Introduction

IN A MOVE that signaled a break with Democratic Party tradition since the New Deal, John F. Kennedy declared in the summer of 1960 that, rather than opening his campaign in Detroit on Labor Day, his bid for office would officially launch in Honolulu, followed by a stop in Alaska. To Kennedy, Hawai'i was a powerful example of the "New Frontier," the vague but evocative theme of his campaign and, eventually, his presidency. Suggesting to Americans that global developments demanded a new kind of labor, Kennedy extolled the "spirit of adventure" that had led their nineteenth-century forebears to seek novel experiences in Hawai'i. He insisted that this spirit "must be awakened again in the American people if we are to maintain our position as a leader in the free world." Hawai'i, Kennedy claimed, was not only a product of past expansionist sentiment, but must also be a site for its rechristening—and for the work of securing America's political and ideological influence abroad. As the nation's first state with a majority Asian population, Hawai'i held great symbolic value to America's expansionist global mission. "It represents the outstanding example in the world today of peoples of many races and national origins living and working together in peace and harmony," Kennedy said. "It represents as well a bridge to Asia."[1] But while Kennedy was concerned about international perceptions of American race relations and praised Hawai'i as an example of a racially tolerant society, he was notably reluctant to pursue an active civil rights agenda during either his campaign or his presidency. Perhaps Hawai'i, with its glint of newness, appealed to Kennedy because the island state seemed to be removed from the troubles of the mainland, and from the burdens of its history.

Kennedy did not, in fact, launch his campaign in Hawai'i, choosing instead to open in Alaska and send to Honolulu in his place vice presidential candidate Lyndon Johnson, who had gone to great lengths to secure Hawai'i statehood in the Senate. As with civil rights, Kennedy, in contrast to Johnson, was better at rhetoric than action. Kennedy's original intent proved prophetic, however,

when his whisker-thin victory over Richard Nixon was secured with the help of a recount in Hawai'i that showed Kennedy just 115 votes ahead of his opponent—a reversal of the original count that managed to put Hawai'i's three electoral votes in the Democratic column and triggered a dramatic last-minute notification to Congress shortly before it was due to certify the election.[2] In its first full year as a state, Hawai'i played an outsized role on the American political stage.

But in September 1960, Kennedy could not have known that Hawai'i would be a flashpoint in his election. To him, Hawai'i was as much an idea as a place. He did not have to experience its magic to invoke it. Of course, Hawai'i *was* a place, one whose culturally mixed society and geographic proximity to Asia had given form to the visions that surrounded it. Those characteristics would be deployed in the service of various policy- and money-making projects that brought unprecedented numbers of people to the islands in the decades following Hawai'i's admission as a state in 1959. Only a small fraction of mainland Americans would come to know the islands firsthand, however. Like Kennedy's use of Hawai'i to suggest broader themes about America's role in the world, Hawai'i's resonance in American politics and culture far exceeded its size.

For a few crucial decades in the second half of the twentieth century, America looked to its newest and outermost state for ideas on how to live in an increasingly interdependent world. Hawai'i—a lonely north Pacific archipelago, its jagged curve of islands pointed like a finger toward Asia—was perhaps never more relevant to the United States than it was in the years after statehood. For in Hawai'i, an array of powerful people saw the future, one in which the United States was no longer shackled by old ideas of race, culture, or territoriality. They sought to construct Hawai'i as a site for both understanding and transcending human difference and for projecting U.S. global power—twinned projects that came together in Hawai'i and rippled outward.

This book explores how and why Hawai'i was invested with such significance at the height of American Cold War hegemony. It marks the passage of Hawai'i from territory to state, a process that also transformed Hawai'i from a suspect alien land into an imagined racial and consumer paradise and conduit for American-Pacific relations. The core producers of this new vision of Hawai'i were centered in both Honolulu and the mainland United States, drawn mainly from the often-interlocking ranks of Hawai'i's Democratic leadership, Pacific-oriented members of Congress, modernization advocates in higher education and in the federal government, popular liberal writers, and Hawai'i's business community, notably those in the tourism industry. These elites helped institutionalize Hawai'i as a space where the United States met Asia—and where Americans could encounter Asians—in fruitful, and lucrative, exchange.

While developments in Hawai'i may at first glance appear to be peripheral to broader changes in postwar America, I argue that Hawai'i statehood represented a key transitional moment in how Americans defined their nation's role in the world, and how they negotiated the problem of social difference at home. Hawai'i may have been thousands of miles away from the rest of the United States, but it was this very remove that made it so influential in this period.

Unlike all forty-nine states that came before it, Hawai'i's full inclusion in the nation was based on claims that emphasized *not* Hawai'i's sameness to the rest of the United States, but rather its fundamental difference. Hawai'i had met the constitutional criteria for statehood well before World War II, and its political and educational institutions followed mainland practice. But its mixed and majority ethnically Asian population was a perpetual obstacle to statehood, even up until the late 1950s. By 1959, however, Hawai'i was valuable to the United States precisely because it was home to so many people of Asian descent.

Other states, such as Oklahoma or New Mexico, experienced protracted statehood campaigns because of their sizable nonwhite populations. But Hawai'i was the only one with a majority of people whose race, for most of its territorial history, made them ineligible for naturalized citizenship—thus making its eventual admission as a state a powerful marker of historical change. But just what was the nature of that change? Why did postwar Americans, from tourists to Peace Corps officials, decide to embrace Hawai'i, both the place and the idea, so enthusiastically after rejecting its people for so long?

The answer lies in the intersection of global decolonization and the delegitimation of legalized racism in U.S. politics and culture. These were related developments, as other scholars have shown.[3] *Gateway State*, however, brings postwar racial formation in the United States and global decolonization into the same frame—not just analytically, but materially, as Hawai'i's change in legal status was based on a reimagining of race, culture, and foreignness. Hawai'i statehood, in marked contrast to the parallel issue of Alaska statehood, transcended its more prosaic implications to become part of a larger national reckoning over the meaning of American democracy in the era of civil rights and decolonization.

Once a racially problematic overseas territory whose population was deemed unassimilable, Hawai'i by the 1960s was being touted as a global exemplar of racial harmony and an emblem of the New Frontier. This was a concept that signaled a more expansive understanding of American national identity—both in terms of who could be counted as American at home and what areas of the world were considered to be within the U.S. sphere of influence.

Continental U.S. territories were expected to become states and were incorporated as part of the United States on the basis of their adherence to norms of whiteness and European culture; this was of a piece with the larger

movement toward national consolidation in the Americas and Europe in the nineteenth century.[4] Hawai'i statehood was likewise a result of a broader global development—decolonization—that also promoted national consolidation. But Hawai'i statehood, in this context, had very new implications for the links between nation and race.

Global decolonization and Hawai'i statehood complemented U.S. efforts to promote the nation-state as the primary building block of the postwar global order. As the leading power of the noncommunist world, the United States "startlingly naturalized the free nation," drawing on the tradition of Open Door diplomacy to advance its own political and economic interests as European colonialism collapsed.[5] Against this background, Hawai'i, as an overseas colony legally distinct from the rest of the United States, appeared to many as an aberration needing resolution.

But American support for the nation-state, and Hawai'i statehood along with it, were also a response to the demands of the peoples of the decolonizing world. Grassroots, revolutionary forces abroad had transformative effects on the U.S. state and society in the postwar period. The United States may have sought to control the process of decolonization, but it did not originate it. And while many Americans may have welcomed the end of European empire, they nonetheless found themselves in a reactive position when the calls for self-government across Asia and Africa roared onto the global stage after World War II. American postwar policy, though it certainly altered the course of colonialism's demise, collided with a global movement that had already been set in motion, one that in turn shaped the Cold War itself.[6] Ordinary people in the colonial world demanding their right to self-determination changed the course of global history, often upending the domestic societies of their former rulers.[7] Britain and France may have experienced the most visible reverberations, but the impact of decolonization on the United States was likewise transformative, if less immediately obvious. Hawai'i statehood was one such transformation.

As a non-self-governing territory with a mostly Asian population—many of whose members became eligible for citizenship only in 1952, when Congress overturned anti-Asian naturalization laws—Hawai'i was a problem for the United States, belying its anticolonialist, antiracist rhetoric. The only perceived solution, however, was not to grant independence, as was done in the Philippines, but to bind Hawai'i ever more tightly to the continental United States. In the process, Hawai'i was brought closer to the United States at the same time that it was being instituted as a portal to the foreign.

Statehood, according to its supporters, would be a boon to U.S. foreign relations, and a practically cost-free one at that. It would, with one piece of legislation, demonstrate to the decolonizing world that America practiced what it preached on the issue of self-government. And by making Hawai'i a fully equal

part of the nation, as opposed to casting it off, the United States could counter Soviet claims of American racism and show the Third World that it valued non-Western culture. Hawai'i—as a site of American settler colonialism and as "bridge to Asia" during a period in which the Pacific was of increasing strategic importance to the United States—required self-government without severance.

Gateway State exposes the links among postwar racial formation, decolonization, and U.S. global expansion. It demonstrates that the United States was not only engaged in influencing the outcomes of various struggles for decolonization abroad, but was also the author of its own project of decolonization, one that shaped popular conceptions of race and national identity. In the context of global decolonization, it was no longer enough for the U.S government to promote straightforward Americanization, either at home or abroad. With Third World nationalists calling for an end to foreign domination, the United States needed to convince them that it respected others' cultural traditions.

Hawai'i, as the most recent state to join the union and the most seemingly different, was portrayed as the perfect staging ground for America's newly ambitious foreign policy and as an antidote to accusations of American racism and cultural chauvinism. Moreover, unlike many parts of the mainland that called into question America's commitment to racial equality, Hawai'i appeared to present a ready-made model of interracial amity; it needed only to be exploited, not fostered through legislation or painful social change. Although Hawai'i had long been known among social scientists as the "melting pot of the Pacific" for its mix of Polynesian, Asian, and European cultures, with statehood that cosmopolitan reputation acquired new stakes, and new valence.

The positive emphasis on Hawai'i's mixed racial and ethnic makeup stood in contrast to earlier national debates over the corrosive impact of racialized immigrants on America's white-dominated culture. Much of the popular discourse around immigration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had focused alternately on exclusion and assimilation, with the two positions sharing a common fear of the foreign. Instead, in postwar discourse Hawai'i was lauded not only as a model of successful Americanization but as something more complex—as an example of useful foreignness.

Besides bringing the United States closer to Asia, Hawai'i could impart lessons of racial tolerance to Americans in the continental United States. Meanwhile, the immigrant population in Hawai'i and its desire for statehood reaffirmed American faith in its national superiority.[8] The acceptance of Asians in Hawai'i as full U.S. citizens thus depended, ironically, on their Asianness.

Even before statehood was secured, powerful advocates in Hawai'i and on the mainland had begun working to harness the islands' newfound prominence toward concrete foreign policy ends. In particular, they sought to turn

Hawai'i into a center for "mutual understanding," where Americans and Asians could encounter each other under ideal conditions. By 1962, Hawai'i was home to the East-West Center, a federally funded graduate program at the University of Hawai'i aimed at cultural and technical "interchange" between Americans and Asians, as well as the Peace Corps' largest training site for American volunteers during the 1960s. Peace Corps officials hoped that interaction with Hawai'i's multiracial society would catalyze the psychological refashioning they believed was necessary for "inter-cultural communication."

Meanwhile, Hawai'i's people were enlisted in the effort to solidify the new state's role as bridge to Asia. American elites were not only engaged in an effort to demonstrate to the decolonizing world Americans' respect for racial and ethnic minorities, as other scholars have shown. They were also keenly interested in tapping the cultural knowledge of those minority populations, particularly people of Asian descent, and using it to win friends in Asia. According to Jack Burns, Hawai'i's most influential governor (1962–74), the people of Hawai'i possessed valuable knowledge about "the problems the Asiatic peoples have in adjusting to the new modes of life" and so constituted "our best mediator with those peoples."[9] Asian Americans in Hawai'i thus never lost their perceived connection to Asia or became "white," as had other immigrant groups; instead, their racial and cultural difference was transformed into a marketable resource, one that could be deployed to help other Americans navigate an increasingly globalized world dominated by an expansionist United States.[10]

In short, Hawai'i's difference was turned into an instrument of American foreign policy. The conversations about Hawai'i in the postwar era also reverberated beyond the foreign policy establishment. Hawai'i statehood thus helped usher out a strictly assimilationist paradigm for addressing racial and ethnic difference in American politics and culture. Instead, as administrators of the University of Hawai'i's new East-West Center claimed, the fiftieth state was supposed to exemplify "the useful employment of diversities for mutual good"—a concept that, I argue, represented an early iteration of what would later be called multiculturalism.[11]

"Mutual good" in this instance referred to the spread of American modernization practices to the decolonizing world. Most accounts of multiculturalism in the United States have attributed its formation to a domestic, grassroots effort by minority communities to assert their rights to cultural recognition in the wake of formal legal equality. But as the ideas circulating in and around Hawai'i during the statehood era attest, the emergence of multiculturalist ideology among liberal elites and at the highest levels of policy was, in part, a product of American global expansion, and appeared in inchoate form as early as the 1950s. *Gateway State* shows how postwar liberal multiculturalism was

developed in Hawai'i as a tool of global power, and then embraced, reformulated, and contested by ordinary Americans.

The ideas on multiculturalism developed in Hawai'i were not mere rhetoric: poststatehood Hawai'i became a physical center for facilitating the new cultural encounters of the Cold War, with varying degrees of success. For those Americans seeking to sway the loyalties of people in Asia and the Pacific, Hawai'i was not only seen as a symbolic representation of America's commitment to democracy and diversity; it was also a place where people from both Asia and the U.S. mainland were physically transported in order to prove the veracity of that message. But those cultural encounters did not always go as planned. Moreover, they often revealed the cultural chauvinism of the Americans who orchestrated them, despite their claims that such encounters were intended to prove otherwise.

Meanwhile, popular media and other forms of cultural production amplified the image of Hawai'i as land of social amity and cultural mixing. As liberal writers and activists looked to Hawai'i as a model for domestic race relations, food writers and garment manufacturers promoted Hawai'i cuisine and fashion as vehicles for expressing one's cosmopolitanism and racial liberalism. The Hawai'i tourism industry, above all, helped to solidify the vision of the islands as a racial paradise. Aided by the backing of the new state government, the Hawai'i tourism industry suggested to ordinary Americans that they could take part in the same kinds of cultural exchange experienced by Peace Corps volunteers and East-West Center students.

As the varying narratives of statehood-era Hawai'i suggest, much of Hawai'i's allure lay in its novelty, and in its mutability. As such, those looking to Hawai'i for solutions saw what was useful to see, for whatever political or economic purpose. Hawai'i, a place with its own complex past, much of it disconnected from that of the West, reflected back to them an idealized version of the United States, as if it had always been so. But the production of Hawai'i as a model of racial amity distorted the reality of life in Hawai'i as well as the sources of racial inequality on the mainland. A decade after statehood the movement for ethnic studies at the University of Hawai'i challenged the liberal multiculturalism of state institutions and helped to fuel the nascent Hawaiian sovereignty movement. Both called into question the myths around Hawai'i as a symbol of American democracy, anticolonialism, and racial egalitarianism.

What these debates would eventually reveal was the contested nature of Hawai'i statehood itself. Statehood was a paradoxical form of "decolonization" that had broadened U.S. democracy but did not overturn colonialism. Rather, decolonization and colonialism overlapped in Hawai'i. For Hawai'i's people of Asian descent—whose presence in Hawai'i was itself a result of American

empire—statehood was a form of decolonization: they gained equal national representation as part of a state that was now fully integrated, legally, with the continental United States. This coincided with, and reinforced, their transformation in status in American immigration law and in U.S. popular culture. For Native Hawaiians, however, statehood was an extension, and a definitive normalization, of U.S. settler colonialism and the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian state. It was at once an admission and a denial of American colonialism that placed the prospect of Hawaiian independence even further out of reach. So while statehood represented the expansion of American society and law to include a wider swathe of peoples and cultural norms, this expansion was accompanied by a process of national consolidation that limited the political options for those who might not want to participate in the U.S. project.[12]

These paradoxes and contradictions provide insight into the ways in which decolonization reshaped both U.S. foreign policy and domestic society in postwar America. Hawai'i, I argue, embodied many of the tensions inherent in America's national self-image as an anticolonial global power. A product of American conquest, the state of Hawai'i was now being extolled as the embodiment of American democracy. These same disjunctures shaped American actions in the decolonizing world, where the United States repeatedly announced its benevolent, anti-imperial intent while simultaneously using military violence to police intolerable behavior—namely, anything resembling an embrace of communism—by Third World nations.

Just as Hawai'i statehood represented both widening social participation and national consolidation, American Cold War policy at the global level promoted both broader multicultural inclusion and new limitations on acceptable forms of political economy. Hawai'i, as a site for promoting mutual understanding and as the base for various military interventions aimed at containing communism in Asia, was located at the nexus of these two projects. Indeed, Hawai'i's designation as a staging ground for projecting American cultural power grew out of its history as the center of U.S. military operations in the Pacific, and America's seemingly conflicting missions of mutual understanding and military coercion often coincided in Hawai'i. The notion of Hawai'i as "gateway to Asia" emerged in the nineteenth century among military strategists who were seeking a coaling station for navy steamships. As a result, the military quickly became a major force in the islands, and it has profoundly shaped their relationship to the United States and affected Hawai'i's own economic, social, and spatial landscape. It was the U.S. military presence in Hawai'i that made it a target for the Japanese attack that triggered America's entry into World War II. Later, Hawai'i's transition out of a plantation economy went hand in hand with massive military spending in the islands.[13]

This is not to say that the uses of Hawai'i as a center for global exchange hid an ulterior motive or served as cover for more nefarious activities. Rather, I take seriously the utopian discourses around Hawai'i while maintaining a critical eye toward their practical implications, evasions, and inconsistencies. Rhetoric rarely served as simply a deceptive veil in U.S. foreign policy, but usually originated from deeply held ideological assumptions.[14] Moreover, the very disconnect between rhetoric and action itself shaped American foreign relations during the Cold War. U.S. empire, as Amy Kaplan argues, has been fundamentally incoherent—simultaneously pursuing conflicting goals, such as national boundedness and colonial expansion.[15] One distinguishing feature of U.S. empire has been the presence, going back to the early republic, of powerful anti-imperial forces within the United States.[16] This long-standing strain of anti-imperialism, however myopic or hypocritical, animated the ways in which the United States behaved as a global superpower.

Nevertheless, while the founders of Hawai'i's Pacific-directed institutions in the years after statehood did not always work deliberately to further U.S. domination in the Pacific, they did operate within a set of assumptions that narrowed the scope of action and debate. Many seemed genuinely to believe that Americans had much to learn from other peoples. Yet this view existed in tension with a system of beliefs, written into the very structure of those institutions, that took for granted the superiority of America's economy, political organization, and social relations.

Historical scholarship on modern Hawai'i has been limited in scope, and for the most part has not delved deeply, if at all, into questions about the relationship between social change in the United States and American postwar expansionism. Much of it has focused on the impact of American intervention on the islands—with annexation serving as the pivotal moment in defining Hawai'i's relationship to the United States—or the particularities of Hawai'i's local social structure and politics. The stories of American missionary settlements in Hawai'i, the subsequent growth of Hawai'i's plantation economy and immigrant labor force, and American annexation of the islands have been relatively well covered. Few accounts, however, have explored the impact of Hawai'i on the United States, or how changing American attitudes toward Hawai'i represented broader social and cultural developments. The literature on statehood often treats it as solely a political issue.[17] Some scholars have begun to explore the international dimensions of Hawai'i statehood, placing statehood in the context of the Cold War and American foreign policy. But the focus of these analyses is limited to policymakers and major news coverage of congressional debates and takes a limited view of statehood's larger meaning and impact.[18]

Gateway State seeks to delocalize and open up the study of Hawai'i statehood by locating it within the context of both U.S. foreign relations and

domestic politics and culture. As Asia came to occupy a central place in U.S. Cold War strategy, so too did Hawai'i. Those strategic concerns in turn had a far-reaching impact on policy, politics, and culture in both Hawai'i and the rest of the United States.

This study expands on a burgeoning historiography that situates twentieth-century American history within a wider global frame that draws on many of the themes and methodologies of traditional diplomatic history while also expanding its analytical scope and bringing attention to a broader set of agents of American foreign relations.[19] Many newer scholars of U.S. foreign relations have also sought to "deprovincialize American history" by demonstrating the impact of foreign developments on American society.[20] Most of these works have challenged assumptions of American exceptionalism, either explicitly or implicitly, by exploring the ways in which American institutions and politics have evolved in relation to global developments.[21] They show that the domestic looks different if we take the foreign into account. *Gateway State* likewise illuminates the permeability of the "domestic" by focusing on Hawai'i as an ambiguously foreign place within the nation—one whose connection to Asia was strategically deployed in the postwar era to suit the demands of American expansion in the decolonizing world.

To elucidate the longer history of how Hawai'i came to be an object of decolonization, *Gateway State* draws on the growing body of historical literature on American empire. As Paul Kramer argues, the category of the imperial helps open up the United States to global history and focuses our attention on questions of power and its asymmetries in American relations with other peoples.[22] Rather than treating America's acquisition of overseas colonies in 1898 as an accident or aberration, this imperial historiography emphasizes the centrality of empire in U.S. history from at least the era of Manifest Destiny onward.[23] While America's formal empire never reached the size or scope of its European counterparts, it was nonetheless embedded in that global colonial system.

Most relevant for my purposes here, the imperial lens helps situate the history of American racial formation in a global context. The era of high imperialism led to the intensification of cross-cultural contact around the world, and with it, new racial categories used to justify colonial subjugation. But whereas in Europe the concept of racial difference has always been directly linked to colonialism and its aftermath, those connecting threads have often been less visible in U.S. history. For centuries, national racial discourse in America was mainly focused on differences of white and black in the context of domestic slavery. It was a system whose roots lay in New World colonialism and the expansion of global trade, yet one that was usually talked about as an institution "peculiar" to the American South.[24]

Slavery, however, was not the only historical development shaping racial formation in the United States. As the United States expanded to reach Pacific shores and enter Asian markets, which together fueled a massive influx of Asian laborers, Asians came to occupy an increasingly prominent place in American racial imaginings.[25] Meanwhile, America's acquisition of overseas territories in 1898 further complicated the relationships among American expansion, immigration, and race. As newly colonized peoples were thrust into the chaotic mix of American racial forms, they both challenged and reified concepts of difference and exclusion through their designation as American subjects without citizenship rights.[26] Adding to the confusion over empire, race, and national belonging was the ambiguous legal status of the new colonies. Unlike Hawai'i—which was made an incorporated territory eligible for statehood because of its large white settler population—the Philippines, along with Puerto Rico and Guam, were designated as "unincorporated" American territories that were ineligible for statehood. This was a new juridical invention for the age of American formal empire.[27]

While the Philippines may have been the most populous and most contentious of the new possessions, the annexation of Hawai'i perhaps best represented the increasingly Pacific-oriented nature of American empire. Hawai'i's colonial relationship to the United States is often told separately from other histories of American empire, perhaps because Hawai'i's annexation was not part of the spoils of the Spanish-American War.[28] But Hawai'i is central to understanding American imperial relations in the Pacific, as well as anti-Asian racism in the United States. If America's growing relationship with Asia and the Pacific was defined as much by external as by internal change, it was in Hawai'i—which was both a long-standing object of American expansionist ambitions and a central site for Asian immigration—where these interlocking developments converged most starkly. Not coincidentally, Hawai'i was a major conduit for Asian migration to the mainland, where nativists sought to sever the human ties between the United States and Asia by passing exclusionary immigration laws.

America's presence in Hawai'i went back to 1820, when a group of American missionaries arrived in the islands. It was their descendants who orchestrated the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 and, five years later, Hawai'i's annexation to the United States.[29] Unlike Puerto Rico or the Philippines, Hawai'i was unburdened by vestiges of European colonialism. It had no official colonial bureaucracy to speak of and was largely free from interference from Washington. And yet, mainland norms had thoroughly penetrated island culture, simultaneously masking the colonial nature of the American project in Hawai'i and demonstrating its effectiveness. Moreover, Hawai'i served as the inaugural site of U.S. military operations in the Pacific, with a navy coaling

station first set up in Honolulu in 1860 and exclusive American rights to Pearl Harbor established in 1887.

White minority political dominance, coupled with a monocrop economy and preferential terms of trade with the United States, made Hawai'i a classic island colony to rival any of Europe's. The islands' wealth was concentrated among a handful of families who were direct descendants of the missionaries who came to Hawai'i in the 1820s and 1830s. Meanwhile, of all the new overseas possessions, racial structures in Hawai'i most closely resembled those of the mainland, albeit in jumbled and idiosyncratic fashion. The white elite in Hawai'i, who oversaw a regime of imported Asian labor, evoked the omnipotence of the planter class in Southern slave states. Despite Hawai'i being admitted as an incorporated territory, and thus eligible for statehood, whites in Hawai'i deliberately forestalled any changes to its territorial status out of concern that doing so would threaten their political and economic control.

The politics of race in Hawai'i cannot be uncoupled from a system of labor that insistently linked race and class. Planter rule was founded on a racially stratified system designed to limit labor organizing by assigning jobs based on ethnic descent and correlated with perceived skill and intelligence, with northern Europeans at the top, Chinese and Japanese laborers in the middle, and Filipinos at the bottom. This labor regime was also influenced by discourses of race and nation that existed apart from the plantation economy. Hawai'i politics exposed the tensions between empire and nationalism, republicanism and industry, heterogeneity and racial hierarchy. Before annexation, whites were deeply divided on what Hawai'i's economy and society should look like. Throughout the nineteenth century, fearing the dilution of Hawai'i's imported American culture, an increasingly powerful class of nonplanter white elites—merchants, newspapermen, and other professionals—worked to prevent nonwhites from becoming too numerous. Believing they had carved out a pristine replica of New England society in the north Pacific, these men led the movement for annexation.[30]

Colonialism thus existed in uneasy alliance with American nativism in Hawai'i. Although the two impulses were not mutually exclusive in practice, their ideological inconsistencies gave rise to a Hawai'i society that was both highly culturally diverse and aggressively American. Annexation helped bring whites in Hawai'i together and consolidate their rule, but it could not reconcile the inherent conflict between categories of racial difference and democratic practice. In Hawai'i, as it did throughout the conquered world, that conflict played out in a colonial register, with the problems of race, local political power, and Hawai'i's subordinate relationship to the mainland all intertwined.

Global decolonization fundamentally undermined the concept of racial hierarchy that was at the core of colonial ideology. Around the world, colonized

peoples challenged the racialized structures of control erected by colonizers, often drawing on Enlightenment rhetoric and veneration of human equality espoused by colonizers themselves.[31] The struggles against colonialism in Asia and Africa also enlisted the support of oppressed racial minorities in the United States, who worked to expose the parallels between colonial rule and discriminatory policy at home.[32]

While decolonization and the global movement for racial equality challenged systems of racial difference, it did not erase them. Decolonization helped spur massive worldwide migration as workers and refugees from Asia and Africa sought opportunity in former colonial metropoles, forcing Europeans to confront racialized minorities on a larger scale than ever before. Hawai'i statehood shows that decolonization had a parallel impact on the United States. In particular, it demonstrates that postwar rearticulations of difference in both the domestic and foreign spheres were intimately connected. The legitimation of antiracist discourse in domestic politics and the overhaul of racist legislation in American law were not only influenced by policymakers' concerns over how the United States projected itself to the decolonizing world. New theories on race and culture that emerged in the postwar period in relation to Hawai'i also shaped American foreign relations. Global-minded institutions such as the East-West Center and the Peace Corps both contributed to national discourses around changing notions of difference and sought to inject those new ideas into foreign policy making.

The discourses around difference in Hawai'i, I argue, augured the rise of multiculturalism in U.S. culture more broadly during the later decades of the twentieth century. Well before college admissions offices advocated for the importance of cultural diversity in enriching the undergraduate experience and corporations instituted "cultural sensitivity" training programs for their employees, the Peace Corps was teaching cultural sensitivity in Hawai'i and the islands' business and political class was selling the new state as "a montage of minorities."[33]

There is a vast scholarship, much of it written in the 1990s by sociologists, philosophers, and literary critics, that theorizes multiculturalism and examines its manifestations in academia, politics, and everyday life.[34] I treat the ideology of multiculturalism, as malleable and imprecise as it may be, as a historical phenomenon that emerged out of a specific temporal moment in U.S. politics and culture. Multiculturalism, unlike its ideological antecedents, pluralism and cosmopolitanism, is not only an idea, but also an institutional practice linked to increasing globalization in the latter half of the twentieth century. Scholars have mostly focused on multiculturalism's association with education, chronicling the efforts of those seeking to diversify humanities curricula in response to demands to end white cultural hegemony. This story is often

told as a declension narrative, in which the original, radical multiculturalist ideal was diluted, and contained, often at the expense of promoting diversity at a structural level.[35]

In contrast to the prevailing analysis, I argue that multiculturalism was not only a way for racial and ethnic minorities to assert their right to cultural recognition.[36] Nor was it simply a means for people in power to pander to those restive minority communities. Multiculturalism, from its origins, was a discursive and institutional tool for liberal policymakers and business leaders, who saw the celebration of social difference as a means to both facilitate American expansionism abroad and make money at home. This was not a straightforward story of co-optation. Indeed, liberal corporate multiculturalism emerged before critical leftist multiculturalism.

Broadly defined, multiculturalism refers to the ideology and practice of celebrating social difference in a heterogeneous society. In contrast to assimilationism or traditional racial liberalism, multiculturalism stresses particularity over universality. It represented a response to the challenges of negotiating group difference in the post–civil rights, postcolonial era. Once legal rights and protections were granted to racial minorities and immigration law was stripped of its racial restrictions, once formalized inequality was replaced with more nebulous forms of repression and racialization, multiculturalism offered a way to talk about social difference as an ongoing, and ultimately unresolvable, part of modern life.

The term *multiculturalism* can be traced back to the mid-1970s and its rise in popular media tracks a similar upward trajectory as "globalization."[37] "Multicultural" was already in limited use in the 1960s—significantly, one of its first mentions in the *New York Times* came in an article about the University of Hawai'i.[38] Its conceptual genealogy goes back further, particularly toward the discourse of cultural pluralism, first articulated by Horace Kallen in his radical rejection of the melting pot and later picked up by social scientists and in progressive circles during the interwar period.[39] These "oppositional networks" persevered throughout World War II, despite the external pressures of wartime consensus culture, widespread indifference to civil rights claims, and Japanese internment.[40] But they were never mainstream. Moreover, when state institutions involved themselves in navigating the problem of racial and ethnic diversity in this period it was generally to promote coercive Americanization.[41]

By the late 1950s, as the debates on Hawai'i statehood demonstrate, national policymakers and the producers of popular culture had begun adopting much of the rhetoric of cultural pluralism, and using it toward new ends. They also began interweaving it with a cosmopolitan ethos, which—as exemplified by the emphasis on racial mixing in Hawai'i—upheld the benefits of cross-cultural borrowing over the preservation of autonomous cultural traditions.[42]

This also involved a remarkable transformation in the legal status and popular images of Asians in the United States, who went from being agents of a "Yellow Peril" to a "model minority." During the Cold War, as Christina Klein and Melani McAlister have shown, Orientalist ideas of a binary opposition between East and West gave way to more flexible and heterogeneous representations that often emphasized the affinities between Americans and the people of "the East"—even as many policymakers continued to view the people of Asia through an Orientalist lens.[43]

That multiculturalism came out of a period marked by aggressive American expansionism is no coincidence. The negotiation of difference was increasingly played out on the global stage in the postwar era. Just as more Americans than ever were leaving the United States as tourists, government workers, and business travelers, a new wave of migrants from the so-called Third World was changing the American social landscape. These two trends were tightly entangled. Like Hawai'i statehood, immigration reform was a central plank in U.S. government efforts to prove American good intentions to people of color around the world, and particularly in Asia.[44] Meanwhile, the architects of such expansionism, both in government and outside it, asked Americans to demonstrate their racial tolerance to ease the process of exerting U.S. influence abroad.[45] Thus the new inclusionary ethos that marked elite discourse in the postwar era was not simply the product of moral or intellectual enlightenment; it also fulfilled the strategic demands of American empire.

The scale and scope of U.S. global engagement, which Hawai'i represented in microcosm, necessitated a new paradigm for managing social difference in both national and foreign affairs. One of the ways of doing so was to fold "race" into "culture" or "ethnicity." After the passage of civil rights reform, liberal elites increasingly subscribed to the idea that race was an illegitimate category of analysis—a biological fiction that should be discredited as an explanation for group differences. Multiculturalism helped to replace archaic theories of race and instead drew on anthropological notions of culture as linked to ethnic descent, wherein everyone, from American WASPs to Filipino villagers, was reared in specific norms and practices that shaped their individual identities.

However, as poststatehood Hawai'i demonstrates, the foregrounding of difference left open a number of questions. To what extent should respect for difference give way to various homogenizing forces, such as political democracy, modernization, capitalism, or nationalism? How should the groups that comprise a multicultural society be defined and delineated? Where did indigenous people fit into the multicultural paradigm? And how could multiculturalism address the thorny problem of racial inequality, at once a biological fiction and a structural reality?

Hawai'i boosters left many of these questions unanswered, choosing instead to project an image of Hawai'i as a place that was at once American and foreign, internally diverse and racially transcendent, melting pot and salad bowl. Such inconsistencies, rather than reflecting a nuanced understanding of the complexity of Hawai'i life, were more often driven by the logic of profit and strategic national interest than by social justice.

Gateway State reconstructs and critiques the postwar utopian vision of Hawai'i through an analysis of the people and institutions that crafted it and contested it. As a hybrid work of political and cultural history, it assumes that political and cultural change are mutually constitutive. I thus give equal weight in my analysis to food writers, members of Congress, State Department staff, university students, state officials, and others seeking to shape Hawai'i's image and its future. To that end, *Gateway State* tracks Hawai'i statehood and its effects in roughly chronological order, with each chapter focusing on the perspective of a different set of historical actors who emerged as prominent voices in the discourses around Hawai'i at particular moments in time.

The first chapter explores the post–World War II congressional debates on Hawai'i statehood. It was not until the statehood debates that Hawai'i began to acquire a popular reputation as a vibrant interracial community where "East meets West." This image emerged only through contentious political struggle, as statehood advocates battled opponents who believed Hawai'i's people were a threat to white supremacy. Mainland opponents, most of them Southern Democrats, assailed statehood as a colonialist maneuver that would dilute U.S. national identity. Many of these opponents feared that Hawai'i would provide the crucial votes necessary for civil rights legislation if the territory were made a state. Statehood advocates at first claimed Hawai'i should be granted statehood because of its similarity to the mainland. By the end of the statehood debates, however—as Asia grew in importance in U.S. Cold War policy—Hawai'i was promoted by its supporters as a place whose cultural connections to Asia could be used to advance American global interests.

Chapter 2 examines how activists, journalists, and writers constructed Hawai'i as a paradigm of racial equality in the context of the national civil rights movement. While the vision of Hawai'i as a racial paradise went back to social science discourses of the interwar period, the statehood debates of the postwar era politicized the Hawai'i fantasy. Best-selling author James Michener was the most prominent media figure to champion the idea that Hawai'i could serve as a model for mainland race relations. The black press and many civil rights activists likewise turned to Hawai'i as proof that "integration works." This was an aspirational picture that overlooked Hawai'i's own racial tensions, which would eventually rise to the surface as the glow of statehood dimmed. Moreover, these accounts ultimately helped promote the new state as a place

where mainlanders could escape the hostile race relations of mainland—one of the implicit messages of Hawai'i's tourism industry—rather than a viable social model that could be emulated.

The third chapter investigates how the idealistic imaginings of America's newest state were institutionalized through an effort to establish Hawai'i as a center for global educational exchange. Hawai'i statehood arrived at a moment when the United States was increasingly going beyond its borders to draw foreign peoples into its orbit. The East-West Center and the Peace Corps both enlisted Hawai'i in this effort by designating it as an ideal site for fostering mutual understanding, as a place where foreigners could be trained in American economic and cultural practices and where foreign ways could be demystified for Americans. These efforts would in turn win over people from the decolonizing world, whose racial and cultural differences were seen as obstacles to be conquered in the service of modernization. The ideas on intercultural communications developed at the East-West Center and the Peace Corps would eventually be taken up more broadly, notably by the military in its campaign to secure the allegiance of South Vietnamese peasants.

While the East-West Center and the Peace Corps training program represented Hawai'i's attempt to promote itself as a center for cultural exchange, it was the tourism industry's efforts to sell race and racial tolerance that truly revolutionized Hawai'i's political economy.[46] Chapter 4 studies the Hawai'i tourism industry's efforts to market Hawai'i as a multicultural paradise where positive racial experiences could be bought and sold. Although Hawai'i had long been a draw for wealthy tourists, jet travel, which arrived the same year as statehood, allowed a larger and broader cohort of mainland Americans to vacation in the islands, which the tourism industry portrayed as a quasi-foreign space where mainlanders could experience social amity and forge multicultural self-identities in the comfort of a safe, American milieu. In the process, I argue, tourism helped turn race and racial tolerance into saleable—if intangible—commodities. Meanwhile, a massive military rest and recreation (R&R) program in Hawai'i for combat soldiers during the Vietnam War exposed the limits of global mutual understanding and racial tolerance. Instead of encouraging its consumers to learn from Hawai'i's mixed multicultural society, R&R in Hawai'i upheld the nuclear family and sought to insulate servicemen from the wider world, where American–foreign encounters often did not go the way the U.S. government envisioned. The tourism industry epitomized the ways in which much of the liberal racial discourse in the post–civil rights era conflated race, culture, and ethnicity, and in the process, depoliticized all three.

A fifth chapter asks why white, middle-class American women were so fascinated with all things Hawai'i in the two decades after statehood, and

why Hawai'i's export market linked racial and ethnic boundary-crossing with women's self-fulfillment. The mainland marketing of Hawai'i offered a virtual version of the kinds of cross-cultural exchange taking place in Hawai'i itself, urging ordinary mainland women to envision themselves as liberated, globe-trotting cosmopolitans. Cookbooks and apparel manufacturers suggested that the acts of eating Hawaiian food and wearing clothes produced in Hawai'i could catalyze a new, more relaxed, racially enlightened worldview. Yet the mainland consumption of Hawai'i was also made possible by the expansion of racially segregated suburban developments, where racial liberalism could be performed without disrupting racial inequality.

The final chapter challenges the progressive narrative of Hawai'i's boosters by analyzing the rise of opposition movements in Hawai'i, particularly groups advocating for ethnic studies programs at the University of Hawai'i and related, nascent movements for native rights. While the liberal multiculturalism of state boosters went largely uncontested in Hawai'i in the years before and after statehood, by the late 1960s Hawai'i's colonial history and its consequences would be reawakened as excitement over statehood gave way to widespread discontent among those excluded from statehood's rewards. Like the architects of Hawai'i's cultural exchange institutions, radicals in Hawai'i were also responding to Third World movements for cultural nationalism—as movements not to counteract, but to emulate.

As ethnic studies activists were quick to point out, Hawai'i never did live up to the idealistic rhetoric surrounding it. But to many liberals at mid-century and the decades after, the idea of Hawai'i as a multicultural utopia was a plausible one, even as it appeared to be increasingly at odds with a country wracked by racial inequality and mired in an imperialist war in Southeast Asia. Why did this seemingly peripheral state come to play an outsized role in liberal visions of the nation's racial future, and of the U.S. place in the world? Hawai'i's unexpected and enduring relevance in American life is what this study seeks to explain.