

representing Chinese American women in leading roles and challenging the traditional narratives of female subjugation in Chinese culture (Chapter 6).

As with the Mei Wah Girls' Drum Corps, there are instances in the book where the focus may seem narrow or the interpretation overly detailed. However, this does not diminish the book's value. Its appeal extends beyond academia, and will attract members of the Asian American community and enthusiasts of cinema, history, and urban studies. Readers will appreciate the fluid storytelling, compelling imagery, and the personal touch of the author.

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*Waikiki Dreams: How California Appropriated Hawaiian Beach Culture.* By Patrick Moser. (Champaign, University of Illinois Press, 2024, 316 pp.)

Patrick Moser's *Waikiki Dreams: How California Appropriated Hawaiian Beach Culture* offers a well-researched examination of the intertwined histories of surfing in Hawai'i and California, illuminating the sport's cultural significance and the broader processes of colonization and appropriation that have shaped its evolution. Moser argues that this history can be traced back to "deep-seated cultural imperatives to both remove and replace Indigenous peoples" (p. 3)—a point he continuously underscores throughout the book. Moser adeptly traces the development of California's surf culture, grounding it in its Hawaiian origins and embedding his analysis within the larger framework of American imperialism and settler colonialism. He analyzes how surfing—a once-sacred Hawaiian practice—was appropriated, commodified, and transformed by white surfers, highlighting the complexities inherent in this cultural exchange.

The book is organized into three distinct sections—The Builders, The Beaches, The Dream—which offer a thematic structure to trace the development and transformation of California's surf culture, its contributors, and its world-renowned surf zones. Moser situates the transformation of California's surfing culture within the broader histories of colonization and cultural displacement, revealing the intricate connections between surfing's rise in popularity and the asymmetrical power dynamics at play in its development.

At the heart of Moser's argument is the pivotal role of colonization in shaping the surf culture now emblematic of California. He emphasizes the historical displacement of Indigenous peoples in both Hawai'i and California

as white settlers sought to exploit and commodify coastal lands. In his analysis of Hawaiian surfing spaces, Moser critically examines the profound impact of colonization on the islands' Native populations, refusing to romanticize the surf scene. Instead, he presents it as a product of cultural appropriation, where white surfers, captivated by the aesthetic and recreational appeal of Hawaiian beaches and waves, frequently contributed to the erasure of Indigenous traditions while simultaneously incorporating them into California's surf culture.

Moser's treatment of California's surf history is equally incisive. He underscores how the transformation of coastal lands into celebrated surf breaks was often accompanied by the displacement of Indigenous populations, as California became increasingly urbanized and integrated into the United States following the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). This, in Moser's view, was the precondition for the beach culture we know today. As such, his analysis positions the development of California's surf culture within a broader context of settler colonialism, territorial annexation, dispossession, and resource exploitation. Surfing, in this framework, expanded alongside the systematic appropriation of Indigenous lands for recreational and leisure purposes.

A significant strength of *Waikiki Dreams* is Moser's continual emphasis on the debt California's surf culture owes to Hawaiian knowledge and practices. He resists framing California's surf culture as an isolated phenomenon, instead presenting it as part of a broader process of cultural exchange—albeit one deeply asymmetrical and fraught with the dynamics of colonization. Hawaiian surfers introduced their expertise and traditions to California, such as through surfing exhibitions by Duke Kahanamoku and George Freeth, inspiring generations of surfers. However, as Moser astutely observes, this exchange was often marked by a lack of reciprocity, with white surfers frequently adopting Hawaiian customs without engaging with their deeper cultural or spiritual significance.

Ultimately, *Waikiki Dreams* is more than a history of surfing's transmission from Hawai'i to California; it is a critical interrogation of the colonial forces and asymmetrical power dynamics that facilitated that transmission. Moser offers a nuanced critique of the evolution of surf culture, demonstrating how the appropriation of Hawaiian traditions by white surfers shaped the modern surfing world. Through this lens, Moser exposes the often-overlooked histories of cultural erasure and exploitation embedded in the sport's popularization.

*Waikiki Dreams* situates the rise of California's surf culture within the expansion of American empire and settler colonialism, while also connecting the modernization of surfing to World War II wartime technological advancements that influenced the industry. Although scholarly in nature, Moser's accessible prose ensures that the work remains engaging for non-academic readers as well, making it a compelling addition to both academic and popular discussions of surf history.

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*California, A Slave State.* By Jean Pfaelzer. (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2023. pp. 520.)

Jean Pfaelzer's *California, A Slave State*, is an ambitious effort to tell the story of California's multiple systems of slavery and servitude from the era of Spanish colonization to the early twenty-first century. Wide-ranging chapters cover the coerced labor of Indigenous people in Spanish missions, on Mexican ranches, and in the Russian fur trade; the enslavement of African Americans; systems of sexual servitude that Chinese and Indigenous women suffered; California's vast system of mass incarceration and prison labor; and twenty-first-century sex trafficking.

My assessment of the book echoes both the praise and concerns of Charles McClain's review of Pfaelzer's 2007 book, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War Against Chinese Americans* (Random House), which appeared in the fall 2009 issue of *Law and History Review* (vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 697–99). McClain, a preeminent scholar of Chinese immigration legal history, called Pfaelzer a "talented narrator," and he praised *Driven Out* for being both "comprehensive" and "a work of considerable impact." The same can be said of *California, A Slave State*. The chronological scope and topical diversity of the book are impressive. Pfaelzer has the admirable goal of bringing the injustices of California's past to light. Her captivating narrative will likely bring greater public attention to important questions about reparations and reconciliation in the Golden State.

Unfortunately, *California, A Slave State* suffers from many of the same serious problems that McClain found in Pfaelzer's previous work. *Driven Out*, McClain observed, was "marred by a distracting number of imprecise or inaccurate statements." In addition to documenting numerous factual errors in the book, McClain noted that "Pfaelzer badly misreads several court cases."