The years 1819 - 1820 marked a watershed in the history of the Hawaiian Islands. With the passing of King Kamehameha I in 1819, the Kapu System was abolished, setting off a catalyst for change in the systems of faith, government, and society. A major agent of change was the missionaries who came to Hawaiʻi in April 1820 to spread the Gospel, and in the process, the islands were forever changed.

Nearly everyone who spends much time in Hawaiʻi soon forms an opinion about "the missionaries" who, as many accounts have it, cajoled, browbeat, and eventually, converted an entire "heathen" nation to Protestant Christianity. But how could a handful of overdressed New Englanders who, when they first arrived, did not know the native language or culture convince an entire nation to put on more clothes, adopt western views of sin and sexuality, and replace their traditional Polynesian religion for that of Boston? Could there be more to the story?

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