

# Queen lili'uokalani – the last queen of hawaii essay sample



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King Kalakaua as succeeded by his sister, Lili`uokalani, who was proclaimed queen on January 29, 1891. Her experience as Princess Regent during King Kalakaua's nine month journey around the world in 1881 and visit to the United States in 1890 had prepared her for her new role as Queen of Hawaii. Queen Liliuokalani was the last reigning monarch of the Hawaiian Islands. She felt her mission was to preserve the islands for their native residents. In 1898, Hawaii was annexed to the United States and Queen Liliuokalani was forced to give up her throne. Queen Liliuokalani was deposed by the advocates of a Republic for Hawaii in 1893. She was born in Honolulu to high chief Kapaakea and the chiefess Keohokalole, the third of ten children. Her brother was King Kalakaua. Liliuokalanie was adopted at birth by Abner Paki and his wife Konia. At age 4, her adoptive parents enrolled her in the Royal School. There she became fluent in English and influenced by Congregational missionaries. She also became part of the royal circle attending Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma.

Liliuokalanie married a ha'ole, John Owen Dominis on September 16, Dominis would eventually serve the monarchy as the Governor of O'ahu and Maui. They had no children and according to her private papers and diaries, the marriage was not fulfilling. Dominis died shortly after she assumed the throne, and the queen never remarried.. Upon the death of her brother, King Kalakauam Liliuokalani ascended the throne of Hawaii in January 1891. One of her first acts was to recommend a new Hawaii constitution, as the " Bayonet Constitution" of 1887 limited the power of the monarch and political power of native Hawaiians. In 1890, the McKinley Tariff began to cause a recession in the islands by withdrew the safeguards ensuring a mainland

market for Hawaiian sugar. American interests in Hawaii began to consider annexation for Hawaii to re-establish an economic competitive position for sugar. In 1893, Queen Liliuokalani sought to empower herself and Hawaiians through a new constitution which she herself had drawn up and now desired to promulgate as the new law of the land. It was Queen Liliuokalani's right as a sovereign to issue a new constitution through an edict from the throne. A group led by Sanford B. Dole sought to overthrow the institution of the monarchy.

The American minister in Hawaii, John L. Stevens, called for troops to take control of Iolani Palace and various other governmental buildings. In 1894, the Queen, In 1893, James H. Blount, newly appointed American minister to Hawaii, arrived representing President Grover Cleveland. Blount listened to both sides, annexationists and restorationists, and concluded the Hawaiian people aligned with the Queen. Blount and Cleveland agreed the Queen should be restored. Blount's final report implicated the American minister Stevens in the illegal overthrow of Liliuokalani. Albert S. Willis, Cleveland's next American minister offered the crown back to the Queen on the condition she pardon and grant general amnesty to those who had dethroned her. She initially refused but soon she changed her mind and offered clemency. This delay compromised her political position and President Cleveland had released the entire issue of the Hawaiian revolution to Congress for debate. The annexationists promptly lobbied Congress against restoration of the monarchy.

On July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawaii with Sanford B. Dole as president was proclaimed. It was recognized immediately by the United States  
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government . In 1895, Liliuokalani was arrested and forced to reside in Iolani Palace after a cache of weapons was found in the gardens of her home in Washington Place. She denied knowing of the existence of this cache and was reportedly unaware of others' efforts to restore the royalty. In 1896, she was released and returned to her home at Washington Place where she lived for the next two decades. Hawaii was annexed to the United States through a joint resolution of the U. S. Congress in 1898 . The " ex-" queen died due to complications from a stroke in 1917. A statue of her was erected on the grounds of the State Capital in Honolulu. Queen Lili`uokalani was determined to strengthen the political power of the Hawaiian monarchy and to limit suffrage to subjects of the kingdom. Her attempt to promulgate a new constitution galvanized opposition forces into the Committee of Safety, which was composed of Hawaii-born citizens of American parents, naturalized citizens and foreign nationals, many of whom were businessmen, sugar plantation owners, and businessmen.

This group, with the support of the American Minister to Hawaii, orchestrated the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and the establishment of a provisional government. On January 17, 1893, Queen Lili`uokalani yielded her authority: ". Now to avoid any collision of armed forces, and perhaps the loss of life, I do this under protest and impelled by said force yield my authority until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives and reinstate me in the authority which I claim as the Constitutional" In 1895, an abortive attempt by Hawaiian royalists to restore Queen Lili`uokalani to power resulted in the queen's arrest. She was forced to sign a document of

abdication that relinquished all her future claims to the throne. Following this, she endured a humiliating public trial before a military tribunal in her former throne room. Convicted of having knowledge of a royalist plot, Lili`uokalani was fined \$5000 and sentenced to five years in prison at hard labor.

The sentence was commuted to imprisonment in an upstairs bedroom of `Iolani Palace. During her imprisonment, the queen was denied any visitors other than one lady in waiting. She began each day with her daily devotions followed by reading, quilting, crochet-work, or music composition. After her release from `Iolani Palace, the Queen remained under house arrest for five months at her private home, Washington Place. For another eight months she was forbidden to leave O`ahu before all restrictions were lifted. In 1993, 100 years after the overthrow, President Clinton signed a Congressional resolution (Public Law 103-150) in which the United States government formally apologized to the Native Hawaiian people. Queen Lili`uokalani was a talented musician and accomplished composer. She wrote approximately 165 songs, including Ke Aloha O Ka Haku — The Queen's Prayer, this was written during her imprisonment. Her best known composition was the enormously popular and lasting favorite Aloha `Oe. Her Majesty. Queen Liliuokalani His Royal Highness, The Prince Consort, John Owen Dominis

#### Works Cited

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