

John Henry Palmer (1897) *The Invasion of New York: Or How Hawaii was Annexed*



*Dated 4 July 1897, Palmer's book is primarily an intervention in the Congressional debate, then in progress, over the annexation of Hawai'i. Palmer backs a policy of aggressive imperial expansion, seeing possession of Hawai'i as a key element in an incipient struggle with Japan for control of the Pacific. His distinction is to be among the first to identify the Japanese as a major imperial competitor, as his novel narrates a surprise takeover of Hawai'i by the Japanese, followed by their invasion of San Francisco. [John Rieder (2008) *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction*]*

*This chapter examines John Henry Palmer's *The Invasion of New York, or, How Hawaii Was Annexed*. It argues that the significance of Palmer's book is that it demonstrates the remarkable instability of the opposition between the political and the fantastic in the burgeoning sphere of mass circulated print in the late 1890s. The point is not whether Palmer's fantasies had an impact on the annexation debate, but rather that they had their origin in the publicity generated by the debate, and that the debate itself was immersed in an emerging mass-cultural milieu where fact and rumour and outright fantasy were often hard to tell apart and were sometimes deliberately confused. Palmer's understanding of the issues reflects not only his sympathies with imperialists like the up-and-coming Theodore Roosevelt, but also the success of the Hawaiian pro-annexationists at making their case in the public venues of newspaper reporting and editorializing. [Abstract: John Rieder (2012), "John Henry Palmer's *The Invasion of New York, or, How Hawaii Was Annexed*: Political Discourse and Emergent Mass Culture in 1897" in David Seed (Ed.) *Future Wars: The Anticipations and the Fears*, Liverpool University Press]*

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