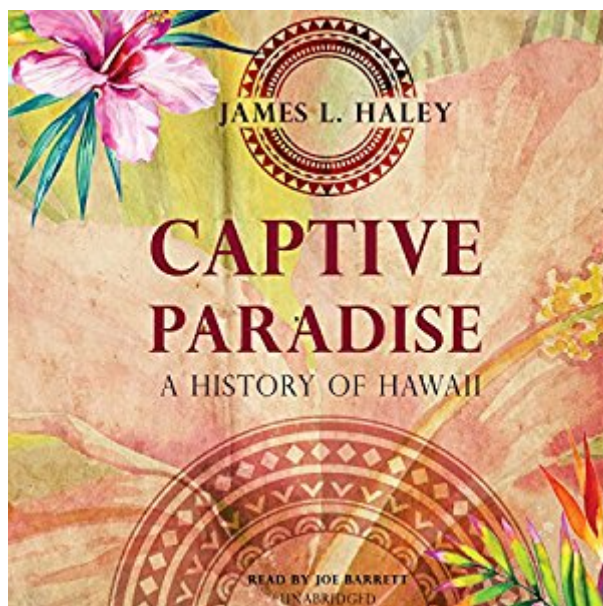


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# Captive Paradise: A History Of Hawaii



## Synopsis

In the tradition of Nathaniel Philbrick and David McCullough comes the first full-scale narrative history of Hawaii, an epic tale of empire, industry, war, and culture. The most recent state to join the union, Hawaii is the only one to have once been a royal kingdom. After its discovery by Captain Cook in the late 18th century, Hawaii was fought over by European powers determined to take advantage of its position as the crossroads of the Pacific. The arrival of the first missionaries marked the beginning of the struggle between a native culture with its ancient gods, sexual libertinism, and rites of human sacrifice and the rigid values of the Calvinists. While Hawaii's royal rulers adopted Christianity, they also fought to preserve their ancient ways. But the success of the ruthless American sugar barons sealed their fate, and in 1893 the American Marines overthrew Liliuokalani, the last queen of Hawaii. *Captive Paradise* is the story of King Kamehameha I, the Conqueror, who unified the islands through terror and bloodshed but whose dynasty succumbed to inbreeding; of Gilded Age tycoons like Claus Spreckels, who brilliantly outmaneuvered his competitors; of firebrand Lorrin Thurston, who was determined that Hawaii be ruled by whites; of President McKinley, who presided over the eventual annexation of the islands. Not since James Michener's classic novel *Hawaii* has there been such a vibrant and compelling portrait of an extraordinary place and its people.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've read a fair number of historical and cultural books on Hawaii, and this one is quite unique. The

author doesn't seem to pull any punches and you get the story warts and all, and in much detail. He clearly did his research. I have only two complaints. One is that rather than telling the story in chronological order, he separates the history into topics. It's a little disconcerting to read different events, some of which happened before and some after ones that you already read about in an earlier chapter. I didn't find the constant use of Hawaiian names or terms difficult - if you're going to read a history of any country, that's part of it. My second minor criticism is the often stilted language that is used. Many times it is charming and quaint, other times it is too much, like someone who feels compelled to use words and phrasing that require dictionary use. Don't get me wrong. I write a lot and use a wide vocabulary; it's just that complexity for complexity's sake has little value to the reader. But, of course, the peculiarities of expression and stilted phrasing in the telling do establish a certain mood and tone, that is not objectionable. If you want Hawaiian history, I would still suggest the standard texts (Daws, et al.) but this adds spice to what many authors have made dry and boring and strictly factual. In my own view, this is an extremely valuable picture for use in the present. Hawaiian history as taught at some universities and expressed by some protest groups is ignorant of much of what Haley achieves with his story - that Hawaiian history is not a story of innocent native peoples being oppressed by imperial powers.

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