CHAPTER 19

Imperial America

The United States in the World, 1890–1914

Becoming a World Power p. 562

> **"Remember the *Maine* and to hell with Spain!"**
>
> Newspaper slogan urging war with Spain in the wake of the *Maine* explosion

On February 15, 1898, a naval officer awoke President William McKinley in the middle of the night with the stunning news that the American battleship the *Maine* had exploded in Havana, Cuba, killing 266 of the 354 crew members. The explosion turned the battleship into a hunk of molten steel. This illustration depicted the blast propelling bodies and debris sky-high in Havana Harbor. Americans also read moving firsthand accounts in the press, including one from survivor James R. Young. "I was feeling a bit glum," Young recalled, "and in fact was so quiet that Lieutenant J. Hood came up and asked laughingly if I was asleep. I said, 'No, I am on watch.' Scarcely had I spoken when there came a dull, sullen roar. Would to God that I could blot out the sounds and the scenes that followed."

The United States and Spain had long been at odds over the question of independence for Cuba, then a Spanish colony. McKinley had sent the *Maine* to Havana to stop Spanish-instigated attacks on American-held property in Cuba. Many Americans suspected that Spanish saboteurs had blown up the ship to protest the U.S. incursion into Spanish territorial waters. The shocking images and accounts of the *Maine* explosion fueled public anger against Spain for its supposed attack on the U.S. Navy, creating a moment of crisis between the two nations. An official investigation confirmed these widely held views, blaming the *Maine* explosion on a Spanish mine in the harbor. The exact cause of the blast, however, remained a mystery. Some experts now cite a spontaneous combustion from the coal stored alongside ammunition as the most likely culprit, a misfortune shared by thirteen similar American naval vessels between 1895 and 1898. Others suggest that Cuban revolutionaries may have planted the explosives, expecting the United States to blame Spain and declare war.

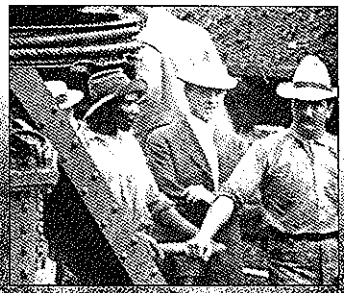
The *Maine* explosion ignited a short, four-month war between the United States and Spain in 1898. This "splendid little war," as one official called it, ended with an overwhelming American victory. The overseas possessions that the United States gained from Spain, including Puerto Rico and the Philippines, gave the nation a new formal colonial empire. The United States simultaneously constructed an informal economic empire throughout the Caribbean and East Asia at the turn of the century. As the United States established itself as a budding world power, Americans offered conflicting visions of how the United States should behave outside its borders.

How has the meaning of this image changed since 1898?

The Spanish-American War p. 565

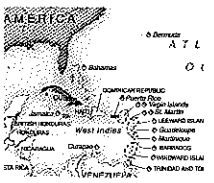
Creating an American Empire p. 573

America and East Asia p. 579



In America's Backyard p. 585

Becoming a World Power

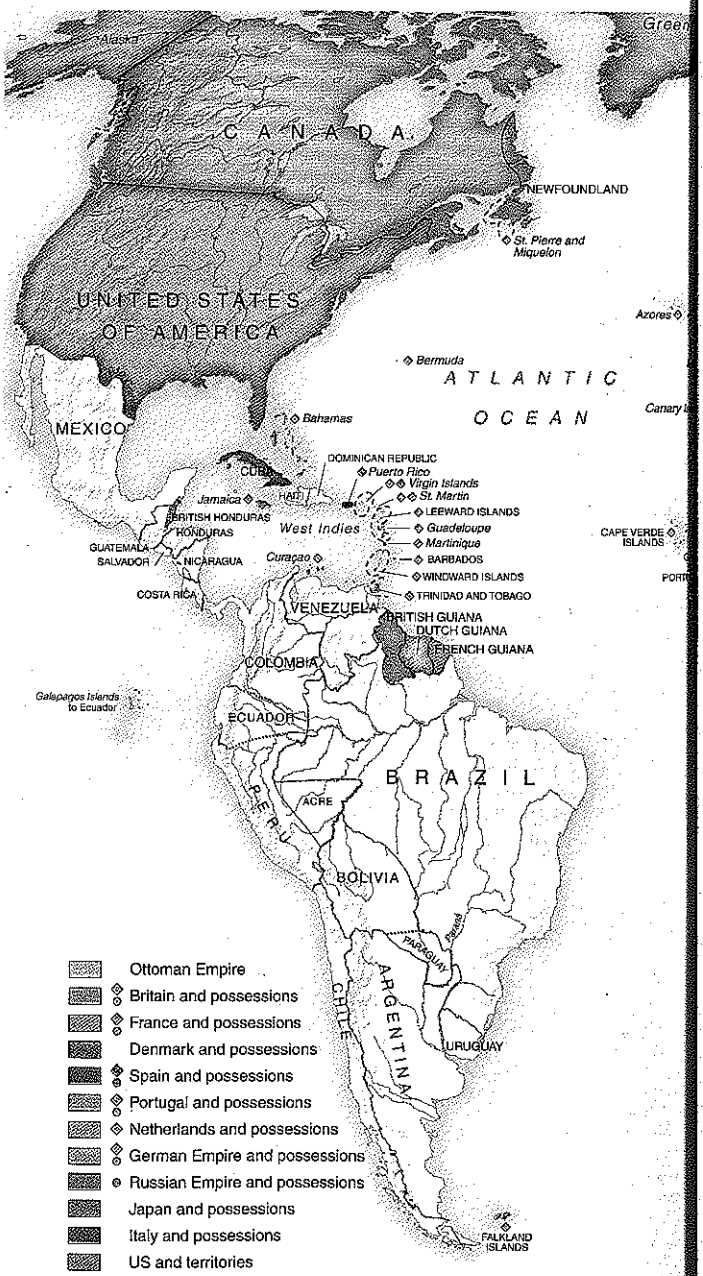


Throughout the nineteenth century the Atlantic and Pacific oceans provided Americans with a sense of security and detachment from world affairs. By the 1880s, however, advancements in transportation and communication suddenly made the world seem smaller and more dangerous to Americans. Fear alone, though, did not explain Americans' growing interest in venturing overseas. Americans looked outside their borders to find markets for U.S. goods and the raw materials needed to fuel a growing industrial economy. International recognition as a world power and spreading American values also appealed to the country's growing sense of national greatness.

European Imperialism

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Britain, France, and Spain had based their world prominence on far-flung colonial empires, places that they populated with settlers and soldiers to exploit economic resources and protect ocean trade routes. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these settler communities launched a slew of successful revolutions that liberated colonies in North and South America from European rule. With the "old" colonial empires now defunct, European nations and Japan sought places to build new ones. As Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Russia, the Netherlands, and Japan discovered vulnerable areas around the globe to colonize, they developed a new style of empire building. **Imperialism**, the late nineteenth-century term for colonizing foreign nations and lands, relied primarily on business, political, and military structures rather than settlers to rule colonized peoples and exploit their resources. Europe's drive to create colonial empires in Africa and Asia in the late nineteenth century provided a model to either emulate or reject as the United States embarked on its campaign to become a world power.

Besides exploiting colonies for economic gain, Europeans also drew satisfaction from fulfilling a self-imposed "civilizing" mission to spread Western culture and values to nonwhite and non-Christian populations throughout Africa and Asia. The drawbacks to empires, however, included the need to defend widely dispersed territories and suppress popular uprisings against colonial rule. Americans,



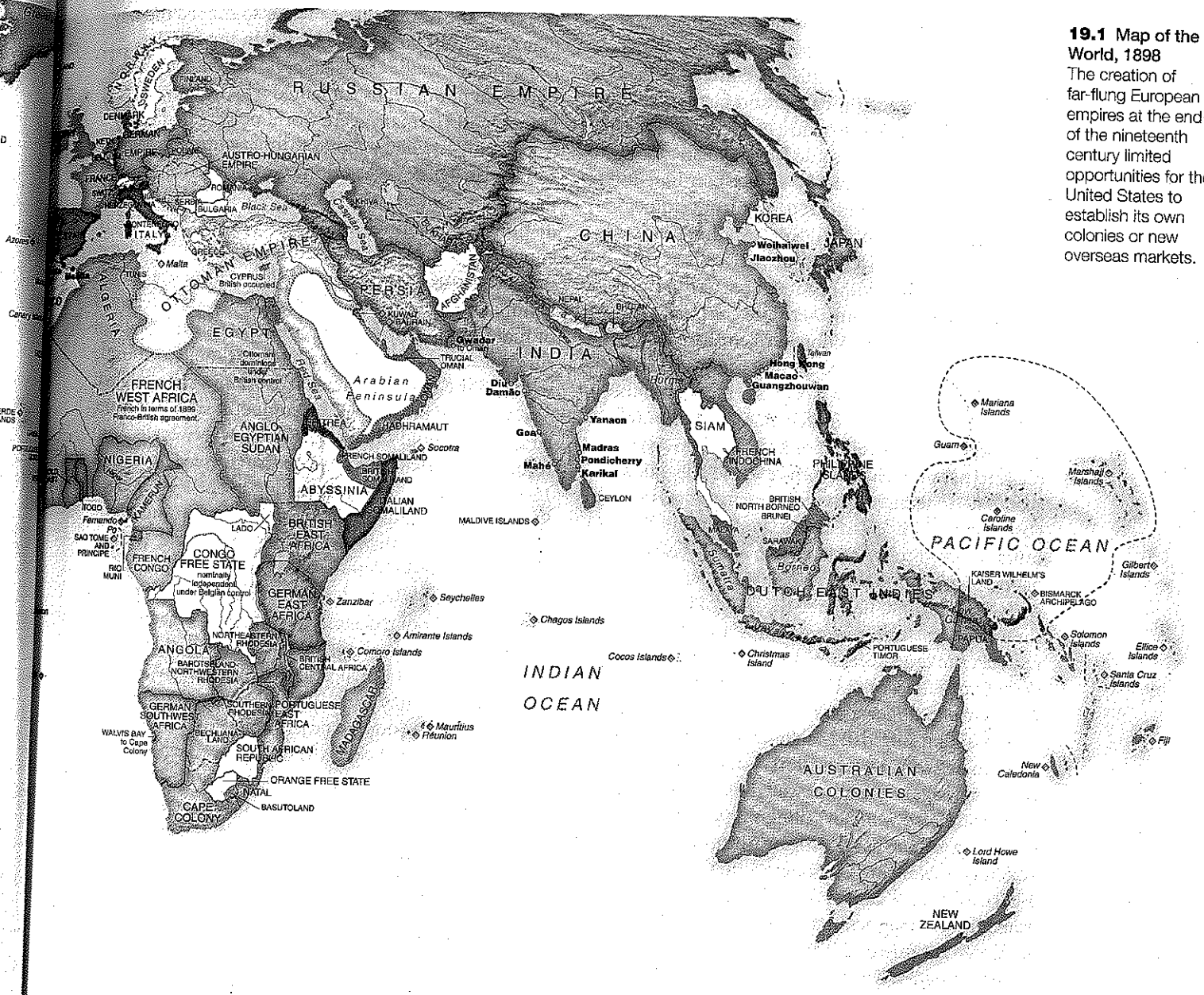
How did European imperialism affect the U.S. effort to create a formal empire?

therefore, developed conflicting visions from the lessons that they drew from the European experience. Some saw it as an inspiration; others, a cautionary tale.

As the map (**19.1**) indicates, the world situation in 1898 affected where the United States could hope to expand its influence. By the time the United States began exploring opportunities for expansion beyond the North American continent, Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands had already established colonial empires throughout Africa, East Asia, and South Asia. Great Britain exerted the greatest reach, making it the world's preeminent imperial power. This left the Western Hemisphere and China as possibilities for U.S. colonial expansion.

The Impulse for Expansion

Throughout American history territorial expansion played an important role in defining national identity and providing economic opportunity to Americans. In the early nineteenth century, manifest destiny, or the belief that Americans had a divine right to land in North America, fueled expansion across the continental United States. Imbued with a sense of cultural and racial superiority over the



19.1 Map of the World, 1898
The creation of far-flung European empires at the end of the nineteenth century limited opportunities for the United States to establish its own colonies or new overseas markets.

Which characteristics defined a nation as a world power in the late nineteenth century?

indigenous peoples who inhabited these lands, Americans felt justified in taking away land from Indians. In their view, Native Americans had failed to make the land commercially productive. The government relocated many Indian tribes onto reservations, where officials and missionaries embraced the goal of "civilizing" Indians by teaching them Western capitalist and Christian values (see Chapter 15). The same belief in manifest destiny, quest for economic opportunity, and ideas of racial superiority that had fueled American expansion across North America throughout the nineteenth century spurred interest in expanding American influence and trade overseas.

Many prominent businessmen, commercial farmers, and politicians urged the country to seek territory and markets outside the United States. In the 1890s American companies and farmers sold 90 percent of their goods to other Americans. The time had come, these critics argued, to develop global markets and even colonies to ensure continued prosperity and economic opportunity at home. When the country suffered a devastating economic depression from 1893 to 1897, these calls crystallized into a resolve within some quarters to build a commercial and colonial empire overseas.

Technological innovations also encouraged Americans to look beyond their borders. The laying of transatlantic telegraph cables increased both the speed and the volume of information sent throughout the world. The telegraph in many respects served as the Internet of the nineteenth century. Telegrams accelerated the exchange of diplomatic notes between governments, while dispatches from journalists overseas connected Americans on a daily basis to happenings around the world.

If the telegraph hastened the flow of information, the advent of steam-powered ships dramatically reduced the time needed to move people and goods throughout the world. In his seminal 1890 work, *The Influence of Sea Power on History, 1660–1783*, U.S. Navy Captain Alfred T. Mahan traced a direct correlation between a powerful navy and world power. In the new age of steam-powered battleships, the navy's outdated wooden sailing ships, described by one congressman as "floating washtubs," were ill-suited for advancing U.S. interests in the world. From 1890 onward the United States built battleships to match its growing economic power and its expansionist ambitions, and it soon boasted the second most powerful navy in the world after Great Britain. In 1907 President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt sent the nation's sixteen battleships and four destroyers on a global tour to show off America's world-class steam-powered navy, a trip that took two years to complete.

Americans' growing pride in their nation's economic might and technological prowess encouraged the United States to seek international recognition as a world power. So did the ideological vision encapsulated by social Darwinism, an ideology that applied nineteenth-century naturalist Charles Darwin's theory of biological evolution to human society through the notion of "survival of the fittest." At home Americans often used social Darwinism to justify the dominance of the wealthy and powerful, considered "the fit," over the poor and weak, or "the unfit." These ideas also shaped the way that Americans viewed the world. In the social Darwinist view, the "racial superiority" of Northern European populations explained why Britain, France, and Germany were world powers that easily colonized nonwhite peoples throughout the world. To take its rightful place alongside, or even above, these world powers, the United States needed to demonstrate its fitness by entering the global competition underway for colonies.

In making a case for expansion, the congregational minister Josiah Strong linked older ideas of manifest destiny with this newer emphasis on survival of the fittest. "It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race to prevail" in the competition to control lands throughout the world, Strong wrote in his influential book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885). In Strong's view the United States risked losing its chance for global eminence if it failed to join the scramble for colonies already underway worldwide.

Driven to perfect democracy at home, many Progressives found the call to spread American values abroad appealing. Their reform impulse extended beyond U.S. borders to imagine a world freed from tyranny and injustice. In many respects the strong, activist government that Progressives helped construct at the turn of the century made it possible for the United States to extend its imperial reach during the Progressive Era. Progressives never spoke with one voice on domestic matters, and they also offered competing visions on expanding U.S. influence in the world. Progressives who opposed the nation's overseas forays feared strengthening big business at the expense of exploited foreign peoples and American workers. They also believed that imperial ventures drew attention away from Progressive reform projects at home.

How did European imperialism affect the U.S. effort to create a formal empire?

The Spanish-American War

The first significant opportunity to expand U.S. influence overseas came when Cuba rose in revolt against Spanish rule. Extensive press coverage of Spanish atrocities and U.S. economic interests in Cuba prompted the nation to take note of this colonial struggle for independence. After a mysterious explosion sank the *Maine* battleship and killed hundreds of American sailors, many Americans accused Spain of deliberately attacking the ship. Fearing that Congress might declare war on its own, a reluctant President William McKinley finally agreed to an armed intervention. The war with Spain was short, but the outcome was dramatic. The peace treaty with Spain granted the United States island possessions in the Caribbean and Pacific that became the territorial foundation for the new U.S. colonial empire.

The Growing Conflict with Spain

In the early nineteenth century, when Spain's other Western Hemisphere colonies successfully fought for independence, Cuba remained loyal to Spain. By 1868, however, oppressive Spanish rule provoked a rebellion in Cuba that ended ten years later with Spain's pledge to grant the island increased autonomy. Failure to fulfill this promise, economic hardships inflicted by the 1890s depression, and continued agitation by exiled Cuban rebels living in the United States fanned the flames of rebellion once again in 1895. By the time the second revolt began, the United States and Cuba had established strong commercial ties. Cuba sent over 90 percent of its exports to the United States, and American investment totaled nearly $50 million in Cuban sugar, cattle, mining, and tobacco industries.

Spain paid a heavy price to maintain this last symbol of its imperial past. Of the 278,000 Spanish troops sent to Cuba to suppress the revolt, nearly 50,000 had died of yellow fever or malaria by 1898, and an equal number lay too sick to fight. A much smaller force of 20,000–30,000 Cuban rebels drew on their knowledge of the terrain and support from civilians to fight an effective guerrilla war that ravaged tobacco and sugar plantations to deprive the Spanish government of revenue. Rebels purposefully steered clear of American-owned plantations to avoid antagonizing the United States.

Cuban exiles in the United States drew appealing analogies between their struggle for independence and the American Revolution, highlighting the similar desire of Cuban and American colonists to free themselves from an exploitive ruler and establish democratic self-rule. If any uncertainty existed among the American public over which side they supported, Spanish General Valeriano Weyler's infamous reconcentration policy ended those doubts. Through **reconcentration** Spanish soldiers tried to crush the Cuban rebellion by herding Cuban peasants off their farms into heavily fortified cities and then systematically destroying the crops that fed the rebel armies. This policy created a humanitarian crisis in Cuba as famine and disease ravaged the civilian population, killing nearly 100,000. Outraged Americans denounced reconcentration as uncivilized and illegal warfare.

The **yellow press**, tabloid journalists and newspapers that reported sensationalist stories with a strong emotional component, fueled public anger against the Spanish. This unique name for nineteenth-century tabloid journalism derived from competing "Yellow Kid" comic strips in leading New York newspapers that portrayed the antics of a precocious boy living in the city's tenements. Yellow journalism emerged in the 1880s when Joseph Pulitzer began using melodramatic, partly fictionalized stories to bolster sales of his newspaper, the *New York World*. After William Randolph Hearst took over the *New York Journal* in 1895, the two newspapers waged daily battles over who could print the most lurid tales.

In the Cuban crisis both papers saw a chance to report the kinds of scandal-driven stories guaranteed to sell newspapers. Exiled Cuban rebels living in the United States provided a steady supply of atrocity stories (some fabricated, some true) to the yellow press, and the vivid illustrations accompanying these accounts helped the public visualize Spanish brutality.

Why did Americans take an interest in the Cuban rebellion against Spain?

Images as History

ATROCITY STORIES AND PUBLIC OPINION

Ever since the yellow press helped raise American ire against Spain in the years leading up to the Spanish-American War, Americans have pondered the power of the press in the United States. How much power do atrocity stories and pictures have to shape public opinion? Can the press convince the public to fight a war?

On February 12, 1897, the *New York Journal* published a story by Richard Harding Davis about a young Cuban woman whom Spanish authorities had expelled for carrying secret messages between Cuban rebels. Davis reported that "Spanish officers" followed Clemencia Arango and her companions onto an American ship. The Spanish officers "demanded that a cabin should be furnished to them to which the girls might be taken, and they were then undressed and searched" for messages to exiled Cuban rebels living in the United States. Frederic Remington's illustration "Spaniards Search Women on American Steamers" accompanied Davis's story.

Hearst next took up the cause of Evangelina Cisneros. Sentenced to twenty years in prison for trying to lure a Spanish officer into a rebel death trap, Cisneros was awaiting deportation to an African penal colony. According to the *New York Journal*, her only crime was calling for help from nearby Cuban rebels to stop a Spanish officer, "a beast in uniform," from raping her. On October 10, 1897 the paper stunningly announced that a *New York Journal* reporter had helped Cisneros break out of jail and sail to the United States. The yellow press presented Clemencia and Evangelina as symbols for the virtuous and victimized Cuban people, fueling public sympathy for the Cuban rebellion.

Frederic Remington (who was in the United States when this incident occurred) drew a beautiful naked white woman standing defiantly before the three overly curious and swarthy-looking Spanish officers who had undressed her. In fact, female prison matrons performed the search.

"There are things more dreadful than even war and one of them is dishonor," the *New York Journal* editorialized about the Clemencia Arango incident.

This 1897 illustration of dark-skinned men viewing and touching the body of a white woman resonated powerfully with many white Americans because it aroused their racial prejudices.

"Spaniards Search Women on American Steamers."
***New York Journal*, February 12, 1897.**

Press coverage of Cisneros's escapades generated so much interest that huge crowds gathered to hear of her adventures when she appeared in New York and Washington, D.C., where President McKinley received her in the White House.

The headline criticized diplomatic inaction and suggested that only heroic, manly military-style action could save Cuban rebels.

New York Journal accounts exaggerated Cisneros's light-skinned beauty, noble birth, and prison sufferings.

Nearly fifteen thousand women, including President William McKinley's wife, signed the newspaper's petition to Spain's Queen María Cristina demanding Cisneros's release.


NEW YORK JOURNAL
AND ADVERTISER

EVANGELINA CISNEROS RESCUED BY THE JOURNAL.

An American Newspaper Accomplishes at a Single Stroke What the Red Tape of Diplomacy Failed Utterly to Bring About in Many Months.

"Evangelina Cisneros Rescued by the Journal."
***New York Journal*, October 10, 1897.**

Why did popular media accounts depict the Cubans as light-skinned and the Spanish as dark-skinned?

The importance of illustrations to the yellow press became clear in a fabled exchange between Hearst and the artist Frederic Remington. Remington, already famous for his portraits of the American West, went to Cuba to draw illustrations for the *New York Journal*. Tiring of the rebellion's slow pace, Remington told Hearst he was leaving Cuba. Hearst supposedly replied, "Please remain. You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war." This exchange passed quickly into American folklore as proof of Hearst's determination to use shocking images, real or staged, to provoke a war with Spain. No evidence exists, however, that Hearst ever wrote or sent this reply. *Images as History: Atrocity Stories and Public Opinion* examines how yellow press illustrations shaped American public opinion.

The Decision to Intervene in Cuba

With the yellow press clamoring for military action, President William McKinley turned to diplomacy to end the impasse over Cuba peacefully and repeatedly asked Spain to grant Cuba more autonomy. In 1897 the Spanish government ended reconcentration by recalling Weyler and allowing Cuban peasants placed in reconcentration compounds to return to their homes. Spain also announced a plan for limited Cuban self-government, inviting protests from all sides. Cuban rebels urged Americans to help them attain complete independence. Meanwhile Cubans still loyal to Spain reacted angrily to the limited autonomy plan and rioted in the streets of Havana. An alarmed McKinley decided to send the *Maine* battleship to Havana to deter loyalists from organizing attacks on Americans or their property. Acting within the boundaries of acceptable international practice, McKinley expected the battleship's presence (with the implied threat of bombardments) to restore calm to Havana. Events in February, 1898, however, conspired against McKinley's effort to resolve the crisis peacefully. First Hearst's *Journal* published a private letter written by the Spanish ambassador, which described McKinley as "weak and a bidder for the admiration of the crowd." Although tame compared with the vicious statements American newspapers routinely made about the president, the published letter outraged the public.

> **"Worst Insult to the United States in Its History."**
>
> Yellow press headline regarding Spanish ambassador's disparaging comments about McKinley

Next the *Maine* exploded in Havana Harbor. After a month of press speculation about the cause of the explosion, an official naval investigation erroneously blamed a Spanish harbor mine for the disaster, rather than the real culprit: faulty ship design that caused an internal explosion, or perhaps sabotage by Cuban rebels who wanted the United States to declare war on Spain. In the weeks immediately following the sinking of the *Maine*, McKinley tried unsuccessfully to convince Spain to grant Cuba independence and to calm calls for war from Congress. "I have been through one war," McKinley told a friend, referring to his military service in the Civil War. "I have seen the dead piled up, and I do not want to see another." For many other Americans, however, memories of brutal Civil War battles had faded. They enthusiastically viewed war as a manly adventure that would instill discipline and vigor in American men. The assistant secretary of the navy, Theodore Roosevelt, championed this competing view, writing to a friend in 1897, "I should welcome almost any war, for I think this country needs one."

With the Democrats championing war, Republicans feared that McKinley's resistance to fighting might hurt the party at the polls. Some senators even suggested that Congress declare war whether McKinley agreed or not. The pressure on McKinley increased when Senator Redfield Proctor, several days before the navy released its findings on the *Maine* attack, gave the Senate a grim accounting of the appalling effects of Spain's reconcentration policy on the Cuban people. "I went to Cuba with a strong conviction that the situation had been overdrawn," Proctor noted, then went on to detail the starvation, squalor, and sickness he had seen. This sober address from a conservative Republican and stalwart friend of McKinley's convinced many wavering congressmen and Americans that the country had a humanitarian duty to save Cuba.

To head off a war, Spain made one last offer to grant Cuba increased autonomy, rejecting McKinley's call for total independence. "Mr. President, I can no longer hold back the Senate," Vice President Garrett Hobart told McKinley. "They will act without you if you do not act at once." Accepting that he had failed to negotiate an acceptable settlement to the crisis, McKinley asked Congress to

Why was McKinley unable to avoid war with Spain?

authorize an armed intervention to end the civil war in Cuba without declaring war on Spain. Congress complied. On April 24, 1898, however, Spain declared war on the United States. The next day Congress responded with its own declaration of war, dating it retroactively to April 21, 1898. The United States was now officially at war with Spain.

To underscore the nation's altruistic motives in declaring war, Colorado Senator Henry M. Teller added an amendment to the war resolutions that specifically disavowed any intention of annexing Cuba. The **Teller Amendment (1898)** promised "to leave the government and control of the [Cuban] Island to its people" at the end of the Spanish-American War. Congress made no such promise to other colonized peoples under Spanish control in the Caribbean and Pacific.

Fighting the War against Spain

America's victory in the Spanish-American War, which lasted from April to August 1898, paved the way for U.S. territorial expansion in the Caribbean and Pacific. One week after the war began, American Commodore George Dewey sailed into Manila Harbor, in the Spanish colony of the Philippines, (**19.2**) and destroyed the Spanish Pacific fleet. Why, Americans wondered, did the navy fight the first battle to liberate Cuba halfway around the world in the Philippines, an archipelago of seven thousand islands in the Pacific Ocean? By eliminating the Spanish Pacific fleet, Dewey prevented it from sailing to Cuba. Losing its Pacific fleet also put added pressure on Spain to sue for peace. Dewey's stunning victory at Manila catapulted the Philippines into the spotlight, and Americans learned that

> "I could not have told where those darned islands were within two thousand miles."
>
> President McKINLEY on the location of the Philippines before the Spanish-American War

the Filipinos were in the midst of their own rebellion against Spain. At first the Filipino rebels, who controlled the interior, welcomed the Americans as liberators. "I have studied the Constitution of the United States, and I find in it no authority for colonies and I have no fear," rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo told one American general. Time would prove Aguinaldo wrong.

Besides securing the Philippines the McKinley administration also used the war against Spain as a pretext for settling the festering question of annexing Hawaii that had divided Americans for nearly a decade. Americans had a long history of

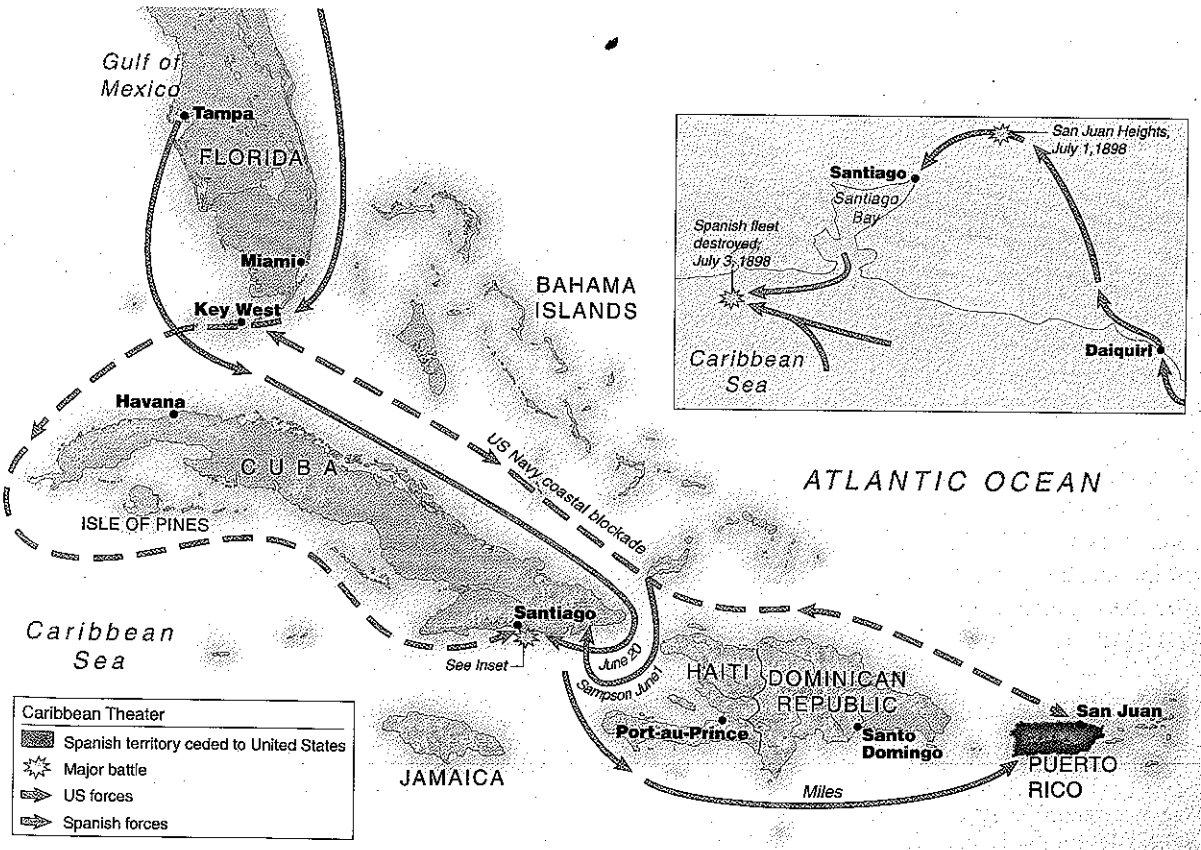
19.2 The Spanish-American War, 1898
The U.S. Navy first attacked the Spanish in the Philippines, and then blockaded Cuba as U.S. forces invaded.

Why did the United States first attack Spain in the Philippines?

involvement in Hawaiian affairs. By the 1880s American-owned sugar plantations dominated the Hawaiian economy, American missionaries had waged a successful campaign to eradicate native religions, and the U.S. Navy had established a permanent naval station at Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu. Responding to popular discontent over the erosion of native Hawaiians' economic standing and cultural traditions, when Queen Liliuokalani assumed the throne in 1891 she promised to curtail U.S. dominance over Hawaiian politics and agriculture. Within two years, however, American businessmen and missionaries working on the islands (representing 5 percent of the islands' population) overthrew Queen Liliuokalani. U.S. Marines sent to protect American property ensured the revolution's success. Thousands of Hawaiians took to the streets to protest the coup, to no avail.

The new Hawaiian government requested annexation by the United States, a request that President McKinley endorsed to foster U.S. commercial interests in the Pacific. In 1897, however, the Hawaiian Patriotic League successfully blocked a formal U.S. takeover by presenting the Senate with a 556-page anti-annexation petition signed by over half of the native-born Hawaiian population. Faced with Hawaiians' overwhelming opposition to annexation, the Senate voted the measure down. A year later, however, with the Spanish-American War underway, the Senate reversed course. Supporters of annexation successfully argued that U.S. ships headed to the Philippines needed guaranteed access to the naval way-station in Pearl Harbor. Deciding to put its own strategic and economic needs ahead of Hawaiians' desire to remain independent, the United States assumed sovereignty over Hawaii on July 7, 1898, when McKinley signed a congressional joint resolution authorizing annexation. The president appointed a territorial governor to head the Hawaiian government, and in 1900 Congress granted Hawaiians the right to elect the territorial legislature.

Meanwhile military planners focused on defeating the Spanish in Cuba. The accompanying map, "Spanish-American War, 1898" (19.2) illustrates how the navy immediately blockaded Cuba, trapping the Spanish Atlantic Fleet in Santiago. America's traditionally small peacetime army, however, was woefully unprepared to train and equip the thousands of volunteers enlisting



Why did Hawaii lose its independence in a war to liberate Cuba?

throughout the country. Theodore Roosevelt resigned as assistant secretary of the navy and formed the First U.S. Volunteer Calvary by recruiting Americans from wildly diverse backgrounds. Many of the recruits had personal connections to Colonel Roosevelt, a result of his eclectic lifestyle that included attending Harvard, hunting expeditions in the West, and a stint as police commissioner in New York City. Dubbed the **Rough Riders**, this collection of cowboys, Ivy League athletes, city police officers, and Pawnee scouts was one of the few volunteer units that fought in the war. Although American forces swelled from 28,000 to 275,000, the vast majority never left the United States.

On June 22, seventeen thousand U.S. troops landed in Cuba to join Cuban rebels on a slow march through heavy jungle to the port city of Santiago, which contained the bulk of the Spanish navy and army. Hidden Spanish sharpshooters harassed U.S. soldiers as they made their way to the San Juan Heights, the outlying hills that encircled Santiago. On July 1, the Americans, under the command of General William Shafter, attacked 750 Spanish soldiers along the San Juan Heights.

"I have seen many illustrations and pictures of this charge on the San Juan hills, but none of them seem to show it just as I remember it," recalled journalist Richard Harding Davis, who watched the charge from the sidelines. Like most illustrations of the battle seen in newspapers at the time, this painting (**19.3**) shows waves of eager American soldiers advancing with the flag flying, suggesting "an invincible overpowering weight of numbers," Davis noted. Yet, he continued, "I think the thing which impressed one the most, when our men started from cover, was that they were so few. It almost seemed as if someone had made an awful and terrible mistake. One's instinct was to call to them to come back." Roosevelt led the Rough Riders to the top of the San Juan Heights, a feat that garnered Roosevelt and the unit much acclaim. They stood alongside African American troops from the Ninth and Tenth Calvary who had actually reached the top first, a fact that Roosevelt and the mainstream media failed to mention when celebrating the victory.

The battle provided another opportunity for the yellow press to whip up war fervor on the home front. Responding to (false) rumors that Spanish soldiers had mutilated the corpses of American servicemen killed during the clash, a *Judge* magazine cover (**19.4**) pictured a Spaniard drenched in the

19.3 Charge up the San Juan Heights, 1898 This painting depicted the charge up the San Juan Heights as glorious and heroic, with the flag flying and no casualties. Illustrations like this contributed to the image of the Spanish-American War as a "splendid little war."

How accurate were the legends that surrounded the charge up the San Juan Heights?

blood of American soldiers who lay at his feet. In one hand the ape-like figure holds the bloody knife responsible for the recent atrocity. His other hand rests on the gravestone of U.S. sailors whom he allegedly killed by exploding the *Maine*. A brute that trampled on the American flag, the image reinforced earlier yellow press portrayals of Spain as a beast that the United States needed to subdue. The caricature also fed into racist notions of white supremacy—just like African Americans at home, and soon the Filipinos abroad, the dark-skinned Spanish posed a threat to the civilized world. In future conflicts American wartime propaganda used strikingly similar images to arouse passionate hatred of the nation's German and Japanese enemies.

Legendary accounts attributed the American success in charging up the San Juan Heights to heroic frontal charges; in fact, the Americans' three Gatling machine guns made the decisive difference. Believing his exhausted troops could go no farther after reaching the top, General Shafter decided to lay siege to Santiago instead of attacking the city directly. While American troops encircled the city atop the surrounding hills, U.S. naval ships blocked the port, thus trapping the bulk of the Spanish navy and army in Santiago. When the Spanish fleet made a dash to leave the harbor on July 3, American ships sank or beached every Spanish vessel. On July 17, Spanish troops surrendered the city and Cuba to the Americans. After defeating the Spanish in Cuba, U.S. forces landed in Puerto Rico, also a Caribbean Spanish colony, where they encountered only token opposition. American troops fought one more battle to take Manila on August 13, having not yet received word that the war between the United States and Spain had ended the day before.

19.4 ***The Spanish Brute,*** **1898**
This wartime caricature portrayed the Spanish as bloodthirsty beasts who murdered and mutilated American servicemen.

The war concluded on a sour note, however, as the high costs of fighting in the tropics without adequate preparations became clear. With a limited understanding of how malaria, yellow fever, and typhoid spread among humans, U.S. Army physicians could not stop these tropical diseases from ravaging the soldier population that occupied Cuba during the summer of 1898. Victory celebrations among U.S. troops soon gave way to panic when hundreds of soldiers fell ill and healthy young men became hollow-eyed, walking skeletons. It was "a heart-breaking sight" to see her husband, a yellow fever victim whose weight had dropped from 165 pounds to 89 pounds, Grace Paulding recalled. He needed a year's nursing before he could work again.

Despairing over the lack of qualified hospital attendants, the Surgeon General turned in desperation to the female nurses offering their services to the military. Eventually, 1,500 professional and Red Cross female nurses worked side by side with army doctors at home and overseas. Overall the Americans counted 385 officers and soldiers killed in combat (excluding those killed on the *Maine*), and nearly 2,000 deaths from disease.

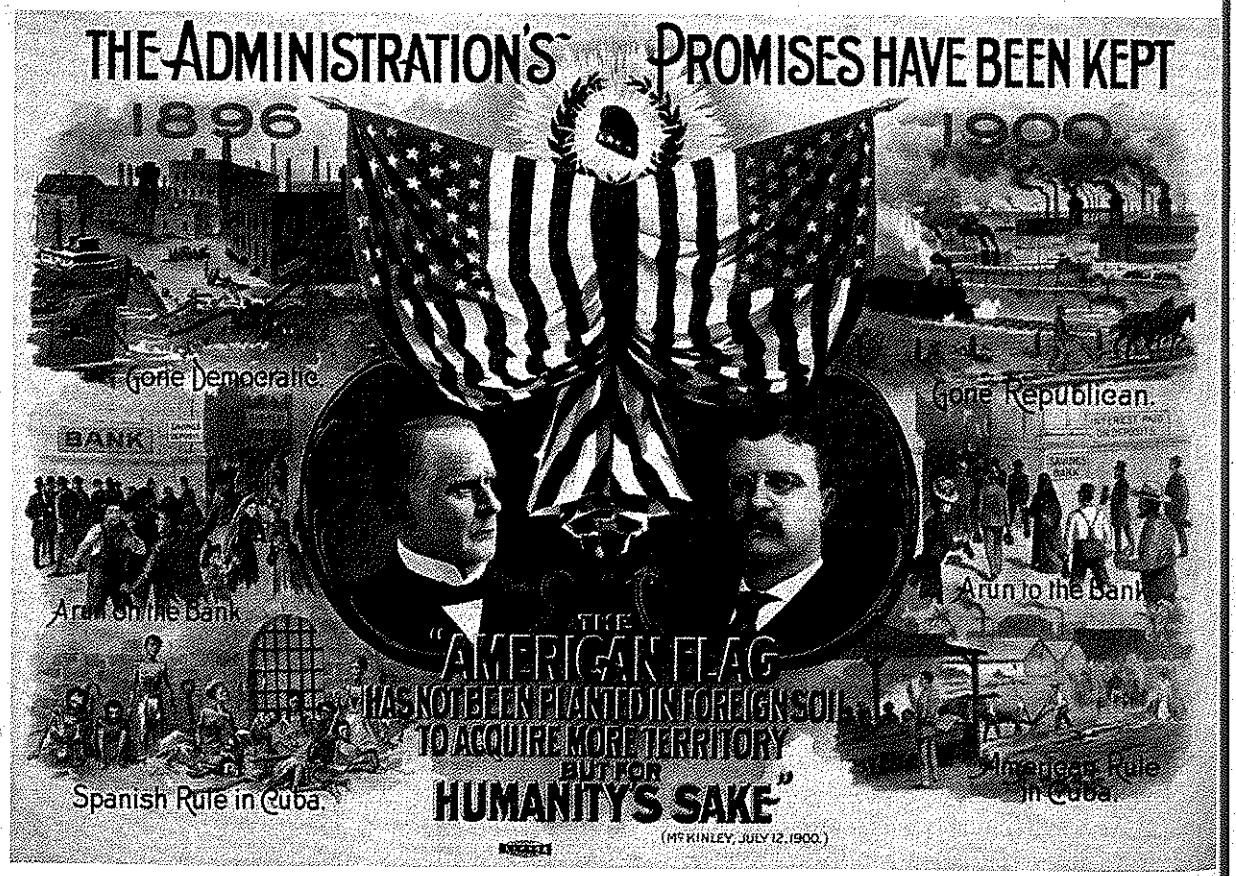
The peace treaty, signed on December 10, 1898, ended the Spanish-American War and set the terms of the U.S. victory. In the **Treaty of Paris**, Spain relinquished its claim to Cuba, and the United States received Puerto Rico, some smaller Caribbean

Were Americans right to characterize the Spanish-American War as "the splendid little war"?

islands, and the Pacific island group of Guam. In return for $20 million, Spain turned the Philippines over to the United States. How this territorial transfer would affect the political future of the Philippines remained in doubt. Did the United States intend to grant the Philippines independence or keep the territory as a colony? Americans soon offered competing visions on how to resolve this question.

Despite the idealistic guarantees given in the Teller Amendment, Cuba became an independent nation in name only. The United States linked the withdrawal of American occupation troops to several concessions from Cuba. The **Platt Amendment** (1901) required Cuba to give the United States the right to maintain a naval base at Guantánamo Bay and to intervene militarily in Cuba to protect "life, property, and individual liberty." Besides granting the United States a privileged trading relationship with Cuba, the Cuban government also needed permission from the United States before entering into treaties with other nations. The former Spanish colony essentially became a U.S. protectorate, a relationship in which a superior power assumes authority over a weaker country or territory to protect it from invasion and to share in managing its affairs. The United States took advantage of these rights and occupied Cuba numerous times until Congress repealed the Platt Amendment in 1934. The United States continued to maintain a naval base at Guantánamo Bay, using it to jail and interrogate foreign prisoners captured during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that began in 2001 and 2003, respectively.

In his successful 1900 reelection bid against Democrat William Jennings Bryan, McKinley made a strong connection between events at home and abroad. One campaign poster (**19.5**) featured portraits of the president and his war hero running mate, Theodore Roosevelt. The individual vignettes reminded Americans of the devastating 1890s depression and Cuban suffering under Spanish rule. It then noted that domestic prosperity returned and social justice prevailed overseas once the United States stepped out into the world. The claim that American intervention improved life for both U.S. and world citizens became a powerful argument in favor of constructing an American empire. Bryan focused his campaign on the evils of imperialism, but McKinley carried the election with a "full dinner pail" slogan that emphasized restored prosperity.



19.5 McKinley Campaign Poster, 1900
This poster helped voters visualize how expanding the nation's global influence created trading opportunities that made the whole country more prosperous. Emphasizing the American humanitarian mission abroad resonated with Progressive reformers and religious groups dedicated to spreading American values and institutions.

What steps did the United States take to construct a formal and informal empire after its victory over Spain?

Creating an American Empire

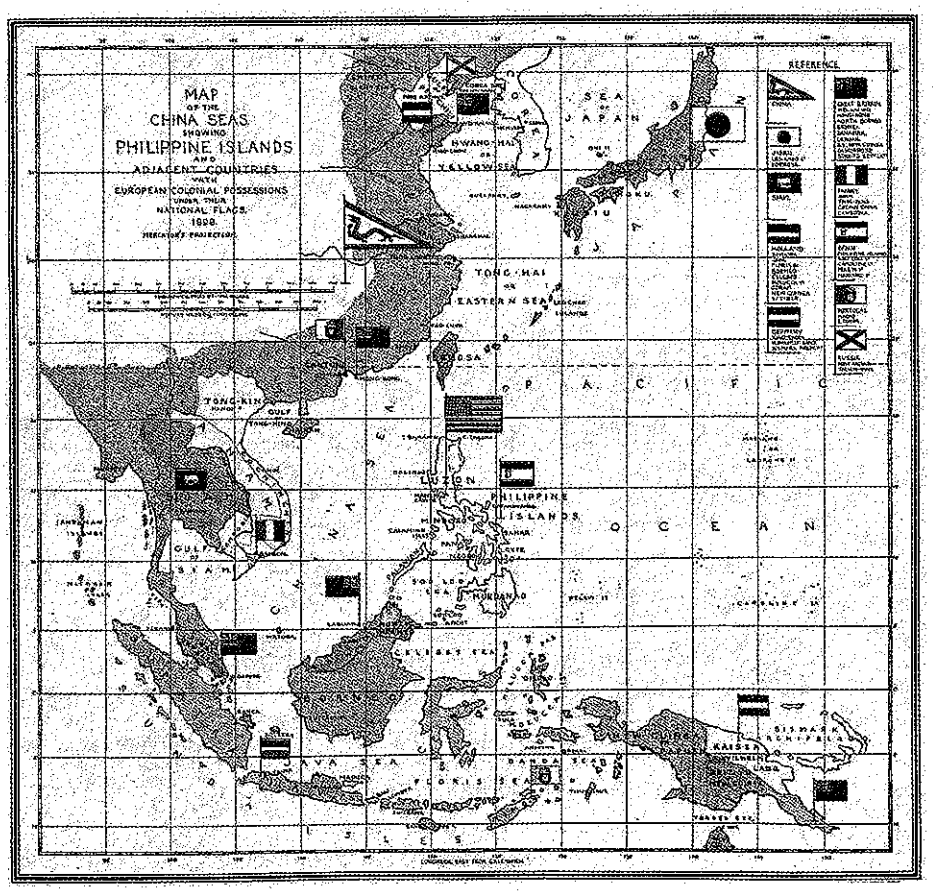
The Senate's razor-thin ratification of the Treaty of Paris, with just two votes to spare, ignited a strident internal debate over whether the United States should annex or free the Philippines. In the wake of ratification, both imperialists and anti-imperialists offered competing economic, political, and racial arguments about the wisdom of colonizing the Philippines. Unwilling to simply leave their fate in the hands of American politicians, Filipinos revolted against U.S. forces. The rebellion soon evolved into a vicious all-out war with high casualties on both sides.

The Debate over Colonies

In a risky strategic move that divided Democrats, party leader William Jennings Bryan had urged anti-imperialist Democratic senators to support ratification of the Treaty of Paris so that the United States could grant the Philippines independence once Spain relinquished control. But after the Senate had ratified the treaty, the majority of Republicans fought to keep the Philippines as a colony. Maps in the popular press helped Americans visualize the strategic and commercial importance of the nation's new island possessions. The "Map of the China Seas ... Under the National Flags, 1898" (**19.6**), published in *Harper's Weekly*, portrayed key parts of the imperialist argument for building an American empire in East Asia. By showing the proximity of the Philippine islands to European colonial possessions in East Asia, the map reinforced President McKinley's claim that another European power would certainly colonize the islands if the United States withdrew. The map also illustrated the imperialist slogan, "trade follows the flag." The closeness of the Philippines to China, for example, underscored the usefulness of the colony for developing a strong trading relationship between the United States and China.

A competing economic argument came from the Anti-Imperialist League, an organization that attracted a broad cross-section of politicians, Progressive reformers, writers, industrialists, and labor activists who opposed overseas colonial expansion. How would markets for American industrialized goods suddenly materialize in undeveloped Asian countries, the league asked. Anti-imperialists had a point, as the notion of a vast, untapped China market proved to be a seductive myth. Europe, not China, remained the most important overseas market for American goods throughout the twentieth century. Instead of economic gains anti-imperialists foresaw decades of costly expenses to maintain colonial outposts.

Debate also centered on the ability of the Filipinos to govern themselves. On the imperialist side,



19.6 "Map of the China Seas ... Under the National Flags, 1898"
This *Harper's Weekly* map depicted the United States taking its rightful place alongside other world powers with colonial empires in East Asia.

What competing economic arguments did imperialists and anti-imperialists offer about colonies?

19.7 ***Give the Child Over to the Nurse, Uncle, and It Will Stop Crying***
Uncle Sam protects a Filipino child from ignorance and crime, portrayed as a savage black nurse, by feeding him education and civilization. This 1899 pro-expansionist political cartoon accused anti-imperialists like Hoar of failing to realize that the racially inferior Filipinos were too immature to rule themselves, no matter how much the Filipinos protested.

President McKinley adopted a strong paternalistic stance, arguing that "We could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government, and they would soon have anarchy and misrule worse then Spain's was." Caricatures helped imperialists publicize their case, incorporating popularly accepted notions of Americans' racial and moral superiority to so-called uncivilized peoples. This political cartoon contained strong racial undertones (**19.7**), depicting Uncle Sam as a nurturing white father who protects the wailing savage Filipino child from Independence (pictured as a depraved mammy-like figure) and from anti-imperialists like Senator George Hoar, a Republican from Massachusetts. The majority of Filipinos had converted to Catholicism under Spanish rule, a religion that most Americans distrusted. Besides spreading Anglo-Saxon cultural and political values, McKinley called upon American to take control of Filipinos' spiritual lives by turning them into Protestants.

Anti-imperialists viewed the question of governing the Filipinos differently. They claimed that subjugating the Philippines to imperial rule violated the principles of representative government outlined in the Constitution. Their slogan, "the Constitution follows the flag," conveyed their belief that Congress could not withhold constitutional rights, including the right to self-government, from colonial subjects.

In the 1900–1904 Insular Cases, the Supreme Court affirmed Congress's authority to govern the Philippines, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico as colonies. The court upheld the acquisition of colonies as constitutional and ruled that colonial populations did not become American citizens until the United States incorporated the colonies as territories. The justices offered a more mixed response on the question of extending constitutional rights to colonial subjects. In these cases the court denied colonial subjects some constitutional protections, such as procedural rights that guaranteed a fair trial, but held that Congress could not abridge the "natural rights" of free speech and religion. Recognition of these limited rights did not appease anti-imperialists, however. "Yes, as near as I can make out the Constitution follows the flag—but doesn't quite catch up with it," quipped Secretary of War Elihu Root. In 1900 Congress granted inhabitants of Hawaii and Alaska American citizenship, making them eligible for full protection under the Bill of Rights. Puerto Ricans had to wait until 1917. Filipinos never held American citizenship.

Finally some anti-imperialists envisioned that the burden of colonies would detract from solving racial problems at home. In the political cartoon *Civilization Begins at Home* (**19.8**), a woman symbolizing justice tries to draw McKinley's attention away from the map of the Philippines to the problems of racial injustice just outside his window. Other anti-imperialists, however, had racist reasons for opposing colonies. "Why do we as a people want

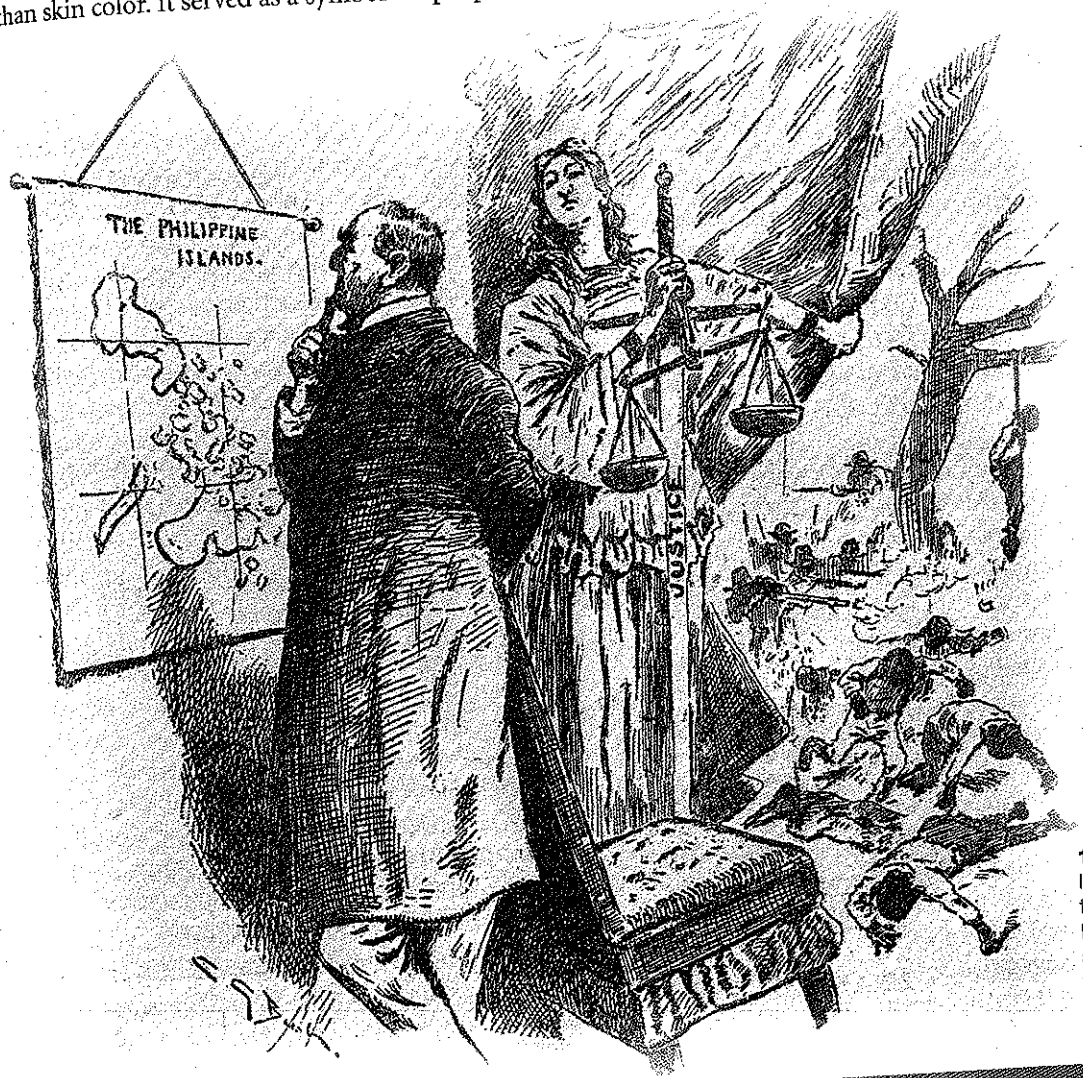
How did white Americans' racial views influence the debate over colonizing the Philippines?

"[T]here was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them."

President McKINLEY explaining the imperialist vision for annexing the Philippines as a colony

to incorporate into our citizenship ten millions more of different or of differing race?" asked Senator Ben Tillman (D-SC) on the floor of the Senate.

In 1899 the British poet Rudyard Kipling entered the American debate over colonizing the Philippines when the popular magazine *McClure's* published his poem, "The White Man's Burden—The United States and the Philippine Islands." Kipling pictured Americans embracing "**the white man's burden**," the Anglo-Saxon quest to better the lives of so-called racially inferior peoples by spreading Western economic, cultural, and spiritual values and institutions. To Kipling, the term *white man* referred to more than skin color. It served as a symbol for people who embraced Anglo-Saxon moral standards and values. Theodore Roosevelt described the poem as "rather poor poetry, but good sense from the expansionist standpoint" when he sent it to Massachusetts's Republican senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who shared Roosevelt's views on expanding U.S. global influence. Black newspapers offered a competing vision, publishing an array of poems and editorials that detailed "the black man's burden" of living in a country that accepted Jim Crow practices in the South. The poem is reprinted, along with the satirical response from an anti-imperialist activist, in *Competing Visions: The White Man's Burden* (page 576).



19.8 ***Civilization Begins at Home***
In this 1898 illustration, a woman holding the scales of justice tries to draw President William McKinley's attention away from the Philippine-American War to the grisly lynchings of blacks at home.

How did imperialists define the nation's civilizing mission?

Competing Visions

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

For American imperialists, Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem "The White Man's Burden" offered a strong justification for annexing the Philippines. The poem's title became synonymous with the imperialist civilizing mission. Some disagreed, suggesting that Kipling portrayed colonies as burdens rather than assets. Others saw the poem as rife with irony. Social reformer and poet Ernest Crosby, president of the Anti-Imperialist League of New York, offered a competing vision of "the white man's burden" in his 1899 poem "The Real 'White Man's Burden.'" What views do these poems offer on the benefits and drawbacks of colonization?

Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden"

Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden—
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—
The savage wars of peace—
Fill full the mouth of Famine
And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hopes to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—
No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper—
The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter,
The roads ye shall not tread,
Go mark them with your living,
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden—
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard—
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light: —
"Why brought he us from bondage,
Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden—
Ye dare not stoop to less—
Nor call too loud on Freedom
To cloke your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden—
Have done with childish days—
The lightly proferred laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!

Ernest Crosby, "The Real 'White Man's Burden'"

With apologies to Rudyard Kipling

Take up the White Man's burden.
Send forth your sturdy kin,
And load them down with Bibles
And cannon-balls and gin.
Throw in a few diseases
To spread the tropic climes,
For there the healthy niggers
Are quite behind the times.

And don't forget the factories.
On those benighted shores
They have no cheerful iron mills,
Nor eke department stores.

They never work twelve hours a day
And live in strange content,
Altho they never have to pay
A single sou of rent.

Take up the White Man's burden,
And teach the Philippines
What interest and taxes are
And what a mortgage means.
Give them electrocution chairs,
And prisons, too, galore,
And if they seem inclined to kick,
Then spill their heathen gore.

They need our labor question, too,
And politics and fraud—
We've made a pretty mess at home,
Let's make a mess abroad.
And let us ever humbly pray
The Lord of Hosts may deign
To stir our feeble memories
Lest we forget—the *Maine*.

Take up the White's Man's burden.
To you who thus succeed
In civilizing savage hordes,
They owe a debt, indeed;
Concessions, pensions, salaries,
And privilege and right—
With outstretched hands you raised
to bless
Grab everything in sight.

Take up the White Man's burden
And if you write in verse,
Flatter your nation's vices
And strive to make them worse.
Then learn that if with pious words
You ornament each phrase,
In a world of canting hypocrites
This kind of business pays.

Is Kipling's poem best understood as imperialist propaganda or a satire of the civilizing mission?

The Philippine-American War

On January 20, 1899, the rebel Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo declared the Philippines independent of the United States. He formed a provisional government that concentrated power in the hands of elites from the main island of Luzon to rule the ethnically and religiously diverse societies that inhabited the archipelago. Fighting began a few weeks later on February 4, 1899, when U.S. and Filipino patrols clashed in the darkness, igniting a full-scale battle on the outskirts of Manila. The U.S. government called the conflict the Philippine Insurrection, using *insurrection*, a term used to describe an illegitimate revolt against an established government, to underscore that the Philippines was a U.S. colony, not an independent nation capable of waging war. The conflict nonetheless soon assumed the scope of a full-fledged war. In the Philippine-American War, fought from 1899 to 1902, the United States eventually defeated Filipino rebel forces. The cost of the two-and-a-half-year war in human lives differentiated it immediately from the quick American victory in Cuba. Between 1899 and 1902, 70,000 U.S. soldiers (nearly 70 percent of the army) fought a grueling war against the insurrectionists, and 4,234 lost their lives. Estimates place the number of Filipino soldiers and civilians killed as high as 220,000.

> "Every tree seemed to shoot at us!"
>
> An American soldier confronting Filipino rebel guerilla tactics

The rebels used conventional warfare tactics at first, but eventually turned to ambushes, sniping, and sabotage to drive out U.S. occupying forces. American soldiers called the Filipino way of war "amigo warfare" (amigo being the Spanish word for friend) because the guerilla fighters posed as friendly peasants during the day, then fought for the rebel army at night. The logistical difficulties of supplying troops with food and adequate medical care as they marched through the jungle in search of insurgents contributed to American soldiers' miseries. To uproot the guerilla forces, the U.S. Army adopted a mix of persuasive and coercive tactics. In many villages the army built roads, improved sanitation, vaccinated civilians, and created schools. Tens of thousands of Filipinos aided the U.S. Army during the rebellion by providing information and supplies, a sign of their gratefulness for American-engineered improvements in their daily life and their own religious, class, or ethnic disagreements with the Aguinaldo-led independence movement. Rebel soldiers, however, dealt harshly with civilians who refused to supply them with food or told the Americans where to find insurgent hideouts.

Benevolent policies won over only half of the archipelago, however. In provinces where these reforms failed to curtail guerilla attacks, U.S. troops lashed out with increasing brutality. "With an enemy like this to fight, it is not surprising that the boys should soon adopt 'no quarter' as a motto, and fill the blacks [Filipinos] full of lead before finding out whether or not they are friends or enemies," a soldier from Utah wrote home. American soldiers burned villages and crops to deprive rebels of shelter and food, tactics that created a starving civilian refugee population and encouraged resentful peasant men to join Aguinaldo's rebel force. Exposés in the American press and Senate investigations revealed the inventive tortures the army used to extract information from captured Filipino rebels, fueling the ongoing debate over whether the United States was civilizing or conquering the Philippines. In the "water cure," for example, interrogators shoved a bamboo shoot down a victim's throat to keep his mouth open while they poured water into his throat and nose until his stomach swelled and he could not breathe, and then pushed on the stomach to expel the water. The victim had a few minutes to release the desired information before his interrogators repeated the entire process.

Justifying annexation of the Philippines as part of the "white man's burden" posed a particularly thorny dilemma for the six thousand African American soldiers fighting in their own segregated regiments to subdue the Filipino rebels. White soldiers constantly referred to Filipinos as "niggers," the same derogatory term they used when speaking about their African American comrades. Knowing that many African American civilians opposed the war as "an unholy war of conquest," a term coined by activist minister Henry M. Turner, black soldiers nevertheless hoped that their honorable military record would help create more opportunities for African Americans at home and in the military. Filipino rebels posted signs on trees that chastised African Americans for fighting "against people who are struggling for recognition and freedom, [while] your people in America are being lynched and disfranchised by the same who are trying to compel

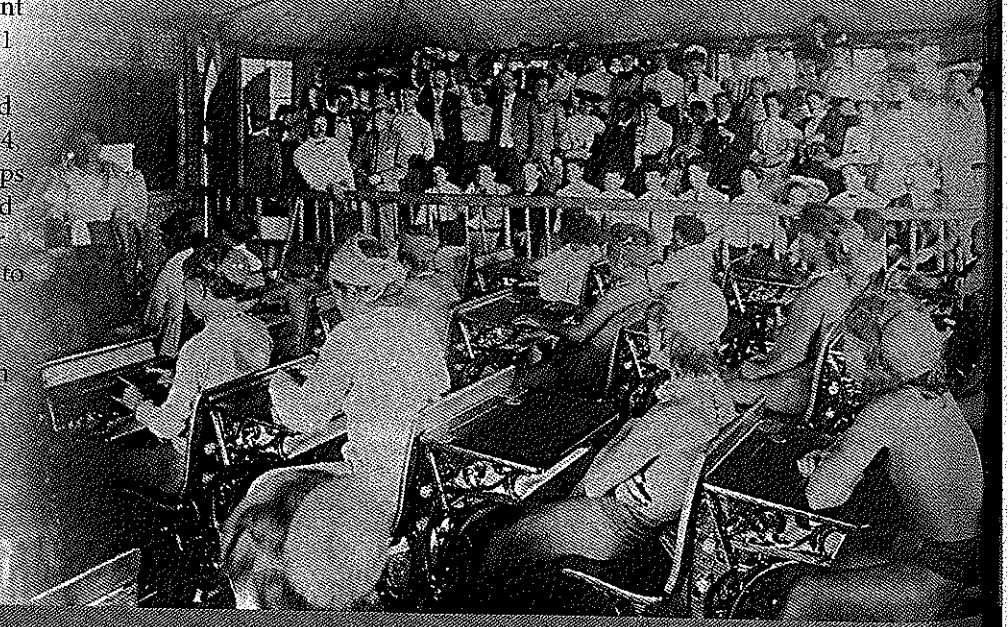
What tactics did the U.S. Army adopt to fight the Filipino rebels?

us to believe that their government will deal justly and fairly by us." Yet these Filipino appeals to lay down their arms had little effect on most African American troops, who focused instead on avenging the lives of comrades killed by Filipino rebels. One exception was Corporal David Fagan, a black soldier who had fought in Cuba and defected to the Filipino army shortly after arriving in the Philippines. He was one of five black soldiers who deserted to the other side. Fagan's reputation grew to mythic proportions as he eluded capture and successfully organized guerilla raids on his former comrades-in-arms.

Rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo was not so fortunate. In March 1901 a captured messenger revealed the location of Aguinaldo's hideaway 50 miles into the jungle. To capture Aguinaldo General Frederick Funston assembled a group of Macabebe scouts, a Philippine ethnic group that had traditionally rendered military service to Spain and now joined the U.S. fight against the rebels. Posing as reinforcement rebel troops, the Macabebe soldiers entered Aguinaldo's camp accompanied by five American soldiers pretending to be prisoners. The group arrived as a birthday celebration for Aguinaldo was under-way, and when the infiltrators reached for their weapons, Aguinaldo's guards assumed they were preparing to fire an honor salute. Instead the Macabebe scouts began shooting, the signal for the rest of Funston's men, who were waiting on the perimeter, to invade the camp. Aguinaldo's guards fled in panic, leaving the rebel leader in the hands of the Americans.

A chastened Aguinaldo called on his followers to lay down their arms and accept U.S. rule. One by one Aguinaldo's generals surrendered, and the war ground to a halt. Theodore Roosevelt, who became president after McKinley's 1901 assassination (see Chapter 18), declared the war over on July 4, 1902. American troops nonetheless remained in the Philippines for another eleven years to subdue separate revolts by Muslim Moro tribal leaders in remote islands of the Philippines.

In 1900 William Howard Taft became the first civilian Governor General of the Philippines. When the war ended he expanded humanitarian efforts to build roads and schools, and improve sanitation. Taft also convinced Congress to purchase church-held land from the Vatican, which the colonial administration then helped peasants purchase with low-cost mortgages. To put the debate over annexing the Philippines to rest, the government sponsored exhibits at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair that championed the imperialist vision of colonization. In the Philippine Reservation display, visitors walked through six reconstructed Filipino villages and watched partially clothed members of remote Filipino tribes demonstrate native practices that included feasts of dog and headhunting. By inviting tribes with the most exotic customs to participate, organizers intended to juxtapose the primitiveness of Filipino culture with the civilizing influence of U.S. rule. Photographs such as this (**19.9**) captured the U.S. effort to provide illiterate, nearly naked Filipinos with a Western education. The curious American visitors in the gallery observing a white female instructor teaching her pupils appear unconcerned about putting these people on display as a tourist attraction. Instead Americans who talked with Filipinos at the exhibit quickly "disabused themselves of any impression that the natives could take care of themselves," one newspaper reported. Other displays at the World's Fair championed America's scientific, economic, and cultural achievements. Collectively these exhibits suggested that as a leading nation in the civilized world the United States had the duty and right to become a colonial power.



19.9 American Rule in the Philippines The 1904 St. Louis World's Fair included exhibits on American efforts to school native tribes in the Philippines, turning these exotically dressed people into tourist attractions.

How did imperialists try to quell debate over colonizing the Philippines?

America and East Asia

The United States fought a war of conquest in the Philippines to secure an independent trade route to East Asia only to discover that the coveted China market was in danger of disappearing. To prevent the world's leading powers from carving China up into formal colonies at the turn of the century, the United States turned to diplomacy, scoring an impressive victory when it convinced these nations to keep Chinese trade open to all. Americans also viewed their nation's role in negotiating an end to the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 as an additional sign of America's growing world stature. Not all international conflicts in this period originated outside the United States, however. In 1907 President Roosevelt used diplomacy to smooth over the crisis that arose in Japanese-American relations when California initiated a campaign to segregate and ban Japanese immigrants.

The Open Door in China

Throughout the nineteenth century China granted most-favored trading status (commercial privileges) to every world power that asked. This strategy prevented any one foreign nation from gaining too much power over the Chinese economy and helped China remain independent in an age when Europe and Japan colonized many Asian lands. Any nation contemplating a campaign to colonize China risked provoking the wrath of angry competitors eager to protect their own access to Chinese trade.

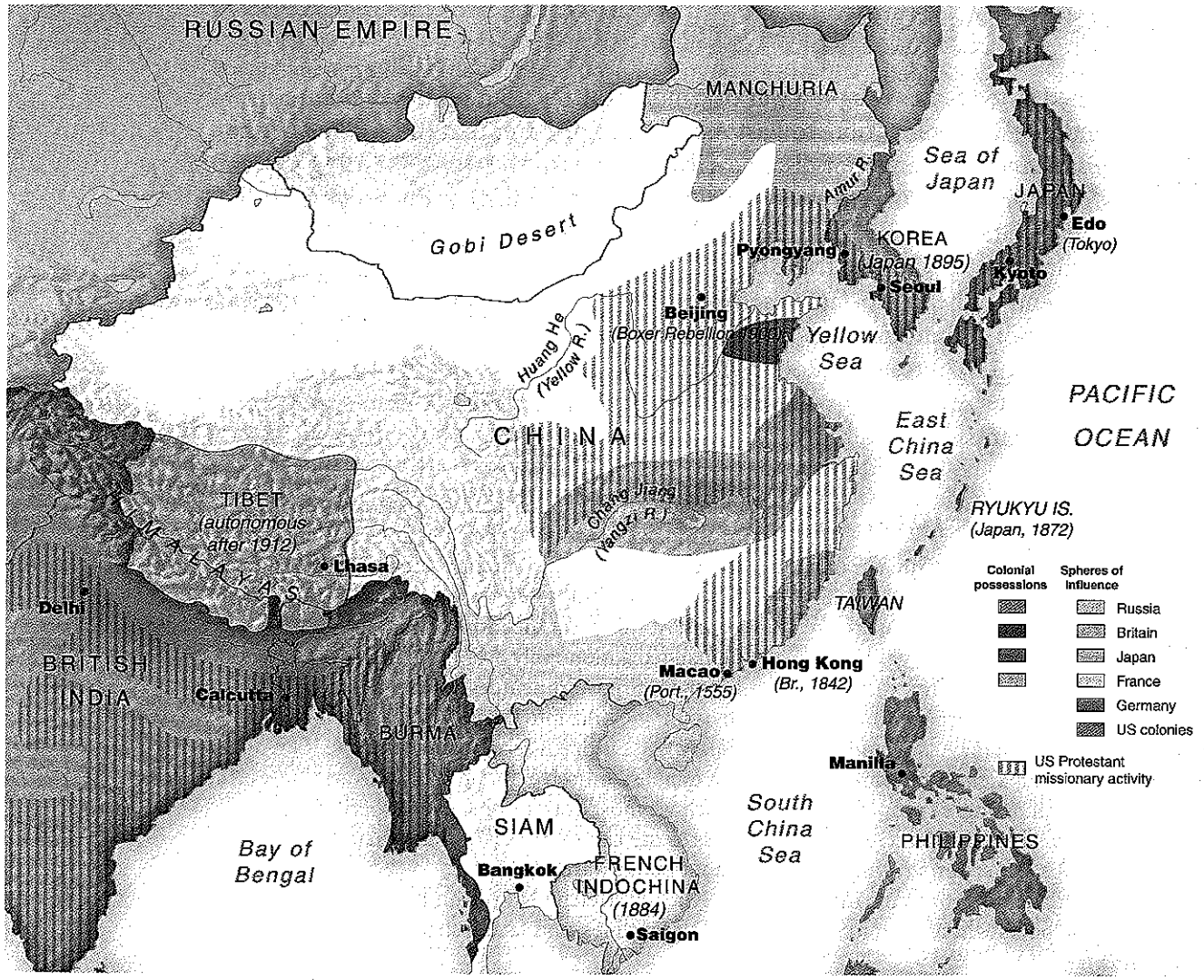
In the 1880s and 1890s, American Protestant missionaries began venturing forth into the interior of China, away from the ports where foreign businessmen concentrated their commercial activity. In their letters to American churches, missionaries exaggerated Chinese interest in Western agricultural crops such as wheat and cotton. By whetting public curiosity about a vast Chinese market, missionaries hoped to bolster domestic support for their religious work in China. The debate over colonizing the Philippines also heightened the allure of an untapped Chinese market for U.S. goods.

American access to these potential customers, however, appeared in danger of evaporating at the turn of the century. The world's leading nations descended on China to each claim a **sphere of influence**, the term used to describe the exclusive political and trading rights that a foreign nation enjoyed within another nation's territory. American missionaries continued their religious activities in these new spheres of influence, areas that American businessmen also coveted as future markets for U.S. goods. At this point the involved nations only demanded a monopoly over trade in a specific region, but the U.S. government feared that an outright division of China into formal colonies would soon follow. "All Europe is seizing on China and if we do not establish ourselves in the East that vast trade, from which we must draw our future prosperity" would close to the United States forever, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge warned.

Already stretched to the limit in the Caribbean and Philippines, and facing strong anti-imperialist sentiments at home, McKinley never considered sending troops to China to seize a port or territory. Instead Secretary of State John Hay circulated a carefully worded set of notes that laid the foundation for the **Open Door Policy**, a U.S.-sponsored nonbinding international agreement that kept the Chinese market open to all foreign nations. The first set of Open Door Notes asked France, Italy, Japan, and Russia to allow other nations to trade freely within their respective spheres of influence, refrain from imposing arbitrary duties on foreign goods, and allow Chinese officials to collect customs fees (thereby recognizing China's continued political control). By January 1900 Hay reported that all nations with a sphere of influence in China had

> "There are 400,000,000 active stomachs in China, and each cries for food three times a day."
>
> A New York newspaper extolling the opportunities to export American crops

Why did Americans develop a strong interest in China at the turn of the century?



19.10 Foreign Activity in China, 1901 American missionaries and businessmen established a presence in China that the U.S. government tried to protect by negotiating with nations that had spheres of influence there.

agreed to abide by these terms. For the time being the allure of trading opportunities in the spheres of others outweighed the desire for full-fledged colonies in China. China was the only nation Hay neglected to consult in his diplomatic negotiations.

Angry over the humiliating foreign domination of China, a group of Chinese militants vowed to restore Chinese sovereignty over its land and economy. In 1900 a secret society called the Righteous and Harmonious Fists initiated a terrorist campaign to drive the "foreign devils" out of China, a crusade that some members of the Chinese imperial government secretly funded. Westerners called this group the Boxers because of the clenched fist the rebels adopted as their emblem and the militants' martial arts training. When thousands of Boxers began roaming the countryside and attacking foreigners at will, an international force of ground troops and battleships assembled to crush the insurgency. Tensions escalated dramatically when the Boxers took foreign diplomats and businessmen hostage in Beijing.

Throughout the crisis Secretary Hay worked frantically to prevent the involved nations from using the Boxer Rebellion as an excuse to colonize China. In a second round of Open Door Notes, Hay asked the same nations that had accepted the first Open Door Notes to respect the "territorial and administrative integrity" of China. To avoid any negative responses, Hay did not ask for a formal reply to his request. To further protect American missionary and economic interests in China (pictured on **19.10**), McKinley sent 2,500 U.S. soldiers to join the multinational force in freeing the foreign hostages and ending the Boxer Rebellion. As punishment for the imperial government's support of the Boxers, the international coalition demanded $333 million in indemnities from China. The United States used its share to provide scholarships for Chinese students studying at American universities.

What does this map reveal about relations between China and the world's leading powers, including the United States?

Relations with Japan

Despite the Open Door Policy, the competition for rights to control railroads, mines, and ports in China continued, and within a few years Japan and Russia fought to control the resource-rich Manchurian province of China. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 threatened to topple the careful balance of power that the United States was trying to maintain in China. Concerned that too overwhelming a Japanese victory "may possibly mean a struggle between them and us in the future," President Roosevelt offered to negotiate a peace settlement. In August 1905 a financially exhausted Japan and a militarily defeated Russia came to the peace table in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Many Americans delighted at the sight of their president mediating a conflict between two world powers. In 1906 Roosevelt received the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending the Russo-Japanese War.

No sooner had Roosevelt negotiated a settlement between Japan and Russia than he faced the possibility of losing the Japanese friendship he had worked so hard to protect. In 1905 California legislators, newspapers, and labor leaders joined hands to mount a strident campaign to halt Japanese immigration. Japanese and Korean exclusion leagues urged Congress to follow the precedent established with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and prohibit all Asians from entering the nation. These groups denounced Asians as a degenerative element who threatened American culture and unfairly competed for jobs that rightfully belonged to native-born white workers.

California legislators lumped all Asians together when they spoke about defending the nation from the "Yellow Peril," but Roosevelt understood the vast difference between a weak, humiliated China and a powerful, proud Japan. "If we show that we regard the Japanese as an inferior and alien race, and try to treat them as we have treated the Chinese; and if at the same time we fail to keep our navy at the highest point of efficiency and size—then we shall invite disaster," Roosevelt wrote privately. In 1906 the San Francisco Board of Education decided to send Japanese, Chinese, and Korean children to one set of segregated schools. With Japan bristling at the insult of Americans lumping Japanese together with other Asian peoples whom they viewed as inferior to themselves, Roosevelt intervened to control the damage to U.S.-Japanese relations. California agreed to revoke the segregation order in return for an end to Japanese immigration, but Hawaiian sugar planters protested that they needed Japanese workers. As a compromise Roosevelt issued an executive order that allowed Japanese workers into Hawaii. The president then negotiated a reduction in Japanese immigration to the mainland through a series of diplomatic notes between Japan and the United States. In the **Gentleman's Agreement** (1907–1908), the Japanese government agreed to deny passports to Japanese workers intending to immigrate to the United States. This informal agreement helped Japan escape the indignity of joining China as the only other nation legally banned from sending immigrant workers to the United States.

Angel Island

In the Gentleman's Agreement Japan reserved the right to issue passports to professionals and to the relatives of Japanese migrants or citizens already living in the United States. Until the United States closed this loophole in 1921, Japan gave passports to Japanese wives so they could join their husbands in the United States. Americans called these women "picture brides" because couples often exchanged photos of each other through the matchmaker who arranged long-distance marriages for Japanese men residing in the United States. The three hundred to five hundred Japanese "picture brides" who immigrated annually to the United States met their new husbands for the first time when they arrived.

The United States also experienced a surge in Chinese immigration during this period. The 1906 earthquake in San Francisco destroyed the city's birth records and without any way to prove otherwise, hundreds of Chinese men successfully claimed that they were American-born. As citizens they asserted their right to bring their families to the United States. Many brought in "paper sons," boys whose families paid a fee to Chinese men already in the United States to fraudulently claim to be their fathers.

In 1910 U.S. authorities opened up an immigration processing station on **Angel Island** in the San Francisco Bay to verify the identities of Japanese and Chinese immigrants claiming the right to enter the United States. Chinese "paper sons" endured long periods of detention on Angel Island while authorities investigated their background. Before leaving China "paper sons" memorized details about their "father," including descriptions of relatives, houses, and key events in a family's history. Once they arrived at Angel Island, inspectors quizzed sons and fathers separately and refused entry to those whose answers failed to match. Chinese men detained on Angel Island sometimes passed the time

How did domestic racial prejudices affect diplomatic relations with Japan?

by etching poetry onto the barrack walls, including one anonymous poet who expressed his angst by writing, "who was to know two streams of tears would flow upon arriving here?"

In 1919 California politicians reignited their campaign against the Japanese, successfully passing laws that made it illegal for Japanese immigrants to own property. Naturalization laws allowed just people of white or African ancestry to become citizens, preventing Japanese immigrants from seeking U.S. citizenship to circumvent these restrictions. In *Takao Ozawa v. United States* (1922), the Supreme Court held that Japanese immigrants were indeed ineligible for citizenship because they were not white. *Choices and Consequences: The Legal Construction of "Whiteness"* explores this decision.

The fact that Japanese picture brides bore children who were U.S. citizens, and therefore eligible to own property, did not escape the notice of those campaigning for a ban on Japanese property ownership. Senator James D. Phelan (D-CA) led the campaign to stop admitting picture brides to the United States, ominously predicting that a booming birthrate in the Japanese immigrant community would lead to Japanese dominance of California agriculture. To garner publicity for their anti-Japanese crusade, a congressional delegation traveled to Angel Island in 1920. The legislators invited news photographers to take photos (**19.11**) as they sternly examined the passports of bewildered, frightened young women, dressed in their best clothes to meet their new husbands. Fearful that rising anti-Japanese prejudice might lead to a Japanese exclusion law, Japan agreed to stop issuing passports to picture brides in 1921. Congress banned all immigration from Asia in 1924 (see Chapter 21).

19.11 Japanese Picture Brides, 1920
To rally public support for their drive to cut off the flow of Japanese women coming to the United States, a delegation of congressmen posed for the cameras as they examined the passports of these shy, pretty Japanese picture brides, whose ethnicity made them unwelcome.

What insights does this photo offer into issues of ethnicity and gender in the early twentieth century?

Choices and Consequences

THE LEGAL CONSTRUCTION OF "WHITENESS"

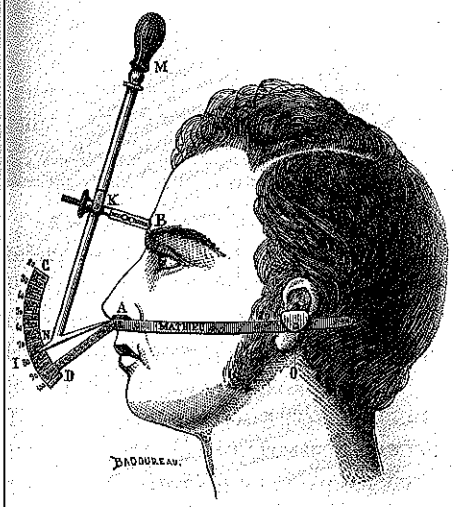
Takao Ozawa was a Japanese immigrant who lived in California and Hawaii for twenty-eight years before he applied to become a citizen of the United States. Aware that naturalization laws allowed only Caucasians and people of African ancestry to become citizens, Ozawa argued that he was white. He emphasized his complete assimilation into American society and the lightness of his skin. When the Supreme Court heard his case in 1922, the justices faced several options about how to define "whiteness."

Choices

1. Differing physical features divided the human species into white, black, and yellow races.
2. Skin color established racial identity.
3. Whiteness was a socially constructed notion with no scientific basis.
4. Assimilating into American culture made one "white."

Decision

The Court rejected Ozawa's contention that skin pigmentation signified whiteness and his claim of complete assimilation. In a unanimous decision the justices ruled that "the words 'white person' are synonymous with the words 'a person of Caucasian race.'" This decision accepted contemporary anthropologists' assertions that measurements of facial features provided scientific evidence to classify the Japanese as members of the "Mongolian race."



Measurement of the Head and Face, 1883

Consequences

Within three months the court unanimously reversed its reasoning, deciding instead that whiteness was a socially, not scientifically, constructed category. When Indian immigrant Bhagat Singh Thind applied for citizenship, he argued that anthropologists categorized Asian Indians as Caucasians. In rejecting Thind's claim of whiteness, the Supreme Court now ruled that "the words 'free white persons' are words of common speech, to be interpreted in accordance with the understanding of the common man." Deciding who was legally white now depended on the whims of the larger culture, not the claims of scientists.

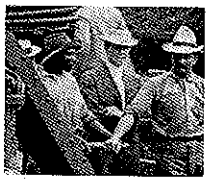
Continuing Controversies

What determines racial identity?

Well into the twentieth century, many Americans continued to believe that biologically based racial differences existed, even within the Caucasian race. In the 1920s the United States severely curtailed immigration from eastern and southern Europe, viewing northern Europeans as racially superior (see Chapter 21). The fear that light-skinned blacks were "passing" as whites caused many Southern states to bar individuals with any African ancestry, the so-called "one-drop" of blood rule, from using "whites-only" facilities. The view of racial identity as a social construct also drew adherents. Radical black civil rights leaders tried to cultivate a racial identity based on African Americans' cultural distinctiveness, while others sought a color-blind society that did away with racial identities completely.

What differing ways have Americans defined racial identity?

In America's Backyard



Establishing a U.S. presence and maintaining favorable relations in East Asia became key aims of American foreign policy at the turn of the century. Americans also, however, explored opportunities to expand closer to home. The government focused in particular on constructing an isthmian canal through Central America to facilitate U.S. trade with China and better protect the nation's coastlines. Earlier transportation breakthroughs such as the Erie Canal, National Road, and transcontinental railroad quickened the movement of people and goods and helped the United States expand across the continent. The Panama Canal secured U.S. dominance of the Caribbean, and the government resolved to keep other foreign powers out of the region.

The Panama Canal

At the end of the nineteenth century, American canal advocates emphasized increased trade and better defense as reasons for building the **Panama Canal**, a manmade waterway through Panama completed in 1914 to link the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The canal project received a boost when one of its strongest advocates, Theodore Roosevelt, assumed the presidency. Roosevelt took up the canal project immediately. "No single great material work which remains to be undertaken on this continent is of such consequence to the American people," Roosevelt told Congress the first time he addressed the legislators.

Roosevelt intended to take up where Ferdinand de Lesseps, the French mastermind who built the 1869 Suez Canal in Egypt that linked the Mediterranean and Red seas, had left off. In the 1880s de Lesseps had begun building a canal through Panama (then part of Colombia). Battling mudslides and earthquakes de Lesseps eventually abandoned the project and sold his concession from the Colombian government to the New Panama Canal Company, a French company headed by Philippe Bunau-Varilla, a longtime engineer on the project.

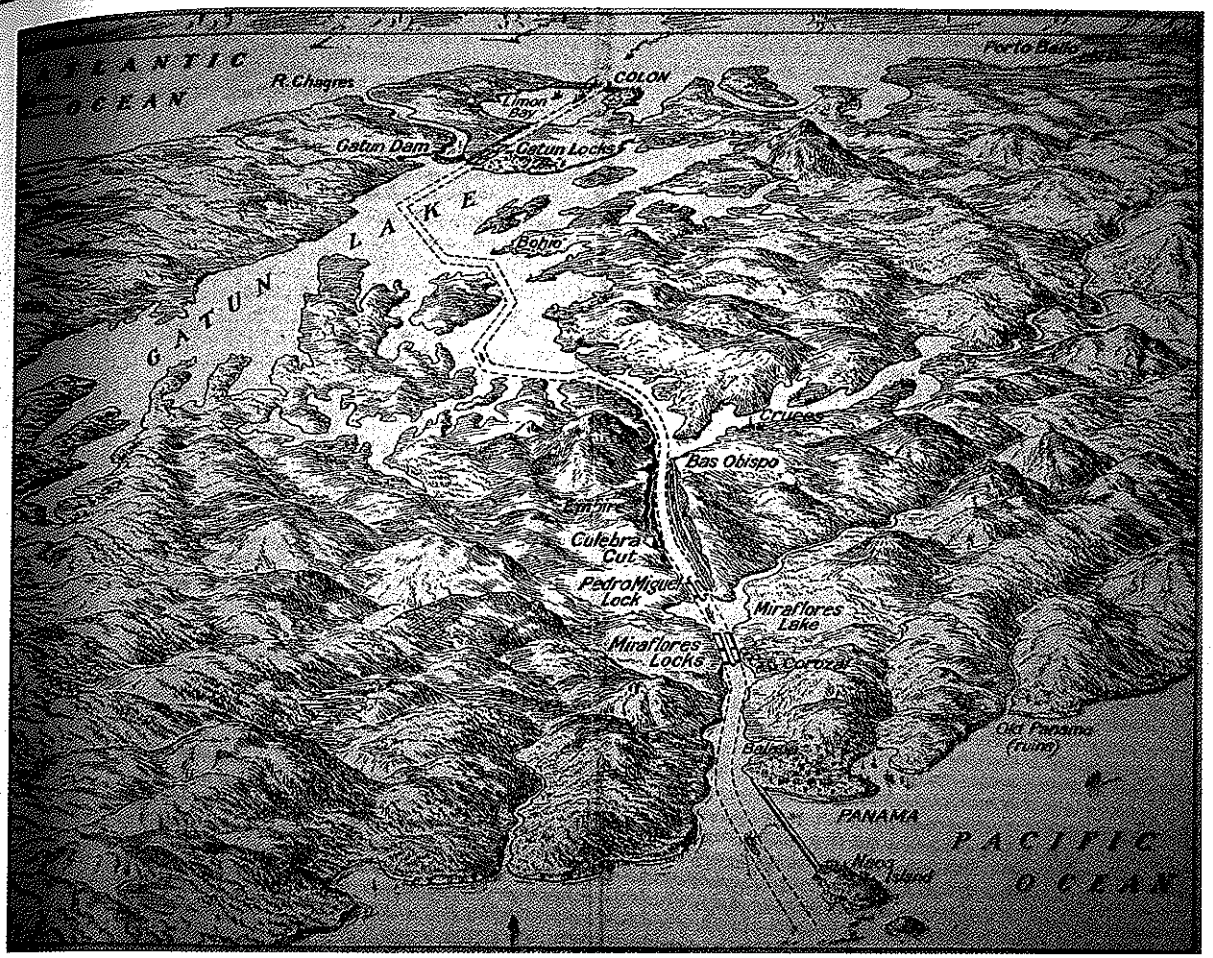
In 1902 the United States offered the New Panama Canal Company $40 million for its concession and assets, a sum that Bunau-Varilla eagerly accepted. Colombia, however, rejected Roosevelt's offer of $10 million to secure the rights to maintain a U.S.-controlled canal in Panama indefinitely. The Colombian government knew that the New Panama Canal Company's concession expired in 1904, and by stalling Colombia expected to pocket the $40 million earmarked for the company. "Those contemptible little creatures in Bogotá [the capital of Colombia] ought to understand how much they are jeopardizing things and imperiling their own future," Roosevelt wrote in frustration to his secretary of state John Hay.

In 1903 Panama revolted against Colombia. The timing was not coincidental. Fearing it would lose everything, the New Panama Canal Company encouraged and financed the rebellion by Panamanian business and political elites who did not want to share revenue from the projected canal with the rest of Colombia. Bunau-Varilla not only set the date for the revolution but also provided its leader, Manuel Guerrero Amador, with money, defense plans, a declaration of independence, and even a flag. Roosevelt never gave Bunau-Varilla any direct promises of U.S. support but, the president later recalled, it was Bunau-Varilla's "business to find out what he thought our Government would do . . . in fact, he would have been a very dull man had he been unable to make such a guess."

Once the Panamanian revolt began, Roosevelt acted immediately to ensure events turned in favor of the United States. The difficult mountain terrain separating the rest of Colombia from Panama forced Colombian troops to come by sea. When they arrived U.S. naval ships patrolling both coasts prevented them from landing in Panama. Roosevelt claimed that an 1846 agreement with Colombia gave the United States the authority to control transit across Panama. The nineteenth-century pact, however, envisioned using U.S. forces to protect, not destroy, Colombian sovereignty in Panama. In the 1920s Congress apologetically sent Colombia $25 million for Roosevelt's transgression.

With America's help the revolution in Panama succeeded. The United States immediately received its reward from Bunau-Varilla, the newly appointed

How did U.S. intervention in Panama compare with its colonization of the Philippines?



19.12 Building the Panama Canal The Americans used a system of locks and dams to construct the waterway through a mountainous terrain subject to flooding and mudslides. [*Source:* Map of the Panama Canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, 1913 (litho), American School, (20th century) / Private Collection / Peter Newark American Pictures / The Bridgeman Art Library International]

minister to the United States for the Republic of Panama. The Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty (1903) gave the United States perpetual control over a strip of land 10 miles wide that included the Panama Canal for $10 million and an annual rent of $250,000. These terms remained in effect until December 31, 1999, when the United States turned control of the canal over to Panama.

When American engineers took over building the Panama Canal in 1904, they confronted a host of geological challenges. At several points the Chagres River crisscrossed the route selected for the canal. Tropical rains regularly poured down the mountains into the Chagres, which, if not diverted, would dump floodwaters and huge silt deposits into the planned canal. By damming the Chagres River, U.S. engineers created the artificial Gatun Lake that ships reached through a stairway of locks on either side. This approach used water rather than shovels to create a large portion of the waterway. The accompanying map (**19.12**) shows the 164 square miles of rain forest that construction crews flooded to create Gatun Lake. The five thousand American engineers, skilled workers, and foremen at the construction site relied on thousands of foreign workers, mostly blacks from the British West Indies, to dig the rest of the canal.

President Theodore Roosevelt shared the public's fascination with the feat of building the canal, and visited the site in 1906. His two-week trip made Roosevelt the first American president to leave the country while in office. Not content merely to watch the huge steam shovels through the window of the train bringing him to the Culebra Cut, the project's largest excavation site, Roosevelt tramped through the mud to reach one and climbed into the driver's seat. As photographers snapped away Roosevelt

> "It is an epic feat, and one of immense significance."
>
> President ROOSEVELT, after visiting the Panama Canal construction site

How did U.S. engineers overcome the geological obstacles to building the Panama Canal?

"You had to pray every day for God to carry you safe, and bring you back."

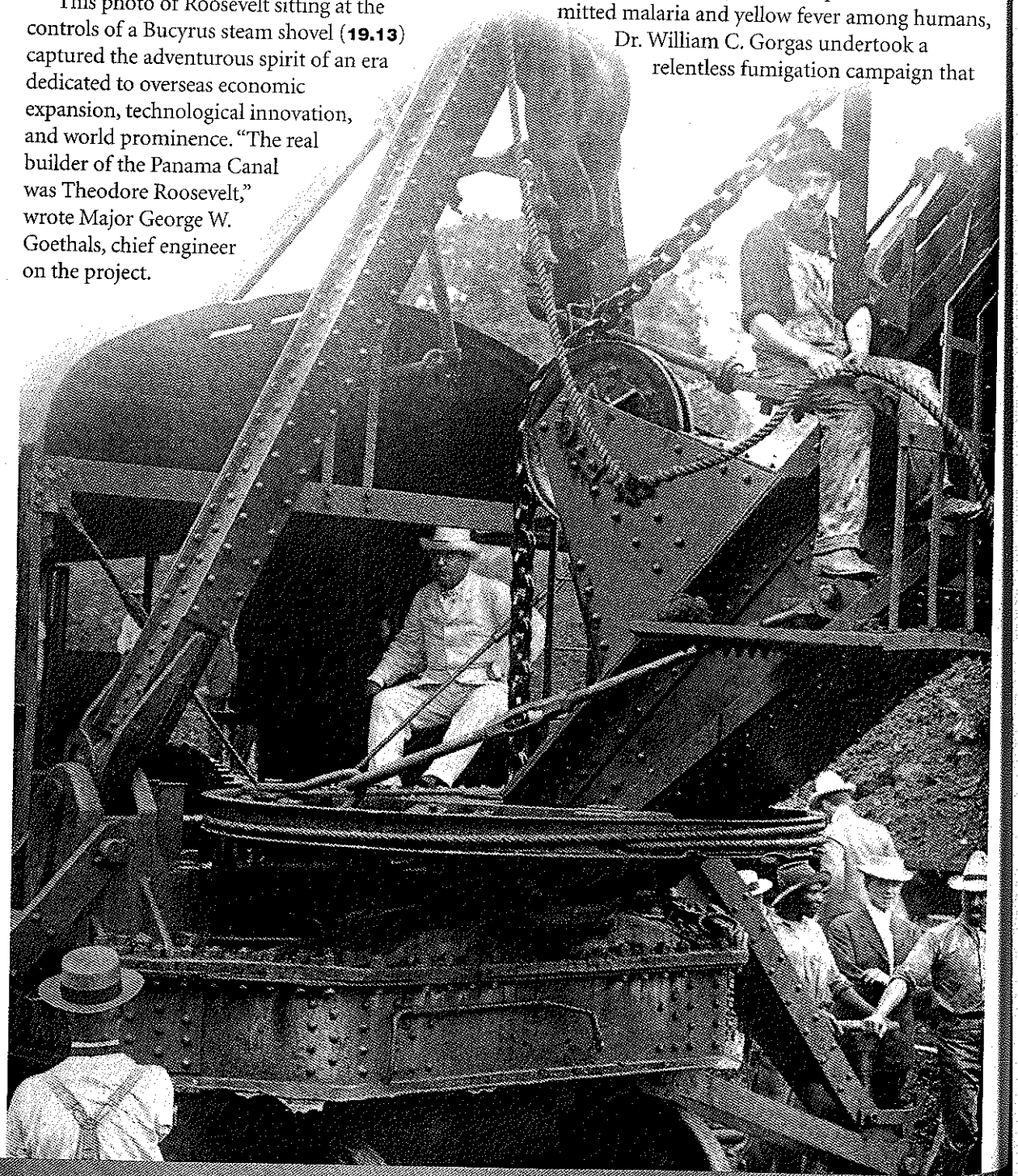
A black worker on felling giant trees and surviving mudslides while building the Panama Canal

learned that the Bucyrus steam shovel picked up 8 tons of dirt in a single scoop, required a crew of ten, and dug five times more than older machines.

This photo of Roosevelt sitting at the controls of a Bucyrus steam shovel (**19.13**) captured the adventurous spirit of an era dedicated to overseas economic expansion, technological innovation, and world prominence. "The real builder of the Panama Canal was Theodore Roosevelt," wrote Major George W. Goethals, chief engineer on the project.

Americans usually saw photos of their formally dressed presidents standing on podiums, sitting at desks, or posing with visiting dignitaries. In this photograph Roosevelt appears as the larger-than-life personality he was, literally building the canal he played such a large part in securing for the United States.

Americans solved more than the engineering riddle of constructing the canal. They also conquered the disease-carrying mosquito. Guided by the recent discovery that mosquitoes transmitted malaria and yellow fever among humans, Dr. William C. Gorgas undertook a relentless fumigation campaign that



19.13 Theodore Roosevelt Visits the Canal Zone
Instead of observing construction of the Panama Canal from a safe distance, Roosevelt climbed into the seat of a steam shovel to work its controls.

What does this photograph convey about Roosevelt and the feat of building the Panama Canal?

saved thousands of lives. Nonetheless poor sanitary conditions in the black workers' laboring camps (which Roosevelt criticized during his visit) and the dangers posed by mudslides and working with dynamite still exacted a toll. Nearly 4,500 foreign black workers and 500 white Americans died during the American phase of construction.

The Roosevelt Corollary

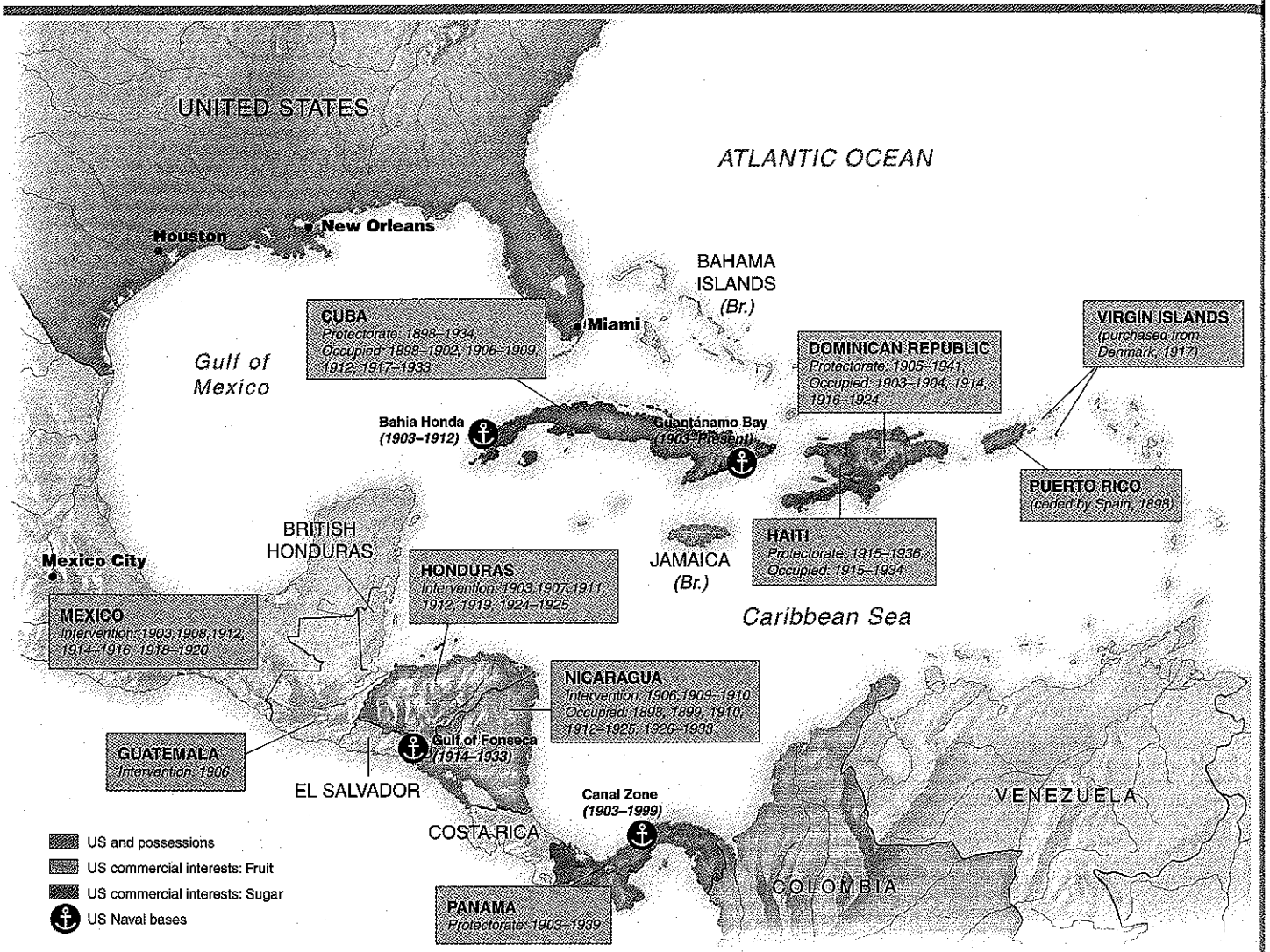
The completed Panama Canal stood as a symbol for U.S. technological achievement, naval power, and economic strength. The canal also increased the importance of the Caribbean to U.S. national security. "America's interests in this hemisphere are greater than those of any European power," Roosevelt stated, therefore the United States intended to "police and protect" the canal alone. Roosevelt had reason to worry about European naval incursions into the region. Anxious about overdue debts, Britain and Germany blockaded Venezuela in 1902 and two years later several European nations threatened to intervene with force in the Dominican Republic for the same reason. To head off a European invasion, the Dominican Republic asked Roosevelt to accept the nation as a protectorate. Roosevelt privately remarked he had "about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to." He nonetheless agreed to help the Dominican Republic, but only after deciding to use the incident to establish a new principle in U.S. foreign policy.

To prevent European military incursions into the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt announced a corollary to the 1823 Monroe Doctrine (see Chapter 7), which had declared the Western Hemisphere off-limits to further European colonization. The **Roosevelt Corollary** of 1904 stated that when confronted with "flagrant cases" of wrongdoing by Latin American nations, such as not paying their debts to Western nations, the United States intended to act as an "international police power" in the region. In this political cartoon (**19.14**), a gigantic Roosevelt, dressed as a Rough Rider, holds a big stick as he pulls U.S. ships labeled "sheriff" and "debt collector" around the Caribbean. Americans dubbed the Roosevelt Corollary the "big stick" policy in reference to a West African proverb that Roosevelt favored: "Speak softly and carry a big stick, and you will go far." The corollary exempted Argentina, Brazil, and Chile because Roosevelt considered them civilized nations capable of meeting their international commitments and running their own domestic affairs. Satisfied that the United States would help Europe recoup its loans to Central and South American nations, European nations reacted positively to the Roosevelt Corollary.

19.14 *Theodore Roosevelt's Big Stick*
In this cartoon illustrating the impact of the Roosevelt Corollary, the president pulls a line of naval vessels around the Caribbean to keep nearby nations in line and prevent the creation of European empires too close to U.S. shores.

Roosevelt's successor in the White House, William Howard Taft, further expanded U.S. influence over Latin America. Not content to simply ensure that Caribbean nations paid their debts, Taft initiated a policy of Dollar Diplomacy that encouraged U.S. investment in Latin America to ensure U.S. economic dominance over the region.

How did the Roosevelt Corollary bolster U.S. stature as a world power?



19.15 American Involvement in Latin America, 1898–1939
The United States intervened continually in the domestic affairs of its southern neighbors to protect the area as a U.S. sphere of influence.

Hoping to substitute "dollars for bullets," Taft shared Roosevelt's desire to turn the Caribbean into an American lake. When Democrat Woodrow Wilson became president in 1912, he followed in Roosevelt and Taft's footsteps by acting aggressively to protect U.S. business interests and curtail European access to the Western Hemisphere. The map, "American Involvement in Latin America, 1898–1939," (**19.15**) lists the many U.S. military incursions that occurred in areas where American businessmen had invested heavily in fruit and sugar industries. During this period U.S. troops invaded Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba for a variety of strategic, commercial, and humanitarian reasons. American occupying armies often stayed for years, and in 1915 Haiti joined Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Panama as a U.S. protectorate. Exerting influence over the domestic affairs of its Caribbean neighbors, through military invasions and protectorships, became a mainstay of twentieth-century U.S. foreign policy.

America's emerging role as a mediator in international disputes also included sending delegates abroad to resolve conflicts among European nations, including an agreement that partitioned Morocco in North Africa between Spain and France in 1906. Many congressional leaders feared that this diplomatic intervention represented a dangerous precedent. They made clear their refusal to support any departure from the traditional U.S. policy of

What steps did Taft and Wilson take to protect the Caribbean as a U.S. sphere of influence?

neutrality in the precarious game of European geopolitics. Their concerns proved well founded. On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal officially opened. Newspapers buried this news about America's crowning achievement of the imperial age in their back pages, instead devoting their headlines to the eleven-day-old war sweeping through Europe. The beginning of World War I ushered in a new era in world history, one of global warfare made possible by the powerful empires constructed in the late nineteenth century. Now actively engaged in the world, the United States would find it difficult to stay out of this spreading conflict.

Conclusion

From 1890 to 1914 U.S. imperialists identified key commercial, strategic, and moral reasons for the United States to play an active role on the world stage. Americans increasingly saw expansion overseas, through war or trade, as the answer to its domestic and foreign concerns. Opportunity for expansion came first in Cuba. Shocked by stories of Spain's reconcentration program and worried about U.S. business interests in Cuba, Americans agreed to help Cuba liberate itself from Spain when the *Maine* exploded in Havana Harbor. After its victory in Cuba, the United States established a protectorate there, acquired Puerto Rico and Guam, and purchased the Philippine islands. These territorial possessions in the Caribbean and Pacific formed the basis of the U.S. empire for the next forty years.

Americans offered conflicting visions over the virtues of creating a U.S. colonial empire. Imperialists asserted that acquiring colonies would enhance the prestige of the United States, provide valuable economic resources, and help establish a trade route to China. Advocates also viewed imperialism as a mission to improve the lives of native peoples. Anti-imperialists voiced concern over subjugating people against their will and the costs of maintaining an empire. As Americans argued, Filipino rebels took up arms against the American occupying force. The costly Philippine-American War cooled American enthusiasm for using military conquest to acquire more colonies.

Establishing a strong trading relationship with East Asia also required diplomacy. The implementation of the Open Door Policy guaranteed American businessmen unfettered access to China by preventing other foreign nations from colonizing China. To maintain the balance of power in East Asia, President Roosevelt took a leading role in negotiating the peace treaty that ended the Russo-Japanese War. Roosevelt also forged the Gentleman's Agreement, which limited Japanese immigration to the United States.

In return for helping Panama win independence from Colombia, the United States received permission to build and control a canal across Panama. The construction feat evoked pride in the nation's industrial achievements. The Roosevelt Corollary announced the U.S. intention to police the Western Hemisphere to ensure that the region remained an American sphere of influence. By building the Panama Canal, establishing protectorates in Central America, acquiring territory in the Pacific, and authoring the Open Door Policy in China, the United States emerged as a world power at the turn of the century. With the American economy increasingly dependent on overseas markets, the United States would find it difficult to ignore the threat that World War I posed to its trade, and eventually to its borders.

CHAPTER REVIEW

1893

Four-year depression begins
Intensifies interest in finding foreign markets for American goods

1898

The *Maine* explodes in Havana Harbor
Major cause of Spanish-American War

Spanish-American War
United States defeats Spain in four months

Treaty of Paris signed
Ends war with Spain; United States gains Caribbean and Pacific islands

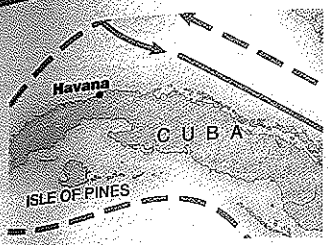
1899

Philippine-American War begins
Ignites debate within United States over keeping Philippines as a colony

Rudyard Kipling publishes "The White Man's Burden"
Imperialists believe it articulates the civilizing mission; others see it as a parody

Review Questions

1. What concerns and fears encouraged the United States to look outside its borders in the 1890s?
2. How did Americans' longstanding interest in Cuba become a full-blown crisis in 1898? What image did Americans have of Spanish rule in Cuba and the American war against Spain?
3. How did the United States benefit from its victory against Spain?
4. What conflicting visions did imperialists and anti-imperialists hold toward colonizing the Philippines? How did each reconcile their ideas with traditional American values and ideals?
5. How did American views about race and racial identity shape the nation's development as a world power?
6. What different tactics did the United States use to protect its economic and strategic interests in East Asia versus those used in the Caribbean at the turn of the century?
7. How did the United States overcome political, engineering, and medical challenges to build the Panama Canal?



1900–1901

Open Door Notes
Protects American access to China market

Platt Amendment
Cuba becomes a protectorate of the United States

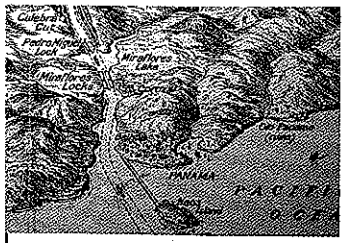
1904

Roosevelt Corollary
Establishes United States as international police presence in the Caribbean

St. Louis World's Fair
Exhibits highlight industrial progress and "civilizing" mission in colonies

1907–1908

Gentleman's Agreement
Limits Japanese immigration



1914

Panama Canal opens
Symbol of U.S. technological, military, and economic might

World War I begins
Global war engulfs Europe and its empires

Key Terms

imperialism The late nineteenth-century term for colonizing foreign nations and lands, relying primarily on business, political, and military structures rather than settlers to rule colonized peoples and exploit their resources. **562**

reconcentration Spanish policy that herded Cuban peasants off their farms into heavily fortified cities followed by systematic destruction of the crops that fed the rebel armies. **565**

yellow press Tabloid journalists and newspapers that reported sensationalist stories with a strong emotional component. **565**

Teller Amendment Congressional promise "to leave the government and control of the [Cuban] Island to its people" at the end of the Spanish-American War. **568**

Rough Riders A volunteer unit of cowboys, Ivy League athletes, city police officers, and Pawnee scouts led by Theodore Roosevelt that gained fame by charging up the San Juan Heights during the Spanish-American War. **570**

Treaty of Paris Agreement that ended the Spanish-American War with Spain relinquishing its claim to Cuba and the United States receiving Puerto Rico, some smaller Caribbean islands, and the Pacific island group of Guam. In return for $20 million, Spain turned the Philippines over to the United States. **571**

Platt Amendment Law linking U.S. withdrawal from Cuba to Cuban government granting the United States the right to maintain a naval base at Guantánamo Bay, to intervene militarily in Cuban domestic affairs, and to establish a privileged trading relationship with Cuba. The Cuban government also needed permission from the United States before entering into treaties with other nations. **572**

"the white man's burden" The Anglo-Saxon quest to better the lives of so-called racially inferior peoples by spreading Western economic, cultural, and spiritual values and institutions. **575**

sphere of influence The term used to describe the exclusive political and trading rights that a foreign nation enjoyed within another nation's territory. **579**

Open Door Policy A U.S.-sponsored nonbinding international agreement that kept the Chinese market open to all foreign nations. **579**

Gentleman's Agreement (1907–1908) Japanese agreement to deny passports to Japanese workers intending to immigrate to the United States. **581**

Angel Island Immigration processing station in the San Francisco Bay for Asian immigrants. **581**

Panama Canal A manmade waterway through Panama completed in 1914 to link the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. **584**

Roosevelt Corollary (1904) Corollary to the 1823 Monroe Doctrine that announced the U.S. intention to act as an "international police power" in Latin America. **587**