surprised when they faced animosity in Hawai‘i, particularly considering the highly publicized reputation of racial harmony that they had heard about. Candace Fujikane reminds us that these tensions relate to colonialism. In a settler society, as Hawai‘i is just like the United States, the violence of colonialism is
masked by the rhetoric of civil rights, multiculturalism, and democracy. Therefore, many whites who come to Hawai‘i for the first time are surprised to discover that Hawai‘i is not as “welcoming” as they had expected. Wartime in particular exacerbated the tensions between locals and soldiers. The most well-known event—the Damon Tract Riot—occurred in 1945 when a riot broke out between approximately one thousand sailors from the Honolulu Naval Air Station and nearby civilians they called “gooks.” The daily realities of the Cold War in Hawai‘i added to these tensions, particularly because the islands were playing such a significant role in the escalation of the war in Vietnam which brought an increasing number of (mostly white) American soldiers from the U.S. mainland to the islands.

Hawai‘i was considered especially critical for guerilla warfare training that would be used in Southeast Asia, particularly in Vietnam. In the summer of 1962, Hawai‘i’s 25th Infantry Division conducted extensive “jungle warfare” training in O‘ahu’s Ko‘olau mountains. They had already been training for three years and were considered “the most highly trained” in these skills. Hawai‘i was also considered a necessary component of the training precisely because Hawai‘i’s topography, climate, and vegetation was thought to resemble the conditions in Southeast Asia. The jungle training included simulations that were expected to mimic what troops would experience in Vietnam. “Villages” were built deep in the Ko‘olau mountains and “realistic” and “imaginative” scenarios were created and performed. Some troops would dress as Asian villagers and attempt to “harass”—using “Asian customs and traditions”—the maneuvering GIs.

It seems that the military shared some of the same ideas about Hawai‘i’s exceptional assets during the Cold War. From Washington’s perspective, Hawai‘i’s resemblance to Asia—its people and land—made it a useful place for bringing the East and West together through diplomacy, but also training the West to understand the East in order to out-maneuver them in warfare. In both cases, Hawai‘i was considered essential and indispensable because it resembled Asia, but offered the securities and

589 Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You Say?, 97.
familiarity of America. General Wornham made that very argument in March 1961 when he explained that Hawai‘i was an ideal place to train marines in preparation for the Far East because its geography resembled Asia, and they could still have their families with them, which they could not due in the Far East. In other words, for the military’s purposes, Hawai‘i simulated Asia but was conveniently America.\footnote{Buck Buchwach, “Marines To Beef Up Hawai‘i Force,” Honolulu Advertiser, March 24, 1961.}

In early April 1963, members of Hawai‘i’s 25\textsuperscript{th} Infantry, which had been training in guerilla warfare for the past three years, were sent to Vietnam. As the U.S. began committing more combat troops, efforts were made to keep the escalation silent and keep the exact number of American troops in the country a “closely guarded secret.”\footnote{Young, Vietnam Wars, 95.} Just prior to their deployment, the Honolulu Advertiser ran a five-part series on the importance of the military to Hawai‘i, written by their own staff military editor Scott Stone. The timing of these articles are curious considering five-part series were not standard. The series discussed the importance of maintaining Hawai‘i’s reputation as a necessary outpost, as well as the familiar tensions between the military and locals. The length of the articles, their assertiveness and boldness (rhetorically as well as the use of bold and capital letters to accentuate their point), and the repetitive nature of their messages are also worth mentioning. The timing of the articles suggests that local military officials expected some resistance from the increasing visibility of the training as well as the ongoing escalation. The first article began with the question about what the military’s future status would be in Hawai‘i, but it also began with a declarative editor’s note in bold type:

Hawai‘i is a vital military base, perhaps the most significant one outside the continental limits of the U.S.

Stone continues with his summary of the current dilemma in Hawai‘i, which was that the average serviceman was both “praised and damned” by the local civilians “who profit by his presence but sometimes resent him.” Therefore, he is caught in the “limbo of a cold war” himself. If it were a hot one, he’d be “on top” of the status list, but if peace existed around the world, he’d be in “Purgatory.” Stone’s assessment was that the soldier in
Hawaiʻi ought to be respected more. Not only was he sacrificing himself by “soaking wet for days on end while maneuvering in the mud of the Koʻolau” and “freezing in the 6000-foot altitude” of the Pōhakuloa Training Area, he was helping Hawaiʻi. Stone was explicit:

Because Hawaiʻi is an island state, he is much more important to the economy than he would be on the Mainland. Because Hawaiʻi is in the mid-Pacific, his presence is vital in terms of strategy. These two areas—economy and strategy—dictate the importance of the military here in Hawaiʻi. They are both worth considering.

Stone ends the first installment with the oft repeated statistics of the growing number of people in Hawaiʻi—soldiers and civilians—employed by the military, as well as their number of dependents who would continue the military’s legacy in Hawaiʻi. The message was unequivocal; the people of Hawaiʻi should be grateful to the military because they are the direct beneficiaries of the U.S. military’s financial investments and willingness to provide them security.593

The next installments repeated themes from the first, but Scott Stone wrote much more passionately, defensively, and forcefully. One message was that military training in Hawaiʻi was superior and needed to be continued in Hawaiʻi. No other place offered the same kinds of opportunities that Hawaiʻi did. Perhaps Stone was attempting to answer the question *why Hawaiʻi?* He began the second installment by describing the 25th Division, nicknamed “Tropic Lightning,” which was housed at Schofield Barracks but trained in the muddy Koʻolau Mountains and desert-like saddle between the Big Island’s Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa. Stone described their reputation in jungle training and Hawaiʻi’s significance in providing a forward area “outside the confines of the mainland, but still on American soil.” Stone wrote in all capital letters, “HAWAIʻI IS IMPORTANT.”594 Not only was Hawaiʻi needed for its likeness and closeness to Asia, he said, Hawaiʻi depended on the military for its protection and security in case of Cold War disaster.

In another article, Stone demanded that Hawaiʻi learn to appreciate the military because Hawaiʻi “owed” them. Stone wrote that the Army had been in Hawaiʻi for

“decades,” “poured” hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy each year, provided thousands of jobs, and was “strategically important to the nation.” Hawaiʻi’s operations ranged from planning (Pacific Command), training, security, intelligence gathering, medicine and healthcare, aerial photography, weather studies, and even humanitarianism. He bemoaned that “Hawaiʻi’s residents occasionally swear and shake their fists at the noisy jet tankers that pass overhead” and that the state sometimes “takes an ambivalent attitude towards its military tenants,” but that generally the relationship was quite “amicable” and certainly “superior” to most other places with large military complexes. Stone concludes by saying that “the military needs Hawaiʻi as badly as Hawaiʻi needs the military.”

In the following article, Stone makes a similar point:

But even the military’s worst enemies here are forced to admit that Hawaiʻi is a tempting target for the nation’s enemies . . . A nuclear explosion on or near Camp Smith could eliminate the five top military men in the Pacific—and destroy the command center for U.S. forces in more than 85 million square miles of land and water—almost half the surface of the earth.

As this indicates, sometimes fear was used to justify the Cold War escalation generally and increased militarization in Hawaiʻi specifically. These kind of reminders about the dangers and risks of war often came at the end in order to conclude the conversation or end any debate.

I draw attention to these installments not because they were the “final word” on the military’s role in Hawaiʻi, but because their themes were so pervasive within the mainstream media in Hawaiʻi. With citations from state and military authorities and commanding language, the articles’ conclusions were presented as fact. During the 1950s and 1960s, Hawaiʻi had two major newspapers. Both had military sections, a military editor, and typically represented American interests that coincided with military interests. Helen Chapin’s thorough study of Hawaiʻi newspaper history says that

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598 From its inception, the Honolulu Advertiser was run by men affiliated with the missionaries’ arrival, the overthrow and annexation, and eventually statehood. The newspaper that became the Honolulu Advertiser was founded in 1856 as the Pacific Commercial Advertiser. Its founder, Henry M. Whitney, was the son of two members of the first company of missionaries to come to Hawaiʻi. When he founded the paper he
throughout the 1950s, during nuclear weapons testing throughout the Pacific and increasing militarism in Hawai‘i, the commercial newspapers uncritically printed government releases “verbatim,” making them often times a spokesperson for the state, nation, and military. Not everyone who read these narratives believed them to be fact, nor did they remain uncritical of the military presence in Hawai‘i. And surely not everyone read the newspapers. However, the themes mentioned here persisted before and after statehood and were therefore familiar. I also think it is worthwhile to consider (and not dismiss) the “official” rhetoric and rationale provided by the military institutions and their collaborators in order to better understand what they wanted civilians to believe and how they hoped their actions would be perceived locally, nationally, and globally. In earlier chapters I have attempted to explain how Washington rationalized statehood, Hawai‘i’s multiculturalism, the East-West Center, and the Peace Corps. Here I attempt to understand how Washington rationalized the continued occupation and increasing militarization of Hawai‘i. Ferguson and Turnbull explain that militarization occurs when daily life becomes organized around military activities and priorities and when national security becomes a “consuming anxiety” that “undermines other ways of thinking and living.” By representing military interests, Hawai‘i’s newspapers played an important role in militarizing Hawai‘i by attempting to organize Hawai‘i’s society and economy.

exclaimed that finally Hawai‘i had a “free press.” It was later sold to sugar baron Claus Spreckels, then to the Hawaiian Gazette Company in 1888, whose secretary was Lorrin A. Thurston. A descendant of missionaries, Thurston was the “principal propagandist and agitator” behind the 1893 overthrow of Hawai‘i’s Queen. He also supported the disenfranchisement of the non-haole “ignorant majority of the electorate.” Whitney himself boasted that he was an “ardent advocate of annexation to the U.S.” In 1922, Pittsburgh-born Raymond S. Coll became the editor. He and his wife decided to take a trip around the world and when they stopped in Hawai‘i, they decided to make it their permanent home. In 1931, Lorrin P. Thurston succeeded his father as president and publisher of the Advertiser. He was active in civic affairs, a leader in Hawai‘i’s tourism industry, and served as chairman of Hawai‘i’s statehood commission. It is clear that the Advertiser has consistently represented American haole interests, including the military. Hawai‘i’s other major newspaper was the Star-Bulletin. It began as the Daily Bulletin in 1882, which was also founded by Henry Whitney. Thus, he is the parent of Honolulu’s two major longest running dailies. The Star-Bulletin was founded in 1912 by Wallace Rider Farrington, who would later become Hawai‘i’s territorial governor (from 1921-1929). Farrington remained the president and publisher from 1912 until his death in 1933. Then his son Joseph Rider Farrington succeeded him and served as president and publisher until his own death in 1954. See David Stannard, Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow’s Spectacular Last Case (New York: Penguin, 2006), 117; Helen Chapin, Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai‘i (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1996), 54.

599 Chapin, Shaping History, 214.
according to military priorities, while closing off—and silencing—alternative futures for Hawai‘i, including demilitarization.

Hospitality or Hostility?

Despite Scott Stone’s best efforts to remind Hawai‘i’s citizens that they should be grateful for the military’s presence in Hawai‘i, resentment between locals and soldiers continued. Regular discussion continued within Hawai‘i’s newspapers about the local treatment of the military and the soldiers’ thoughts on living in Hawai‘i. The numerous articles in May 1963 suggest that this was of growing concern and something the military was taking seriously. Some soldiers wrote very favorably about their time in Hawai‘i and experiences with the locals. One man wrote that he disagreed with others who criticized Hawai‘i’s “phoney hospitality” and wanted to offer his own opinion because he was fond of Hawai‘i and planned to retire there. He said that he knew the local people “pretty well” and found nothing “phoney” about them because they had been “warm, kind, and understanding.” His said that he did not think their “aloha spirit” was reserved for those who spend the most money, but instead a “natural outgrowth of the interracial understanding found only in Hawai‘i.”

One private first class said, “I don’t feel like I own the town. Guys in the barracks say how bad things are, but I’ve made friends with people who’ve lived here all their lives. The real Hawaiians are supposed to be bad, but I find ‘em real good Joes.”

Others were much more critical of the reception they received in Hawai‘i and pessimistically referred to being stuck on “the rock.” Their criticisms ranged from high prices, bad schools, and regular animosity. Some were disappointed by the lack of welcome when they arrived, particularly because they had heard all about Hawaiian friendliness and openness. One navy man who had been in Hawai‘i for four years said that his family could not wait to leave because they found locals to be no better or worse than anywhere else. More specifically, he said:

603 The term “The Rock” was not new, but Harold used it in his letter to the editor. “Military Flay Hawai‘i,” Honolulu Advertiser, May 29, 1963.
We learned quickly that the so-called “aloha spirit” was just another publicity come-on for the tourists, and that mostly the military here is looked upon as a necessary evil, as it is in a lot of other places. I think most of the disillusionment of the service people comes from hearing so much about the friendliness of the people here, and they get here and find out it just isn’t so.  

Another man said he consistently felt unwelcome when riding the bus because the driver would look at him as though he wanted to “snap [his] head off.” Yet another man was skeptical that their recently increased allotments were some kind of plot to allow the local landlords to raise soldiers’ rents and make more profit. A service wife reported receiving regular harassing phone calls and a car filled with local teenagers trying to force her off the road.

While the military spoke favorably about the benefits of training soldiers in America’s newest state, some soldiers questioned if Hawai‘i should be considered domestic or foreign. For example, several soldiers said that they were upset that Congress was eliminating their overseas pay. One man’s suggestion was: “They ought to follow us around in the rain and the mud in the mountains and then they’d see that with all that and the cost of living here this should be considered an overseas post.” Another man, an army colonel, had even harsher words. He said, “These people just aren’t ready for statehood.” It seems there was some disagreement about the Americanness of Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i’s readiness for statehood. A navy wife wrote about her difficulties finding a job because she was connected to the military, white, and could not speak the “lingo.” Mrs. Patricia Peterson wrote adamantly:

Well, this is the U.S. and the national language is English which I speak very well. It is not up to Americans to learn to speak Japanese, Chinese, or pidgin. The citizens of Hawai‘i wanted statehood; they should learn decent English . . . These islands, though a state, seem to me like a different country.

606 Staff Sgt. Alton Currin was cited in John Pinterman’s, “To Tourists, Paradise; To GI’s It’s ‘The Rock,’” Honolulu Advertiser, May 24, 1963.
608 Staff Sgt. Alton Currin was cited in John Pinterman’s, “To Tourists, Paradise; To GI’s It’s ‘The Rock,’” Honolulu Advertiser, May 24, 1963.
Her suggestion was that the military boycott all businesses in Hawai‘i for six months and then the military would be “greeted with open arms.” Here she simultaneously asserted that Hawai‘i was American and only English should be spoken, yet she felt lost in this unfamiliar place that felt “like a different country” because she was an outsider and could not effectively communicate with the locals. Her solution was that the only way locals would accept the military is if it was in their economic interest. Some soldiers stationed in Hawai‘i were so disappointed by the resentment they faced that they told reporters they did not care what happened to Hawai‘i. One private first class said, “Most servicemen wouldn’t care if O‘ahu rolled over and sank to the bottom of the ocean.” Another Air Force lieutenant colonel reportedly said, “These people ought to appreciate that it’s the military that makes their economy but they don’t.”

These selected expressions of resentment certainly do not offer a full or accurate representation of all the feelings between locals and soldiers. The editorial staff at the Honolulu Advertiser acknowledged this in a follow-up article soon after publishing the various letters to the editor: “Letters to the editor aren’t necessarily an accurate index of public opinion. We’re certain many service people enjoy their stay.” The letters the Advertiser chose to print were written by soldiers and their wives from the mainland and they conceded that it was a small snapshot. No similar articles or calls for letters were requested from locals so missing from this archive are local responses to the increasing military presence in Hawai‘i. The collection of responses that were selected to be published was a public reminder that many soldiers were not satisfied in Hawai‘i because they did not feel welcome. This directly contradicted messages that Hawai‘i’s citizens were wholeheartedly happy to host the military and recognized the security and economic benefits of doing so. However, by publishing this discussion, perhaps the Honolulu Advertiser hoped that it would encourage local readers to think twice about how their actions were perceived by military members and pressure them to live up to their reputation of island hospitality. The editors said that they “don’t accept that Hawai‘i is every bit as inhospitable as the critics say . . . [but] obviously, something’s wrong and

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Hawai‘i should find out . . . what can be done about it . . . because Hawai‘i cannot afford the bad reputation.” Hawai‘i Senator Sakae Takahashi was explicit about the “unhappy state of affairs” and warned that “if we’re not careful the military will move some of its activities elsewhere.”

The letters to the editor and the Honolulu Advertiser’s editorializing demonstrate that tensions existed between locals and the military and as the war in Vietnam escalated, so did military activities in Hawai‘i. Here I turn to some examples of military testing and training that occurred in Hawai‘i that demonstrate how Hawai‘i’s residents were living the Cold War on a daily basis.

Agent Orange

The University of Hawai‘i was serving multiple functions during the Cold War. At the forefront was the EWC and the popular Peace Corps training. These are the projects both Washington and the University drew attention to by focusing their public relations on them. However, equally important to understanding Hawai‘i’s significance during the Cold War was classified research conducted for the U.S. Army. The most infamous of which was defoliation and herbicide research related to the controversial use of “Agent Orange” in Vietnam. The spraying of these chemicals would become one of the biggest public relations mistakes in the war. Chemical weapons were first used in WWI and subsequent concerns over the use of them led to the convening of a Geneva Conference in 1925. Here, all uses of asphyxiating and poisonous gases were outlawed. The U.S. had been at the forefront. Throughout the 1930s, Russia, Japan, and Germany actively researched chemical and biological warfare. In 1943, upon hearing reports that the Axis powers were contemplating using poison gases, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed that the U.S. would not use such weapons unless they were first used by its enemies. This would become the country’s stated policy on chemical weapons.

615 Ibid., 22.
The idea of crop destruction in Asia was first proposed in October 1961 and it was quickly implemented as a war strategy in Vietnam. Initial research and testing took place until October 1962. In March 1962, the topic was discussed at a conference in Hawai‘i with the Secretary of Defense, and in November, the Departments of State and Defense, under the Kennedy administration, authorized the operational use of the chemicals in Vietnam, nicknamed “Operation Ranch Hand.”

First, the chemical weapons were used for reducing foliage along roads and waterways (1963), then for destroying crops “grown by or for the enemy” (1964), and eventually for spraying large tracts of swamp and forest (1965-6). By 1967 and 1968, 5 million gallons of chemical herbicides were being used annually. It was around this time that criticism against the war and the use of chemical warfare was expanding quickly. Reports from Vietnam were alleging large-scale herbicide poisoning of humans, farm animals, and fish. There was also new concern that dioxin (TCDD), which was in two of the commonly used agents being used in Vietnam (2, 4-D and 2, 4, 5-T) might be “teratogenic” or “fetus-damaging” to humans. The use of dioxins was restricted in the U.S. in 1969 by the Environmental Protection Agency, although it was reportedly “not known” if it had caused birth defects.

A front-page story in the New York Times in November 1964 described America’s booming research in chemical and biological warfare (CBW). The story also stated that the U.S. policy of only using these weapons in retaliation remained the same. Within four months, by March 1965, it was widely known that the U.S. was using chemical weapons in Vietnam. Secretary of State Dean Rusk insisted that the U.S. was not planning to use gas warfare in Vietnam or anything in violation of the Geneva Convention. However, those opposed to the American use of chemical weapons often cited that their use was directly in violation of the Geneva Protocol. The Soviet Union, for example, quickly alleged that the U.S. was breaking international policy. The U.S. Embassy in Moscow rebutted that it was a “completely false allegation.” Adlai Stevenson, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, did not dispute that the U.S. was using chemical weapons, but distinguished that tear gas was commonly used—and

616 Assistant Secretary of Defense, Memorandum, “Crop Destruction Program in the Republic of Vietnam,” January 28, 1966; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974, Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
617 Hersh, Chemical & Biological Warfare, 22.
618 Ibid., 25.
accepted—by police forces all over the world. He conceded that if they had used poisonous gases, it would “rightfully concern the conscience of humanity.”

The key to Washington’s argument was that they were using tear gas and herbicides and that these were legal alternatives to chemical and biological gases prohibited under the law. Beyond legality, they also distinguished that tear gas was not “lethal.” Unconvinced, Soviet criticisms continued. The Russian newspaper Pravda reported on October 15, 1965, the “American imperialists are committing new and brutal crimes in Vietnam by ever increasing use of poisonous substances against the Vietnamese people. [Their] acts bear witness to the fact that the aggressors have lost all feelings of humaneness; these acts are of an exceptionally bestial, inhuman nature.”

Washington knew that reports coming from Vietnam could easily be propaganda efforts but also admitted that “they should not be dismissed out of hand.” In March 1966, the U.S. embassy in Saigon recognized increasing propaganda in Hanoi and on Vietcong radios about the crop destruction and defoliation by the American “aggressors.” The U.S. interpreted it, in part, as evidence that it was working; however, they could not determine if the military value outweighed the political liabilities. October 1967, the Rand Corporation released a report on the defoliation efforts. They concluded that in terms of denying food to the Viet Cong, the returns from the crop destruction program

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619 Adlai Stevenson to Abdul Monem Rifa’i (President of the Security Council), April 2, 1965; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
620 A legal advisor to the State Department recommended that they officially substitute the term “riot control agents” with “tear gas” because it was “more specific and less alarming.” Leonard C. Meeker to Garthoff, January 14, 1966; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
621 They defined chemical riot control weapons as those which cause “significant impairment of function in affected individuals but do not cause death or permanent disability except in very isolated cases and which have been accepted and used by civilian and military organizations for law enforcement purposes.” National Security Action Memorandum, November 1966; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1, RG 59, NACP.
622 “New Crimes of the American Aggressors [Russian],” Pravda, October 15, 1965, translation by the Department of State Division of Language Services; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
623 David E. Brown, “The Use of Herbicides in War: A Political/ Military Analysis,” Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
624 Telegram, American Embassy (Saigon) to Secretary of State, March 16, 1966; Records Relating to Agent Orange, 1961-1974; Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
“seem insignificant at best” and the costs to the villager seem “disproportionately high.” Thus, the report’s author recommended that the program be discontinued.  

The University of Hawai‘i and Jungle Defoliation

The use of defoliants and herbicides continued despite these early concerns. Even though the political liabilities were recognized, research continued. Much of it occurred within corporations and universities. Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh was one of the first to attempt to investigate this growing research in the 1960s but described the thick “wall of secrecy” that prevented the public from understanding the Cold War research projects. Forty years later, I experienced the same kind of difficulties attempting to research Agent Orange because a significant portion of the information remains classified today. In 1968, Hersh identified CBW research being conducted at six military bases, more than seventy universities around the world, and even more private and non-profit corporations that were involved in the weekly use of gases, herbicides, and defoliants in Vietnam.  

The earliest research I have been able to find at the University of Hawai‘i occurred in October 1962—meaning Hawai‘i participated in some of the earliest stages of CBW research. UH researchers aerially applied defoliants along a hilly jungle area about 500 feet in elevation at the Hawai‘i Agricultural Experiment Station on Kauai. On August 8, 1964, additional herbicides—including silvex and mixtures of 2, 4-D and 2, 4, 5-T—were aerially tested near Wailua at a site near the 800-foot Hanahanapuni Crater. This research found that all of the herbicides tested were effective in clearing brush from heavily infested jungle wetlands and UH researchers concluded that single application of any of the herbicides were inadequate for the long term, implying that multiple applications would be needed in the future.

625 Anthony J. Russo, “A Statistical Analysis of the U.S. Crop Spraying Program in South Vietnam” (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, October 1967); Box 1; RG 59, NACP.
626 Hersh, Chemical & Biological Warfare, 36.
627 Philip S. Motooka, D.F. Saikai, D.L. Plucknett, O.R. Younge, and R.E. Daehler. Aerial Herbicidal Control of Hawai‘i Jungle Vegetation, Bulletin No. 140 (University of Hawai‘i: Hawai‘i Agricultural Experiment Station, January 1967), 4-7 and 15. Another contract included Dr. Scheuer of the Chemistry Department to study “polytoxins” for the U.S. Army’s Edgewood Arsenal. This is according to Hawai‘i People’s Coalition for Peace and Justice, leaflet, “Weed Killers and Defoliants at the UH,” May 4, 1971, EWC Student Association 1980-42, Box 14, University of Hawai‘i Archives.
Most egregious was the herbicide testing conducted at the university’s Agricultural Experimental Station near Kapa‘a, Kaua‘i starting in 1967, the same year the RAND Corporation report concluded that such efforts should be “discontinued” because the risks to the people impacted were “disproportionately high.” The contract was between the UH department of agronomy and soil science and the U.S. Army. Two UH employees, James Oshita and William Fraticelli, were regularly drenched with Agent Orange while testing its defoliation effectiveness. The men were instructed to mark their bulldozers with flags to designate them as targets. Then they would drive to a test site and stay there while planes sprayed them. James Oshita recalled, “When the plane came to spray, somebody had to guide them. We were the ones.” Because the assignment was repeated so often, Fraticelli wore his work clothes for several consecutive days because they would get so wet each day. Information provided in the final report, written by the four UH agronomists conducting the research for the Army, corroborates the information provided by Oshita. The report detailed descriptions of four tests conducted on Kaua‘i in July, October, and December 1967 and February 1968 and explains that due to the “uneven terrain and boggy conditions” of the test sites, accessibility was limited. Bulldozers were used when possible, but “all additional means of accessibility were done by hand.”628

Oshita and Fraticelli had severe health problems shortly after the testing and they directly linked these illnesses to their exposure to toxic chemicals during the tests, including dioxins. In 1969, Oshita was diagnosed with a liver dysfunction; in 1971 he was diagnosed with bladder cancer. He also had chronic hepatitis, diabetes, anemia and chloracne—a severe skin disease. Fraticelli died in 1981 from lung and kidney cancer. He also had bladder cancer and a brain tumor. Another crew member, Masao Takatsuki, was diagnosed in 1978 with tongue and mouth cancer, as well as chloracne.629 Again, the research final report corroborates their claims. It lists all the chemicals used at the Agricultural Experimental Station and this included dioxins such as 2, 4-D and 2, 4, 5-T.

628 Ibid.
It also states that the main objective of the 1967-1968 research was to evaluate the “rapidity” and “duration” of “defoliation and damage.” The report summarized that for the Army, the tests were a success. Agent Orange was “very effective as a defoliant, whether applied alone or in combination with other systemics, and obviously may also be lethal.”630 The report does not offer any explanation of how it was determined that these chemicals were lethal, but it is worth emphasizing that the conclusion said obviously they may also be lethal and tests continued even after the RAND Corporation recommended that Agent Orange be discontinued because its effects on civilians seemed “disproportionately high.”631

By 1971, opposition to the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam was widespread and contributed to the U.S. military’s decision to abandon the use of it that same year. In April 1971 Hawai’i People’s Coalition for Peace and Justice—a group of community, peace, student, military, low-income and other individuals632—sought to draw attention to the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. They announced that they planned to spray chemical defoliant on the EWC’s Japanese Garden in protest of U.S. policies in Vietnam. The action was an attempt to create publicity and increase opposition to the military’s decision to use it. The Executive Board of the East-West Center Student Association did

630 Suehisa, Saiki, Younge, and Plucknett, Defoliation of tropical jungle vegetation, 1, 79. This is also quoted in Betty Wallace, “Agent Orange: Men sprayed in Kauai tests,” Ka Leo, Feb. 3, 1986.

631 In 1982, these allegations became part of a class-action lawsuit filed in federal court in Honolulu against the manufacturers of the herbicide (Dow Chemical Company), the Department of Defense, and the UH Board of Regents. The lawsuit then became part of a nationwide multi-district class action suit filed in New York on behalf of military veterans exposed to Agent Orange. The federal suit alleged that the herbicide manufacturers and some government officials knew of the potential health hazards. Oshita said no warnings were issued to the UH employees and no protective clothing or showers were provided. Oshita, Fraticelli, and Takatsuki’s case was dismissed. Hawai’i soldiers who went to Vietnam were also impacted by the use of Agent Orange. One vet from Kauai, Chris Wright, joined the same federal lawsuit as Oshita, Fanticelli’s widow, and Takatsuki. Wright served in Vietnam for eighteen months between 1967 and 1968. He recalled that as early as two days after a hill was sprayed with Agent Orange, he and others would be dropped off by helicopters to build a base in the area. He said the herbicide turned the jungle from green to yellow. They dug into the ground, lied in the dirt and usually did not bathe for days or wash their hands before eating. He said they were also breathing the air, which was contaminated by the mist spray. Years after serving, he suffered from chloracne as well as terminal cancer, which he was diagnosed with in 1984 and told by his doctor that it was “likely caused by Agent Orange.” His daughter was also born with defects that they alleged was also related to the chemicals. Despite the $180 million settlement with Dow and other chemical companies, Wright did not receive any compensation. Betty Wallace, “Agent Orange: Men sprayed in Kauai tests,” Ka Leo, Feb. 3, 1986; Grace Wai-Tse Siao, “Agent Orange Veteran: Kauai man fights for recognition,” Ka Leo, April 25, 1986.

632 Information on Hawai’i People’s Coalition for Peace and Justice can be found on Ian Lind’s website. http://www.ilind.net/2009/12/19/1971-Hawai`i-peoples-coalition-for-peace-and-justice/#sthash.w3BaCahL.0iHDtIKa.dpbs
not support the spraying of the garden, but they wanted to express their concern over the use of defoliants and herbicides. They passed a resolution and released it to the press. It read, “We, the EWCSA Executive Board, affirm our stand against environmental destruction throughout the world. We are especially opposed to the use of chemical defoliants for political purposes, whether by individuals or governments.” They also said that what was being done in Vietnam was “deplorable.”

The use of Agent Orange ended in 1971. The following year the military took most of the remaining barrels of Agent Orange to be stored on Johnston Island, 800 miles away from Hawai‘i. In 1977, the chemicals were removed from their drums and incinerated at sea. After the Kaua‘i tests concluded in 1968, the 55-gallon oil drums containing the dioxin-laden herbicide Agent Orange were buried near Kapa‘a. Eighteen years later, the UH newspaper Ka Leo inquired to the department of agronomy and soil sciences about where the drums were buried and whether dioxin was leaking into the soil or water supply. The inquiry came about after the lawsuit filed in Honolulu by Oshita and Fanticelli’s widow. There was also concern that the half-life of dioxin was far underestimated when the drums were buried (then estimated to be less than one year). In 1979, the EPA found that leakage from drums buried in Missouri still had high concentrations of dioxin even after being buried for six or seven years. Ka Leo’s inquiry led to an archaeological dig that exhumed the buried drums above Wailua Homestead and sent them to the continent for disposal according to EPA standards. In total, forty-six containers were evacuated. They were tested locally and found to have “high concentrations” of the chemical 2, 4, 5-T, although they did not test specifically for dioxin.

The testing of Agent Orange in Hawai‘i problematizes the statehood story by juxtaposing the reputation of peaceful paradise with the realities of war. Hawai‘i’s tropical climate and foliage made it an ideal place for the U.S. government to test the

effectiveness of its chemical defoliants. Because very few details about the testing and use of Agent Orange have been declassified, it is difficult to say if the University of Hawaiʻi’s research was intended to test the effectiveness of defoliation or the impacts on humans who were sprayed. Considering numerous concerns had been raised about the safety of Agent Orange for civilians by the time UH conducted their tests in 1967 and 1968, in addition to Oshita’s claims that he and other UH employees had not been warned about potential health hazards and were not given protective clothing or showers, it seems the University and the U.S. Army were negligent in their regard for the safety of participants. Hawaiʻi was strategic for such testing because of its similarities to Asia. However, disregard for the safety of the nation’s citizens and using Hawaiʻi as a military laboratory blurred the distinctions between enemy/ally, foreign/domestic, and war/peace. Hawaiʻi was not just a place of peace; it was also a place of war. Bob Krauss, who had written in support of Hawaiʻi’s statehood and the establishment of the East-West Center, understood the strategy of Hawaiʻi’s to U.S. foreign policy in Asia. He arrived in Vietnam on Christmas 1965 to join the Honolulu Advertiser’s military reporter Bob Jones and cover Hawaiʻi’s 25th Infantry Division. His remarks describe the contradicting similarities and differences between Hawaiʻi and Vietnam:

Going on patrol in Vietnam is like hiking to Mānoa Falls. There’s the same humidity, the same dense foliage. Even the fruit trees are the same—mango, coconut, guava. But in Vietnam there were mines on the trail. Razor-sharp pongee sticks in the mud. Snipers in the leafy branches. That’s the difference between war and peace, the knowledge that you may die at any moment. How do I explain that to shoppers at the Ala Moana Center?637

Krauss points out that Hawaiʻi was both similar and different from Vietnam. They looked a lot alike and shared the same weather and foliage. How they differed, he explained, was that Hawaiʻi was not a war zone and there were no mines or snipers in the forests. Men like James Oshita, William Fraticelli, and Masao Takatsuki, however, would likely not have seen the contrasts between peace and war zones so starkly because they could personally attest to the dangers of the Cold War at home, in Hawaiʻi. As weapons testing increased in the islands, and target bombing became more of a daily event, the contrast

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between war and peace also became increasingly blurred. Hawai‘i was a place of peace and a place of war.

Kaho‘olawe

More than any other event, the bombing on the island of Kaho‘olawe intensified Hawai‘i’s opposition to the military’s widespread and what they perceived as careless use the islands as a laboratory. It also highlights the ongoing struggle between the U.S. military and Native Hawaiians over land use and imperial force. Kaho‘olawe is the smallest of Hawai‘i’s eight major islands, about seven miles southwest of Maui, and measuring about 28,000 acres. The bombing of Kaho‘olawe had begun during World War II, but the military continued to use it after the war had ended. Once the Cold War was underway, the military found new uses for the island and refused to return it to the people. Because it was the largest and most isolated of the three major military target areas in Hawai‘i, it was considered the most useful. The most well known tests on the island occurred in 1964 and 1965, under “Operation Sailor Hat,” which detonated three TNT bombs: “Bravo,” “Charlie,” and “Delta.”

Figure 21: Aerial photo of “Operation Sailor Hat.” (Operation Sailor Hat Photographic History, 1965; Box 1; RG 19, NACP.)

638 The two others were on Molokai at Ilio Point and Mokuhooniki. Other sites used for bombing included Ka‘ula Rock near Niihau and Kauna Point south of Kona. Outside of Hawai‘i, Puerto Rico’s Culebra Islands were also used.
Kahoʻolawe is sacred to Native Hawaiians and contains some of the richest and most intact cultural sites in Hawaiʻi. Its ancient name was Kohe mālamalama o Kanaloa and it flourished as a fishing village. The first lease to the island was obtained by Robert C. Wylie in 1858 for twenty years at $505 a year. This began Kahoʻolawe’s fifty-two years of ranching. In 1910, the island was named a State Forest Reserve. The existing lease was terminated, restoration began, and removal of all the island’s goats, sheep, horses, and cattle began. This was only temporary; in 1918 Angus MacPhee secured a lease for twenty one years at $200 per year. Once martial law was declared during WWII, no one was allowed to go to Kahoʻolawe. In 1941, the Kahoʻolawe Ranch (run by MacPhee and his business partner Harry Baldwin) subleased the island to the U.S. Navy and Army for $1 per year in order to use it as a target island. In late 1945, after the war had ended, Angus MacPhee and his daughter were allowed to return to Kahoʻolawe in order to survey the damage, but it was clear the military planned to continue to use the island even though the war was over. MacPhee filed an $80,000 suit against the Navy in 1946 when it was clear his land would not be returned, nor would he be compensated.

The military’s interest in the island renewed with the Cold War. From 1941 until 1953, it remained unofficially under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Navy and was used for continuous bombardment. In 1952 they replaced their existing “dummy airstrip” with a much larger one and began putting larger targets on the island, including old car bodies. The Navy’s sub-lease was set to expire in 1954, but President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10436 in February 1953, which directed the Navy to assume complete and “official” authority over the island during the Korean War. Provisions were included that mandated soil conservation and the number of animals to not exceed two hundred. The order also stipulated that “when there is no longer a need for the use of the

642 Ibid., 75.
643 Ibid., 76.
area,” the island should be rendered “reasonably safe for human habitation” and returned “without cost” to the local government. The future date of return was undesignated.

During the 1950s and 1960s, navy officials claimed that Kahoʻolawe’s bombardment was still as essential to the defense of the U.S. as it had been during WWII. In other words, they insisted that Kahoʻolawe could not yet be returned. Meanwhile, the Navy pointed out that the explosives made it dangerous and “hopelessly wasted.” In April 1958, the population of the island reached a peak of 80 inhabitants when the Navy built new targets and rehabilitated access roads to the island’s two simulated airfields. As the war in Vietnam escalated, Kahoʻolawe’s use was intensified and nearby Maui residents became increasingly agitated by the danger and noise created by the bombing. Additional training around the islands also added to the residents’ frustration. In the summer of 1958, two atom bombs were visible from Honolulu, but the tests were not confirmed until March 1959 when the Star-Bulletin printed a story. On July 8, 1962 islanders caught glimpse of another bomb tested 800 miles away, near Johnston Island. This hydrogen bomb was fifty times more powerful than the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Despite the distance, the bomb lit up Hawaiʻi’s sky for an instant and the display of color “hung in the sky six minutes.” When concerns were raised about the threat of radiation, Hawaiʻi residents were consistently told that everything was safe. In 1964, Mīloliʻi villagers on the Big Island objected to bombing of Kauna Point south of Kona. In 1965, two planes mistakenly dropped eight 250-pound bombs on Niʻīhau which were intended for nearby Kaʻula Rock.

The perceived arrogance of the military’s disregard for the environment and unwillingness to designate a future date when the bombing would stop increased resentment by many groups. In September 1968, Lieutenant Commander King addressed a town meeting in Kahului, Maui where he emphasized that Hawaiʻi’s climate made it the best year-round training space in the Pacific and that “this [was] the last chance for our fighting forces to practice before they go under fire in Vietnam.” King then went on to

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645 This is MacDonald’s term, not a direct quote from the Navy. MacDonald, “Fixed in Time,” 77; Bob Krauss, “In One Ear,” Honolulu Advertiser, April 18, 1958, B1.
646 MacDonald, “Fixed in Time,” 77.
647 Chapin, Shaping History, 218.
present a film that showed the napalm bombing and shelling of the island. Their motion picture was called “Kahoʻolawe is Kaput.”\textsuperscript{649} His point was that the military’s continued use was not negotiable, nor was it in any shape to be returned to the people of Hawai‘i.

Exacerbating existing concerns among Maui residents, a 500-pound bomb was found on land leased to then Maui mayor Elmer Cravalho in 1969. Cravalho said he awoke one night to his home being rocked by a series of bombs. Planes had apparently accidentally dropped a bomb on his land; fortunately it did not explode. When it was detonated later, it left a crater approximately thirty feet wide and fifteen feet deep. Maui’s newspaper wrote that “the concussion shook residents all over Kihei and parts of central Maui,” causing the police to be flooded with phone calls. Cravalho’s “adamant” opposition to the bombing on Kahoʻolawe certainly intensified after this event.\textsuperscript{650}

By 1970 and 1971, numerous politicians in Hawai‘i opposed the continued use of Kahoʻolawe and were becoming increasingly frustrated with the continuing war in Vietnam. In June 1970, the Navy announced it would stop using Kauna Point for bombing practice, but no similar commitments were made for Kahoʻolawe. Thus, several attempts were made to end the bombing. First, Senator Hiram Fong issued a request; then Daniel Inouye, with the support of Representatives Patsy Mink and Spark Matsunaga, presented a bill in Congress.\textsuperscript{651} Soon after, Rear Admiral Thomas B. Hayward told a Rotary Club meeting on Maui that the Navy needed Kahoʻolawe through the year 2000. If denied the island, he threatened, “drastic measures” would be considered, such as transferring military forces from Hawai‘i to Guam or Micronesia.\textsuperscript{652} The military wanted perpetual access to the island and threatened the state through financial intimidation. Recognizing potential harm on the local economy, Hawaiʻi’s Chamber of Commerce unanimously (and predictably) voted in support of the Navy’s position. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Inouye assured the residents of Maui that “massive military movements out of Hawai‘i would not meet his approval.”\textsuperscript{653}

\textsuperscript{649} MacDonald, “Fixed in Time,” 78.
\textsuperscript{650} Maui News, August 23, 1969; Chapin, Shaping History, 342-3.
\textsuperscript{651} In September 1970, Fong requested that bombing stop by January 1, 1972. Inouye’s bill was in April 1971. MacDonald, “Fixed in Time,” 83.
\textsuperscript{652} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{653} Quoted in Ibid., 84.
Meanwhile, Navy Secretary John Chafee, bluntly said that Kahoʻolawe would not be returned, nor was it possible to share the island with the people. In response, Maui’s mayor and the Council Chairman Goro Hokama labeled his comments “the extreme height of arrogance.” In 1971, Mayor Cravalho and Life of the Land (a local ecology group) sued the Secretaries of Defense and Navy to stop bombing and requested an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In 1972, the navy hastily prepared the EIS and the lawsuit was dismissed.

In addition to assessing the damage of continued bombing, the EIS was a rhetorical exercise in validating the U.S. military’s current use of the island. It argued that the monarchy offered the first lease to the land in 1858 and that when King Kalākaua visited the island in 1876 he remarked that the island was fit “only for grazing.” In 1893, the “monarchy was overthrown and a U.S. Territory formed with the consent of the intervening Republic;” by 1909 the vegetation had “deteriorated so badly” that the legislature made it into a forest reserve and a botanist reported in 1913 that it was the “most eroded of any in Hawai‘i.”654 The Navy further validated their continued destruction by pointing out that it currently contained no “aesthetic value,” is “uninhabited by man,” and noise impact is “slight to nonexistent.”655 The military’s assertion was that the island was so eroded even before the military began using it for bombing (even King Kalākaua said it was useless); therefore, they should not be blamed for wrecking it, nor should they be responsible for cleaning it up. Additionally, since the first leases to the island had been granted by the monarchy, there should be no objection to private use of the land; therefore, it could not be sacred. The navy’s claim, of course, also neglects to divulge who overthrew the monarchy, removing its own culpability.

Kahoʻolawe and Hawaiian Sovereignty

As the bombing continued well into the 1970s—even after the war in Vietnam was over—many in Hawai‘i felt that the return of the island to civilian use was long overdue. Native Hawaiians, in particular, asserted their claims to the land based on their

655 Ibid., 15, 16.
indigeneity. A group of Native Hawaiians established the Protect Kahoʻolawe ʻOhana (PKO) in 1976. Their primary arguments were fourfold: Native Hawaiians have deep respect for the land; the bombing not only desecrated the land but also was an “affront to” Hawaiians and their culture, Hawaiians had a rich cultural and spiritual heritage, and the bombing prevented them from practicing their “Constitutionally provided freedom of religion.” In other words, PKO was not only protesting the military bombing, but also asserting Hawaiian sovereignty.

A new period of direct activism began in January 1976 when the PKO began a series of land occupations on the island during scheduled bombing exercises. The first attempt began with 35 protesters attempting to reach the island from Maui. Most were apprehended, but nine managed to get on the island; they became known as the “Kahoʻolawe Nine.” Seven of them were arrested within a few hours, but two eluded the military for two days. The Navy announced that the waters would be closed around the island to prevent more activists from reaching the island and to temporarily halt bombing practice. Bombing began again shortly after. In February, Senators Takeitani and Yamasaki introduced Resolutions requesting the President to rescind the Executive Order that gave authority of the island to the Navy. Only one senator voted against it (Andy Anderson). The resolution cited many reasons for ending the bombing: native sacred sites, pollution and destruction, risk of making it unfit for habitation, danger to Hawaiʻi civilians, negative impacts on Maui tourism and development, and increasing public use. The resolutions simultaneously recognized native sacred sites, but also legitimized state economy and business. This odd and contradicting combination, however, made it an agreeable topic that all sides could come together on. Kahoʻolawe had the ability to unify groups that had different priorities and is an exceptional case, for one, because the State was attempting to rescind an executive order pre-dating statehood. For the military, it was a direct affront to their position that it had the right to use Kahoʻolawe (or any place) perpetually and without question.

656 MacDonald, “Fixed in Time,” 73.
657 The “Kahoʻolawe Nine” included George Helm, Walter Ritte, Jr., Emmett Aluli, Ellen Miles, Ian Lind, Karla Villalba, Steven Morse, Kimo Aluli, and Kuwaipuna Gail Prejean.
658 The concurrent resolution was adopted in the House (SCR 44, SR 6, and SR 166).
Another reason Kahoʻolawe was an exceptional case was because it illuminates the contentious and ongoing contradictions of American colonialism and statehood. PKO members continued to land on the island despite significant fear and danger. They asserted that the land was theirs, while the military charged them with trespassing on “federal property.” In February 1977, four PKO members travelled to Washington, D.C. in an effort to speak to the president. Walter Ritte and Richard Sawyer also began a 35-day occupation on the island. Forty-six searchers were called in to search for the two men. A few days later, the Navy announced that they did not think anyone was on the island (their search was unsuccessful) and they resumed training, including live munitions. In March 1977, three PKO members attempted to return to Kahoʻolawe to get Ritte and Sawyer off the island. They were George Helm (founder of PKO), Kimo Mitchell, and Billy Mitchell. On March 7, Kimo Mitchell and George Helm were reported missing at sea after Billy last saw them near Molokini. The two men were never seen again. Haunani-Kay Trask has written that many Hawaiians, including ‘Ohana members, believe both were murdered. While the case has never been resolved, the Hawaiʻi Legislature’s research did identify the significant tensions between the PKO and the U.S. Navy. For example, at the height of the publicity over the protests, it was reported that some marines designed a t-shirt that read “Bomb Kahoʻolawe ‘Ohana.” From the perspective of Native Hawaiians, their land was under direct occupation by the U.S. military and they were being bombed by the navy.

The Unsettled Legacy of American Imperialism in Hawaiʻi

In January 1976, the State and Navy had jointly announced a program to identify and survey historic sites that could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This became the basis of significant criticism of continuing the bombing of Kahoʻolawe. In June 1977, after several more landings, the PKO filed a motion to stop the bombing

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660 Limited details of this t-shirt are provided in the Legislative Report, but it was added to the timeline of events around March 31, 1977. Kahoolawe: Aloha No: a Legislative Study of the Island of Kahoolawe (Honolulu: Hawaiʻi Legislature, Committee on Kahoolawe, 1978). Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull also mention these t-shirts in their book. They write that two marine pilots from Kāneʻohe Marine Corps Air Station responded to the protests by printing and distributing these shirts and that they later claimed the shirts “were in jest.” See Ferguson and Turnbull, Oh, Say, Can You See?, 215, note 20.
based on the military’s noncompliance with environmental and historic preservation laws. In order to assess the island’s sites to determine eligibility for becoming a “historic place,” the state legislature agreed the bombing needed to end. The assumption was that gaining recognition as a “historic place” would put the continued bombing in jeopardy and ultimately lead to the termination of bombing. To begin the assessment, the state legislature proposed additional archaeological research and oral histories, kama‘āina (native-born or those well acquainted with Hawai‘i) witnesses with appropriate knowledge to conduct research properly, maintaining the original Hawaiian place names for the island, and beginning the paperwork immediately. They also suggested that a long-term project be created so that the island could be an educational tool for students to learn Hawaiian history and culture.  

The legislative committee’s approach to handling Kaho‘olawe is very interesting because it simultaneously recognized the island to be part of the U.S. nation but also sovereign and separate from the nation. In some ways, the state was legitimizing native claims to the land and this could be seen as a gesture of self-determination. For example, they recognized the importance of Hawaiian oral history and native place names. They also recognized that the land was sacred to Hawaiians because they are the original inhabitants, but also because archaeological digs would verify the presence of iwi and heiaus that would directly link them to the land. In other ways, the legislature’s approach directly contradicted Native Hawaiian self-determination. For example, their objective was to end the bombing in order to return the island to the state. They were also working within the framework of the United States and federal guidelines to define “historic places.” The State would remain the beneficiary, not Hawaiians.

In 1980, a consent decree was reached between the navy and PKO (Aluli et al. vs. Brown). The navy agreed to survey and protect historic and cultural sites, clear surface ordnances, and continue soil conservation and revegetation programs. It also allowed monthly PKO access to the island for religious and cultural purposes, and limited (not ended) training on the island. In 1981, the entire island was placed on the National

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661 Kaho‘olawe: Aloha No, 55-7.
662 I say gesture because it did not come with anything substantive, nor did it secure any kind of sovereignty.
Register of Historic Places. Because bombing and training did not end, the PKO continued to pressure the government. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush issued an executive order that discontinued the bombing of Kahoʻolawe.\footnote{Kyle Kajihiro points out that this move was seen as a political move to boost the sagging election campaign of Hawaiʻi Republican congressional candidate Pat Saiki, 181.} In 1990 Congress established the Kahoʻolawe Island Conveyance Commission to recommend the terms for returning the island to the state. The Commission submitted its final report with findings and recommendations to Congress in 1993. That same year, a state law created the Kahoʻolawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) to oversee the cleanup, restoration, and management of the island. It also specified that the island would eventually be transferred to a sovereign Native Hawaiian nation “upon its recognition by the U.S. and state of Hawaiʻi.”\footnote{Kyle Kajihiro, “The Militarization of Hawaiʻi,” 181; Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes, Chapter 6K.} Title X of the 1994 Department of Defense Appropriation Act transferred Kahoʻolawe to the State and appropriated $400 million for cleanup costs.\footnote{Title X of the Fiscal Year 1994 Department of Defense Appropriation Act (PL 103-139, 107 Stat. 1418. 1479-1484).} The navy began cleanup in 1998, but two years later, they reported that they would not be able to fulfill their goals. Cleanup efforts ended in 2003 but only a small portion of the island was deemed safe enough for unrestricted human activity. Twenty five percent was not cleared at all and unescorted access to these areas remains unsafe today. Nonetheless, the island was transferred from the navy to the State of Hawaiʻi in 2003. Today it remains in the possession of the State, in perpetual reserve until a sovereign Hawaiian “entity” is recognized by the U.S. and the State of Hawaiʻi.

In Hawaiʻi, it can sometimes feel like the military, U.S. government, and State have “amnesia” about whose land it is and what existed before the United States. For example, American place-names have replaced Hawaiian ones and the English language has replaced Hawaiian. America’s Hawaiʻi historiography justifies American influence and assimilation, but that does not mean that the writers of history have forgotten the violence or use of force in acquiring Hawaiʻi. The example of Kahoʻolawe is particularly fascinating because it reveals the instabilities of American imperialism in Hawaiʻi, which reveals the ambiguities of statehood. The use of the island during wartime and through executive orders contradicts messages that America acquired Hawaiʻi democratically.
The story of the PKO and their widely publicized protests reveal that American imperialism continued beyond statehood and that Native Hawaiians continue to assert their sovereignty over the United States. Both of these also contradict the commonly repeated message that Hawaiians welcomed both the United States government and military with open arms. Despite efforts by the military institutions and their allies in Hawai‘i to remind civilians that the military is necessary and should be respected, many Hawai‘i residents—both native and non—joined together in opposition to the bombing of Kaho‘olawe. They publicly asserted that they did not feel that the bombings benefited them or made them safe, which directly contradicted the military’s messages.

Kaho‘olawe’s current status—in perpetual reserve until a sovereign Hawaiian “entity” is recognized—simultaneously recognizes the legitimacy of the State and a future (or reinstated) sovereign Hawaiian nation. There are reasonable doubts that a sovereign nation would ever be recognized by the U.S. and the State, but the utterance of such also suggests that imperial forgetfulness is also “replete with memory.” I have attempted to illustrate that the historiography of Hawai‘i has been consistently at the center of the struggle to control Hawai‘i’s future. Marita Sturken says, “history can be thought of as a narrative that has in some way been sanctioned or valorized by institutional frameworks or publishing enterprises.” It does not comprise one single narrative. Instead, “many histories are constantly under debate and in conflict with each other.” Hawai‘i’s history is full of these debates and stories vying against one another, and they all came to a head in debates about the military’s use of Kaho‘olawe in the late 1970s. The “missing” narratives are not necessarily forgotten, nor false. Remembering and forgetting are “co-constitutive processes; each is essential to the other’s existence.” The Hawai‘i State Legislature, in a moment of “remembering,” reflected on an emerging cultural renaissance among Native Hawaiians, sparked by Kaho‘olawe. Their ephemeral analysis directly challenged the mainstream colonial historiography that had been so pervasive and frequently repeated around statehood. They recognized that Kaho‘olawe was a symbol of contemporary Native Hawaiians’ concerns and had “caused them to

666 Marita Sturken, Tangled Memories, 2.
667 Ibid., 4.
668 Ibid., 2.
reexamine both themselves and the world in which they live,” by focusing on the issues that concerned them most, “including reparations.” They also recognized their claims to the land and the “imposition . . . of a western, ‘white,’ Christian culture which viewed Hawai‘i and its people as pagan and inferior...” through forced assimilation. The imposition of American colonialism on the Hawaiian monarchy—and a denial of Hawaiian sovereignty—was overlooked in the mainstream statehood celebrations. Emphasis was instead placed on all Hawai‘i’s citizens gaining civil rights with statehood. Hawaiians were described to be friendly and hospitable to further American influence. No utterances were made about Hawaiians needing reparations. To do so would have acknowledged that there were injuries needing repair.

In contrast to stories around the time of statehood that repeated the idea that Hawai‘i was a failed (“feudal”) system yet led out of “darkness” by American democracy, the legislature’s reflection on Hawaiians’ direct opposition to military bombing of Kaho‘olawe opened up an opportunity to reflect on Hawaiians’ loss of culture, history, and nation. The military testing in Hawai‘i, which often put the U.S. government and Native Hawaiians in direct opposition to one another, elucidates issues of indigeneity, self-determination, and colonialism. These issues were often denied and ignored as the Territory and individuals advocated for statehood. Statehood appropriated the issue of civil rights within the context of the Cold War. As the legislative report points out, Hawaiians didn’t gain civil rights, but lost their land and culture. Kyle Kajihiro points out, “Kaho‘olawe was the first contemporary struggle to directly confront the U.S. military as an imperial force in Hawai‘i, and it helped to illuminate the contradictions of U.S. occupation and militarism.”

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669 Kaho‘olawe: Aloha No, 238.
670 Ibid., 241-2.
CONCLUSION:

50 Years of Statehood

In the 1967 film *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner*, an interracial couple, after meeting in Hawai‘i, fly to San Francisco. African American John Prentice (Sidney Poitier) is about to meet the family of his white fiancé Joey Drayton (Katharine Houghton). The Draytons are surprised when they find out Prentice is black, just as the Prentices are shocked to find out Joey is white. Prentice is a reputable doctor of tropical medicine and having done much research in Africa, was invited to lecture at Hawai‘i’s university and is now on his way to Geneva to work for the World Health Organization. Mr. Drayton (Spencer Tracy) asks Prentice if he and Joey have considered what problems their bi-racial children will have. He answers, “[Joey] feels that every single one of our children will be president of the United States and they’ll all have colorful administrations.”

In an almost uncanny irony, the story of America’s first black president, Barack Obama, shared a lot of similarities with film’s plotline. Obama’s own white mother and African father met at the University of Hawai‘i (in either 1959 or 1960). Obama was sworn into office in January 2009, the same year Hawai‘i celebrated its fiftieth anniversary of statehood. That presidential election had interesting connections to both Hawai‘i and Alaska, the last two states to be admitted. Barack Obama was of course born and raised in Hawai‘i and his mother attended the East-West Center. Obama’s Republican challenger John McCain, chose Sarah Palin as his vice presidential pick. Palin was from Alaska, but had even attended college in Hawai‘i for a short stint. John McCain also had connections to Hawai‘i. His father John S. McCain, Jr. was the Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, headquartered in Hawai‘i, from 1968-1972. In some ways, the 2008 election could be seen as a barometer of how far the nation had come in terms of civil rights and how far Hawai‘i had come within the American political sphere.
In other ways, Obama’s election brought to the surface lingering doubts about Hawaiʻi’s Americanness. During Obama’s campaigning in 2008, Cokie Roberts, a National Public Radio senior news analyst, criticized Obama for vacationing in Hawaiʻi. She said, “I know his grandmother lives in Hawaiʻi and I know Hawaiʻi is a state, but it has the look of him going off to some sort of foreign, exotic place.”672 She followed that comment by saying, “He should be in Myrtle Beach.” The following day, Roberts repeated the same sentiment but added that vacationing in Hawaiʻi "makes him seem a little bit more exotic."673

On the one hand, Obama was celebrated because he symbolized a multicultural identity. For example, Melissa Harris-Perry describes the brilliance of his 2004 keynote address during the Democratic National Convention:

His speech was carefully crafted to build a sense of shared identity with every person listening. He noted his connection to the Greatest Generation through his grandparents. He could relate to those of African heritage as well as to white Midwesterners . . . He talked of little league in liberal places and gay identity in conservative places . . . His goal . . . was to encourage listeners from many different backgrounds to find their own story in his personal narrative.”674

On the other hand, Obama’s links to Hawaiʻi made him “exotic” and “foreign.” In other words, Hawaiʻi itself is still considered exotic and foreign, even fifty years after statehood. Cokie Roberts’ comments also had a racial tone because she implied that vacationing in Myrtle Beach (South Carolina) would make him seem more familiar, assimilated, and “white.”

Questions about Obama’s “belonging” to the United States have been raised throughout his presidency. He has been accused of lying about his place of birth (and therefore nationality) and asked to release his birth certificate proving where he was born. These criticisms have come mostly from the fringe, but well-known icons such as Donald Trump have also participated. Some interpret these accusations as just baseless attacks on

672 ABC’s This Week with George Stephanopoulos, August 10, 2008.
673 This was not a one-time “slip.” Roberts made the same point again on August 11, 2008 on NPR’s Morning Edition.
a president that they disagree with, while others point out the implicit (or explicit, depending who you ask) racism in asking a person of color to show their “credentials.” Critics have claimed that he was born in Kenya or Indonesia, not Hawai‘i. But, what would it mean for Obama’s American citizenship to be questioned on the basis that Hawai‘i was not part of America? Or, what if Obama was born not in 1961, but in 1958, before Hawai‘i became the fiftieth state? Of course these questions do not get asked because Hawai‘i is presumed to be part of the United States. However, Cokie Roberts’ criticism simultaneously suggests that Hawai‘i is still not American enough, or perpetually foreign/other.

Many of the issues I have covered in this project are still lingering. Tourism remains the state’s top industry and each year millions of people visit Hawai‘i. The tourism industry in particular, but not exclusively, continues to tout Hawai‘i’s reputation of racial harmony and understanding. The assumption is that this reputation is partly what keeps people coming to Hawai‘i. Therefore, when tensions arise, the state takes notice. One of the most damning stories came in 2007 when USA Today published a high-profile story about Hawai‘i’s “simmering” racial tensions. It told of a recent altercation between a Native Hawaiian father and son and a white military couple near Pearl Harbor after the white couple hit the parked car of the Hawaiian family. It is in the state’s interest to minimize these reports, as then Governor Linda Lingle did with her comment that “[Hawai‘i] is a model for the world.” However, other voices conceded that there were, as Jon Matsuoka, Dean of the UH School of Social Work, put it, “deep seated and historical” tensions. UH Law Professor, Jon Van Dyke commented rather candidly that racial tensions don’t usually get much public attention because “people are afraid they might lose customers.”

As commemoration plans for the fiftieth anniversary of statehood approached, many acknowledged that great contention still existed about Hawai‘i’s road to statehood. Commemoration organizers also acknowledged that despite their best efforts to create one, a monolithic narrative was not possible. The governor’s office and Wai‘anae High

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675 Martin Kasindorf, “Racial Tensions are Simmering in Hawai‘i’s Melting Pot,” USA Today, March 6, 2007.
School’s Searider Productions produced a series of radio and television segments entitled “50 Voices of Statehood.” During the official commemoration events, while attendees celebrated inside, protesters gathered outside. Hawai‘i remains a contested state. Some cite the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, others the 1898 annexation with no treaty, others decry the illegal plebiscite vote in 1959, while others emphasize the continuing military occupation of the Hawaiian Islands. Throughout this project, I have attempted to point out the competing stories told about Hawai‘i’s relationship to the United States.

Chapter one looked at the 1950s to understand how Hawai‘i went from a territory to a state. The two primary obstacles Hawai‘i faced were fears about rampant communism in the islands and Hawai‘i’s racial diversity that caused concern over Hawai‘i’s loyalty to the United States. I argue that films made in and about Hawai‘i during the 1950s played a significant role in “domesticating” Hawai‘i by presenting it as American and safe. Through this process of domestication and assimilation, the United States and by extension Americans, gradually adopted Hawai‘i as their own, easing the transition from territory to state. Popular culture, films, and statehood hearings fed off one another to create powerful discourses about America’s national and global interests in Hawai‘i during the Cold War. Realizing that Hawai‘i’s exceptionalism was strategic, American politicians and other statehood proponents concluded that Hawai‘i’s reputation of racial diversity could be mobilized to counter Soviet claims that America was racist and imperialist. The potential gains of granting Hawai‘i statehood, in Cold War terms, represented an important opportunity to demonstrate that the United States did not discriminate on the basis of race and was committed to equality and democracy.

Once statehood was achieved, Hawai‘i’s racial harmony was considered both a domestic and foreign Cold War achievement and efforts were made to share this story with the world. Chapter two examines both domestic and international attention to the story of Hawai‘i statehood. Domestically, it was celebrated that Hawai‘i was delighted to be part of the United States and proof that American democracy was available to everyone regardless of race. Globally, the U.S. Information Agency and Voice of America helped spread the news by distributing books, films, and news stories in hopes
that Hawaiʻi’s recent statehood would enhance America’s reputation of dedication to racial equality and democracy. More than anyone else, James Michener became Hawaiʻi’s most important domestic and foreign ambassador. He and his colleagues—A. Grove Day and Bob Krauss—became unofficial yet influential “experts” on all things Hawaiʻi and helped Washington assert a global reputation for Hawaiʻi. They helped create an American historiography about statehood that asserted America’s benevolence in Hawaiʻi and disputed claims of American imperialism. I argue, however, that this historiography actually reinforced the same racist and colonial tropes it claimed to reject.

Chapter three continues to examine ways Washington hoped to use Hawaiʻi for the Cold War. Because Hawaiʻi was considered a cultural “bridge” between the East and West, where diverse people could live peacefully side by side, projects aimed at Cold War cultural diplomacy were quickly established. Hoping to bring together Americans and Asians in Hawaiʻi to better facilitate international cooperation, Washington hoped Americans would be effective ambassadors and promote American values during the Cold War. As it turned out, American and Asian grantees at the East-West Center found ways to challenge U.S. Cold War policies in Vietnam. They were not pawns for American empire; instead, they used their position and privilege within Hawaiʻi and the State Department to advocate for a different kind of foreign policy and highlight the limitations in the State Department’s rhetoric of Cold War diplomacy.

The last chapter juxtaposes the projects aimed at cultural diplomacy with Hawaiʻi’s expanding military roles during the Cold War. Just as Hawaiʻi was considered strategic for cultural diplomacy because of its similarities to Asia, Hawaiʻi was seen as a strategic military training ground for the same reasons. Hawaiʻi was considered a symbolic place, unlike anywhere else, where cultural diplomacy was touted. At the same time, however, Hawaiʻi was considered a crucial spot for military training and testing so that the U.S. military could escalate its competitive and aggressive stance in the Cold War. Hawaiʻi was a place of peace and war. By examining the controversial bombing of Kahoʻolawe, it is clear that Hawaiians were not passive bystanders to the continued military occupation of the islands, nor did they rescind their right to self-determination after statehood.
Taken together, my goal has been to problematize the historiography about Hawai‘i statehood and complicate the simplistic view that Hawai‘i became the fiftieth state through a genuinely democratic and altruistic process. I have also tried to highlight the importance of Hawai‘i to domestic and international debates during the Cold War. Despite common claims that statehood was universally celebrated and proved that America did not practice imperialism, I have argued that statehood actually maintained American imperialism over Hawai‘i and we can see the legacies still today.
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