

# SAVAGE ACTS:

Wars, Fairs and Empire 1898-1904



**Viewer's guide to the 30-minute documentary  
by the American Social History Project**

**U.S. overseas expansion at the turn of the century was not just the concern of government and business; it was the stuff of everyday life. *Savage Acts* tells the story of how the Philippine War and American domestic culture forged a new U.S. foreign policy. Soldiers' letters, world's fair exhibitions, early films, travel guides, and heroic monuments expressed the growing sense of national mission based on ideas of racial superiority. But the victory of imperialist policies was not inevitable; expansion and the way it was expressed in the daily life of the nation, sparked opposition both at home and abroad.**

**Visit the ASHP website for more information: [www.ashp.cuny.edu](http://www.ashp.cuny.edu)**

# GLOSSARY AND TIMELINE

**Continental expansion (p.1)**—The acquisition of land from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans.

**Empire (p.1)**—Government that controls extensive territories and diverse populations for its own economic benefit and increased political and military power.

**Hacienda system (p.2)**—A vast ranch or farm similar to a plantation.

**Colonialism (p.3)**—Control by one country over another country's territories, populations, and culture.

**"Manifest destiny" (p.4)**—Doctrine justifying westward expansion. The phrase originated in 1845 to describe the U.S. annexation of Texas and the occupation of the rest of the continent as a divine right of the American people. This doctrine was also used to justify the U.S. annexation of Oregon, New Mexico, and California and later U.S. involvement in Alaska, Hawaii, and the Philippines.

**Anti-imperialist league (p.7)**—Organization established in June 1898 to prevent the American annexation of the Philippines. Members opposed annexation on economic, legal, and moral grounds.

**Annexation (p.7)**—Legal merging of a territory.

**Modernization (p.10)**—Process of adapting new technologies, building new infrastructure (bridges, roads, railways), and adapting new social/cultural norms.

"The Expansion of Good Government and Commerce, 1900, Philippine Islands."

"Away Down East," W. A. Rogers, *Harper's Weekly*, January 6, 1900, American Social History Project

Spain creates colonies in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Philippines, and Guam  
**1492-1520s**

**1893** Columbian Exposition opens in Chicago

Cubans and Filipinos fight for independence from Spain  
**1895-1896**

**1898** April: U.S. declares war against Spain  
December: Treaty with Spain signed

Philippine-American War begins  
**1899**

**1902-1942** Philippines under U.S. rule

Ferdinand Marcos becomes President of the Philippines  
**1965**

**1986-1987** People's Power Movement overthrows U.S.-backed dictator Ferdinand Marcos

The U.S. closes its Air Force and Naval bases in the Philippines  
**1992**

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# THE FORGOTTEN WAR



War photograph showing encounter between U.S. troops and Filipino women. The Philippine War was one of the nation's first conflicts covered by photo-journalists, who published their pictures in daily newspapers and sold them to the public as souvenirs.

Prints and Photographs Division,  
Library of Congress.

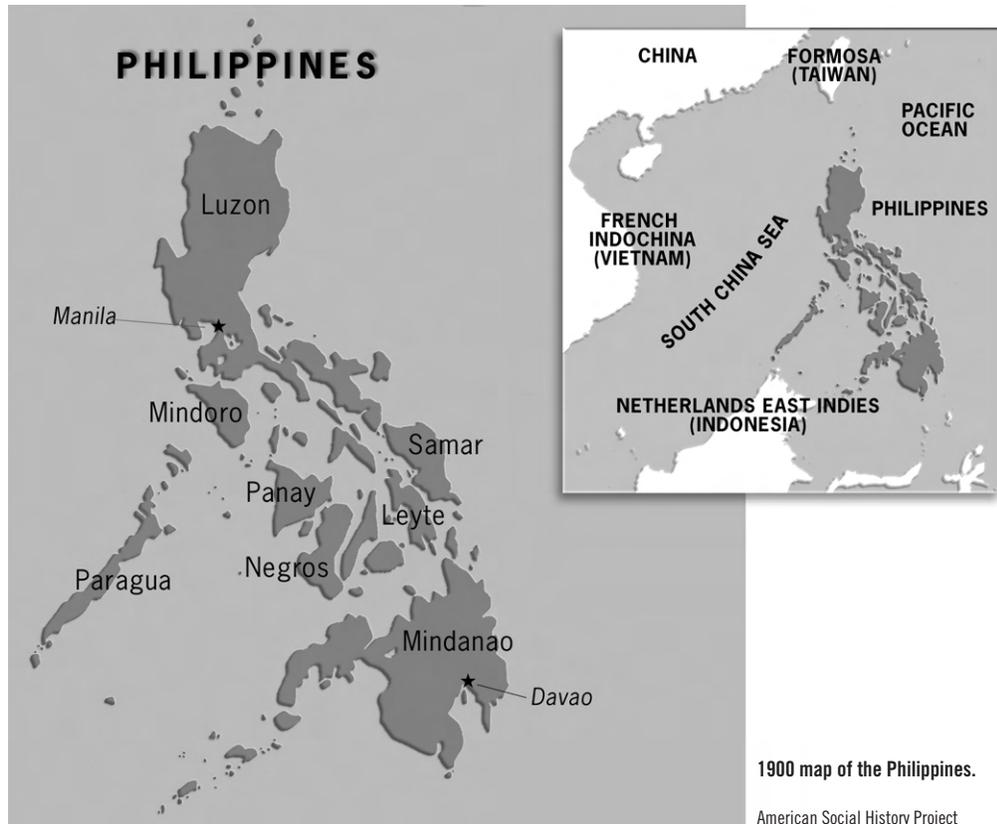
**F**rom 1898 to 1902, the United States waged a bloody war in the Philippines. Thousands of U.S. soldiers were shipped to these far Asian islands. Many never returned. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos were killed and many more wounded. Provoking widespread debate at home, this war helped shape American foreign policy in the twentieth century. Yet today, few Americans know it even occurred. What was this war about? Why was the U.S. involved? And why has it been forgotten?

Sparked by the brief Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, the Philippine War marked an important step in America's emergence as a global power. Marching westward for more than a century, conquering and displacing Native Americans and Mexicans, the U.S. had reached the limits of continental expansion. Increasingly, U.S. leaders looked to extend the nation's power south, to the Caribbean and Latin America, and west across the Pacific Ocean to the vast lands of Asia. As the new century dawned, U.S. armies battled Filipino soldiers, and Americans from all walks of life debated pressing questions:

Should the U.S. treat the Philippines as colonies and spoils of war, or as an independent country? Was it right for America, born in a war for independence from England, to become an empire? What role should the U.S. play in the changing world of the new century?

The video *Savage Acts* (and this guide) looks at the war from often-ignored points of view, including those of U.S. soldiers and of Filipinos themselves. Examining the widespread debate over empire and tracing its links to popular culture—from music, movies, and the arts to the highly visible World's Fairs—*Savage Acts* connects the war to changing attitudes about race, power, and what it meant to be an American in the twentieth century.

# CAUGHT BETWEEN CLASHING EMPIRES



**The history of the Philippines has long been shaped by powerful nations engaged in empire-building. Spain came upon these Pacific islands in 1521, while searching for a route to India. Spanish conquest created a new nation, but plunged the inhabitants into a centuries-long struggle for control of their land and society.**

When the Spanish explorer Ferdinand Magellan sailed to the island of Limasawa in 1521, there was no country called the Philippines. Instead, 150 tribes occupied some 7,000 islands. Though different in many ways, these tribes held common beliefs and shared a complex history. Each tribe had its system of writing. Most accepted equality of the sexes. The vast majority of the islanders lived by agriculture. Some islands were once part of the Balinese empire; some of the Indonesian empire. And all the islands traded with the ancient civilizations of China and India.

The Spanish conquest, part of the first great wave of European overseas expansion that swept over the Americas and parts of Asia, established both Spanish and Christian power in the islands.

At first the Spaniards used the islands as a stopover as they ferried Asian goods by ship to Mexico, and European silver and luxury items back. Gradually they took control of all the islands and created large agricultural plantations or *haciendas*.

Calling the islands the Philippines (after King Philip II of Spain), the Spaniards changed the Filipinos' system of writing and religion and required them to take on Hispanic names. Many new things were acquired by the islanders, but much of the old life was lost. Spanish became the dominant language (though traditional languages persisted, at least in spoken form). Spain created a central government and established a university in Manila long before the U.S. was founded. Most Filipinos became Roman Catholic. New art forms emerged and the *hacienda* system shaped everyday life.

Spanish rule never sat easy with the island people. Spain imposed many taxes and demanded tribute in material goods and unpaid labor. To create the *haciendas*, the colonial authorities took huge tracts of land from residents and gave it to Spaniards and their collaborators.



Turn-of-the-century street scene in Manila, the largest city and colonial capital of the Philippines. Photographs and illustrations can tell us many things about the past. What details or aspects of Philippine life can you observe in this image?

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

As a result, during the centuries of Spanish rule there was an average of one uprising per year. The longest uprising in 1763 was led by a woman, Gabriela Silang, who was hanged by Spanish authorities. Discontent with Spanish rule affected the whole society. Filipino priests were executed for asking for their own parishes. Even well-off Filipinos (called *illustrados*) sought relief from the unjust rule. In the 1870s, seeking a larger voice in ruling the islands, a group of *illustrados* formed the Propaganda Movement. They wanted the Philippines recognized as a province so it could be represented in the Cortez, Spain's government. The campaign

collapsed when one of its leading members, Dr. José Rizal, was arrested and executed.

By the end of the 19th century, however, the once-strong Spanish empire was declining. Most of Spain's colonies in South and Central America had fought bloody and successful wars of independence, and Spain no longer stood among the most powerful nations in Europe. In 1896, eight Philippine provinces united to launch a war of independence against Spanish colonialism, under the banner of a secret society. Two years later, as this war spread, the U.S. launched its attack on the Spanish forces in the Philippines.

*"God gave each individual reason and a will of his or her own to distinguish the just from the unjust; all were born without shackles and free, and nobody has a right to subjugate the will and spirit of another."*

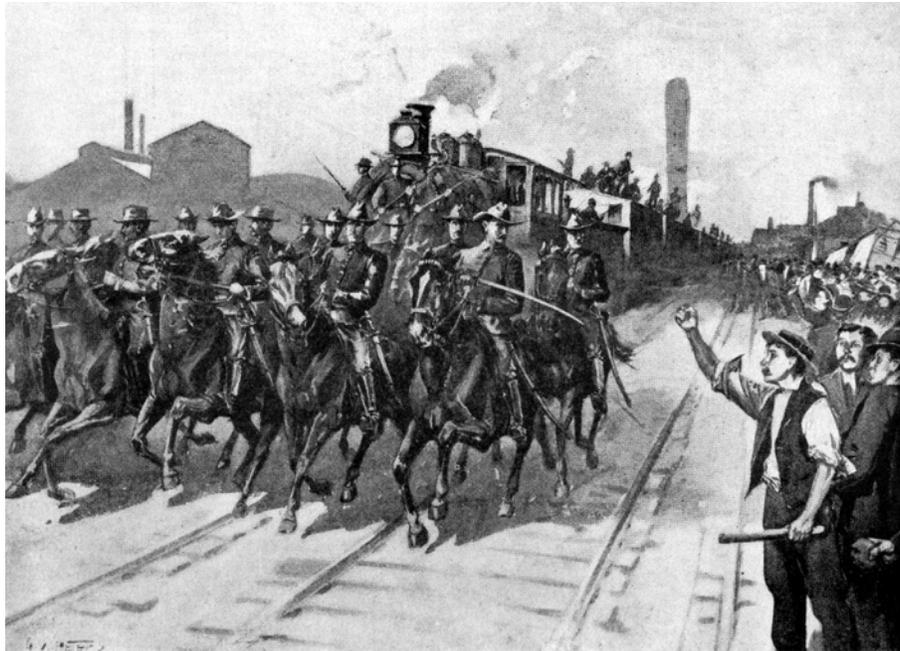
—JOSE RIZAL,  
LETTER TO THE  
YOUNG WOMEN OF MALOLOS

Filipino nationalists struggled against Spanish rule, then helped lead the fight against U.S. forces.

National Archives



# THE U.S. AND THE WORLD



U.S. Cavalry breaks railroad workers' strike in 1894. Industrialization and recurring economic downturns during the late nineteenth century sparked conflicts between workers and owners across America. Military triumphs abroad helped distract the nation's attention from such unrest.

American Social History Project

**T**he collision between the U.S. and Spain in the Philippines in 1898 was part of a larger pattern of change and conflict sweeping the globe. In the late nineteenth century, European nations had launched a second wave of overseas empire-building. England, France, and Germany took over most of Africa and new parts of Asia. China, offering centuries of wealth and a vast market, was seen by European leaders as the grand prize. Spain was too weak to compete in this scramble. But many U.S. leaders were ready to join the chase for overseas empire.

By 1890, the U.S. had completed its westward sweep across the continent. This history of conquest and expansion encouraged U.S. leaders to look for new avenues for growth. When the U.S. suffered severe economic depression in 1893, some businessmen and military leaders pointed to Asia and Latin America as essential markets for U.S. goods. Powerful voices proclaimed that overseas growth was the nation's new "manifest destiny." Looking towards China, U.S. leaders discussed building a canal through Central America to link the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and facilitate U.S. trade. Strategic control of the Caribbean Basin, the seas and islands south of Florida and east of Central America, was increasingly seen as vital.

To some U.S. leaders, Spain's remaining colonies beckoned as tempting stepping stones to greater U.S. power in Asia and the Caribbean. When the battleship *Maine* exploded in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, the U.S. moved towards war with Spain, both in Cuba and in the Philippines.

Yellow Journalism encouraged U.S. intervention in Cuba. Competing for readers, American newspapers headlined stories about Spanish atrocities in Cuba and pressed for U.S. intervention. The papers often reported rumors as facts. The *New York Journal*, for example, distorted an incident involving a search of a Cuban woman by Spanish agents. The illustration implied a sexual assault, but the event as pictured never occurred.

American Social History Project



# SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR IN CUBA

*[Cubans] do not desire the annexation of Cuba to the United States...They admire this nation, the greatest ever built by liberty, but they dislike the evil conditions that, like worms in the heart, have begun in this mighty republic their work of destruction.*

—JOSE MARTI, LETTER TO THE NY EVENING POST, 1889

**W**hen colonial powers clash, the bloodshed often takes place not in their home territories but in the colonies. The U.S. and Spain fought not in North America nor in Europe, but in Cuba and the Philippines. The prize of victory was not the Spanish throne but the colonial properties: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

In the U.S. the war was dubbed the Spanish-American War, but in fact Cuba had been fighting Spain for years without U.S. involvement. Since 1868, political and military rebellions had shaken the island. Some Puerto Ricans also joined the struggle, hoping that once Cuba's freedom was secure, Puerto Rican independence would be next.

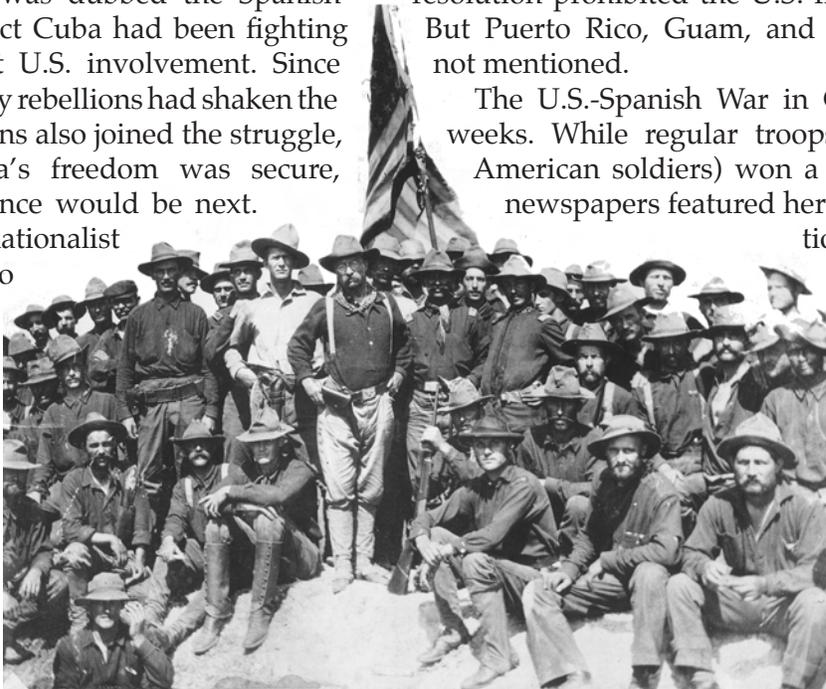
Meanwhile, Cuban nationalist leaders such as Antonio Maceo and writer José Martí sought U.S. support. Since the U.S. had fought England for its independence, colonized peoples looked to it as a natural ally.

Desperate to hold onto its power, Spain dealt harshly with rebellious colonists. Its widespread violation of human rights allowed

U.S. journalists, led by the Hearst and Pulitzer newspaper chains, to whip up popular anger at Spain. After the Maine exploded, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution supporting Cuban independence and authorizing military action to force Spanish withdrawal from Cuba. Congressional members debated empire-building and an amendment to the resolution prohibited the U.S. from colonizing Cuba. But Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines were not mentioned.

The U.S.-Spanish War in Cuba lasted only ten weeks. While regular troops (including African-American soldiers) won a series of battles, U.S. newspapers featured heroic accounts of the actions of Teddy Roosevelt

and his voluntary cavalry troops, the Rough Riders. Soon the combined U.S. and Cuban forces defeated Spain. In the U.S., this quick victory—the first united military action by northern and southern states since the Civil War—fed a new sense of national unity.



Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders gained fame during the war.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress



African-American soldiers were some of the first troops to arrive in Cuba. Despite discrimination in the military, African Americans fought bravely in several battles, including the battle of San Juan Hill.

Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard College Library

# THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR



Filipino soldiers fought in small units utilizing guerilla warfare techniques. The Filipino army included many teenagers, and was sustained by broad popular support.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

**O**ne of the decisive battles of the Spanish-Cuban-American War took place in the Philippines and set the stage for the Philippine-American War. U.S. Navy Commodore George Dewey defeated the Spanish navy in Manila Bay in May 1898, crippling Spain. Soon, however, the U.S. was locked in battle with Filipinos seeking national independence.

The Filipino fight for independence had begun before the U.S. arrived. In 1896-97, a group of Filipinos led by Emilio Aguinaldo fought a war for independence, which ended in a truce. Filipino rebels retreated to Hong Kong, and in 1897 Dewey met with Aguinaldo there. Dewey knew that if war with Spain came, the U.S. Navy might need Filipinos as land-based allies. A U.S. war ship took Aguinaldo back to the Philippines in early 1898. Armed struggle resumed, and soon the Filipinos controlled most Spanish centers. By May the Filipino army had surrounded Manila, but the U.S. requested that they stay out of the capital.

In June 1898 Aguinaldo proclaimed the Republic of the Philippines and asked for U.S. support, but both the U.S. and Spain ignored this proclamation. By August Spanish forces in Manila had surrendered—to the U.S. In December 1898, the U.S. and Spain signed

a treaty and Spain sold Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the U.S. As the U.S. announced its annexation, a skirmish erupted between U.S. and Filipino troops; the Philippine Republic declared war to defend its independence.

The Philippine-American War was brutal and prolonged. The Filipino Army, though small and poorly armed, was supported by many islanders. As a result, some U.S. soldiers attacked Filipino troops and civilians alike. Historians estimate that as many as 500,000 Filipinos died of war-related causes. Though the U.S.

declared the war over after three years, the 63,000 U.S. soldiers did not succeed in quelling Filipino resistance. Armed struggle against the U.S. occupation continued for another decade.

At home, Americans debated the war. Those who supported U.S. actions pointed to the Philippines' value as a fueling station for U.S. ships; and as a springboard for expansion to China. Some felt the U.S. was duty-bound to educate and "christianize" the islands, not realizing that most Filipinos were already Catholic. Newspapers painted the Filipinos as primitive "savages." And many Americans came to believe the islanders could not govern themselves or defend themselves against threatening European powers.

*"Why do you shed all this blood; why do you spend all this energy, all these millions of dollars? Is it for our good or for your own?"*

—SIXTO LOPEZ, FILIPINO LEADER,  
IN LETTER TO U.S. GENERAL WHEELER

*"I thought it would be a great thing to give a whole lot of freedom to Filipinos, but I guess now that it's better to let them give it to themselves."*

—ANTI-IMPERIALIST MARK TWAIN

Those who opposed the war held meetings, wrote editorials, and sent petitions to Congress. In November 1898 they formed an Anti-Imperialist League, and in three months membership grew to over 100,000. Many League members felt empires were anti-democratic and a violation of the nation's heritage. Some union leaders argued that overseas empire would only feed the overwhelming power of big business. Industrialist Andrew Carnegie, however, opposed the war for strategic reasons; he believed the U.S. should exercise global economic power but avoid annexing colonies.

Attitudes about race divided the anti-imperialists. Some opposed annexation because they did not want a

"primitive race" to join the U.S. Others, including many African Americans, suggested that U.S. talk of "uplifting" the Filipinos was hypocritical; at home, they argued, the U.S. was not even trying to protect the rights of black citizens.

The League's fragile coalition eventually came apart. In 1900 the League supported political candidates who opposed annexation, including William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic candidate for President. Bryan ran a hard-fought campaign against incumbent Republican William McKinley and his new vice-president, Rough Rider Theodore Roosevelt. But rising prosperity and patriotic support for U.S. soldiers helped McKinley to victory. Gradually the League faded in power.



*"We came here to help, not to slaughter, these natives...I cannot see that we are fighting for any principle now."*

—NEBRASKA SOLDIER

"Civilization Begins At Home." Political cartoon from an 1899 newspaper. What do you see in the cartoon? What was the cartoonist trying to say?

# THE CULTURE OF EMPIRE

**T**he Philippine-American War took place at a pivotal moment in U.S. history, as the nation changed in important ways. The debate over the war was affected by evolving popular attitudes about race, patriotism, and the U.S. role in the world. A look at the World's Fairs of 1893, 1901, and 1904 can help us explore the nation's changing sense of itself in the new century. Tens of millions of Americans flocked to the World's Fairs and Expositions held in U.S. cities at the turn of the century.

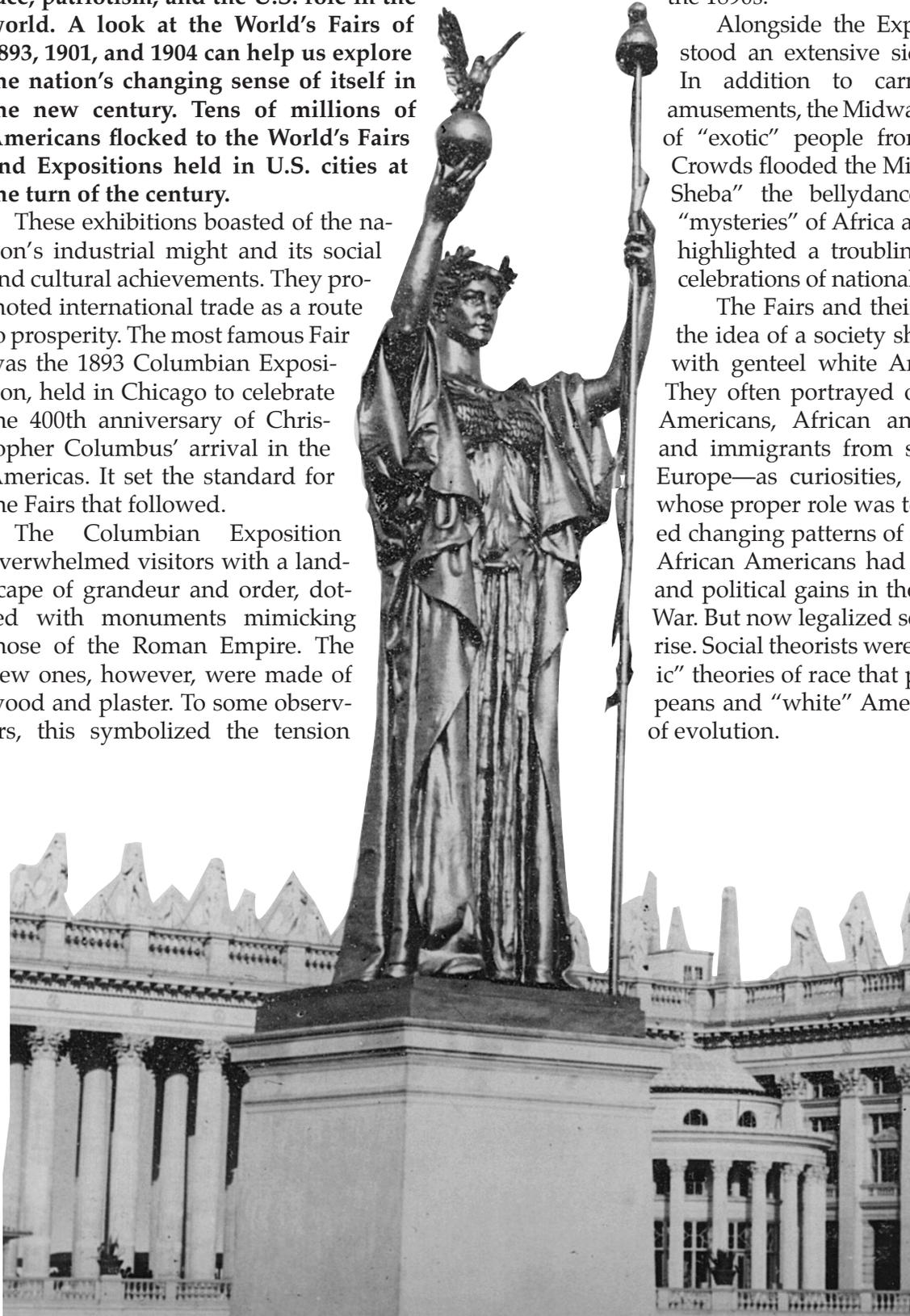
These exhibitions boasted of the nation's industrial might and its social and cultural achievements. They promoted international trade as a route to prosperity. The most famous Fair was the 1893 Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the Americas. It set the standard for the Fairs that followed.

The Columbian Exposition overwhelmed visitors with a landscape of grandeur and order, dotted with monuments mimicking those of the Roman Empire. The new ones, however, were made of wood and plaster. To some observers, this symbolized the tension

between the Exposition's idealized vision of America—what one historian called “a compelling vision of harmony, unity and beauty”—and the reality of widespread poverty and recurring labor conflicts during the 1890s.

Alongside the Exposition's monuments stood an extensive sideshow, the Midway. In addition to carnival-like rides and amusements, the Midway featured exhibitions of “exotic” people from around the globe. Crowds flooded the Midway to watch “Little Sheba” the bellydancer and gape at the “mysteries” of Africa and Asia. The Midway highlighted a troubling underside of these celebrations of national power and progress.

The Fairs and their designers embraced the idea of a society shaped like a pyramid, with genteel white Americans at its peak. They often portrayed other groups—Native Americans, African and Asian Americans, and immigrants from southern and eastern Europe—as curiosities, savages, or inferiors whose proper role was to serve. This illustrated changing patterns of racism in U.S. society. African Americans had won important legal and political gains in the years after the Civil War. But now legalized segregation was on the rise. Social theorists were publicizing “scientific” theories of race that placed northern Europeans and “white” Americans at the pinnacle of evolution.



The Statue of the Republic at the 1893 Columbian Exposition embodied the nation's changing image of itself. What evidence of this can you find in this image?

Chicago Historical Society



One of the Filipino women on exhibit at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Not all Americans accepted this vision. African-American journalist Ida B. Wells and former abolitionist Frederick Douglass protested publicly against the racism and discrimination found at the fairs. Douglass argued that the Columbian Exposition should highlight the progress African Americans had achieved in the face of racist violence. When the fair organizers refused, Douglass called it an insult to the nation's "boasted" values of "liberty and civilization."

Other aspects of American culture demonstrated similar trends and tensions. Positive images of military power and national strength became increasingly common in cartoons, art, public monuments, theater, film, and popular music. Concerned by rising immigration from southern and eastern Europe, many elite and middle-class Americans wanted to focus public attention on what it was to be an "American." Patriotism and nationalism—and a growing sense of the distinction between "us" and "them"—reinforced the nation's drive towards empire.

Filipinos themselves became objects of curiosity at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition. Since the Philippine-American War had generated broad interest, the fair organizers brought 1,200 Filipinos to live at the Exposition. Some were exhibited as members of "barbaric" tribes; others as potential workers. With painful clarity, this exhibition illuminated the link between racism, dehumanization, and overseas economic expansion.



The Pledge of Allegiance was invented in 1892 as part of the celebration of Columbus' arrival in the Americas. It soon became a daily ritual in American schoolrooms. Its widespread adoption revealed anxiety about bolstering an "American" identity in the face of massive European immigration. And it fed the growing nationalism that helped to foster U.S. overseas expansion

Museum of the City of New York

# LEGACY OF EMPIRE

As President (1901-1909), Theodore Roosevelt treated the Caribbean as an "American lake" and asserted the U.S. right to intervene in the internal affairs of Latin American nations.

American Social History Project



**O**n July 4, 1902, the U.S. proclaimed the end of the Philippine-American War. Although scattered resistance continued, the U.S. ruled the islands for the next half-century. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos had been killed; and while U.S. casualties were much smaller, few Americans celebrated the U.S. victory as a glorious triumph. The war, and the U.S. victory, reshaped life in the Philippines. And it affected the U.S. role in the changing global economy for many years to come.

After the war, the U.S. still sought economic and military expansion, but no longer sought overseas colonies. After 1903, the U.S. tried to influence the actions of smaller countries without actually owning or ruling them. In part because of the fierce Filipino resistance and the protests of the anti-imperialists, the price of colonization seemed to be too high.

This shift in policy did not stop the U.S. from using force to ensure that smaller countries followed its wishes. The U.S. military occupied Cuba in 1906, 1912 and 1917. Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico also suffered periodic U.S. military occupations.

In the process, the U.S. carved out a large Asian and Latin American market for its business. For many years, the U.S. dominated these areas, politically and economically. The U.S. often became the largest buyer of raw materials and agricultural products from these countries. Eventually, attracted by the prospect of cheap labor, U.S. corporations built overseas assembly plants. The impact of the U.S. presence on life in these areas was profound and not always positive, as the twentieth century history of the Philippines reveals.

In the Philippines, U.S. rule lasted from 1902 until 1946, and its influence endures to this day. The U.S. encouraged modernization such as building roads and bridges, but many of these improvements supported U.S. economic or military facilities. U.S. educational efforts were also double-edged. Teachers came from the U.S. with a mission: to establish a public school system with English as the language of instruction. Many teachers glorified U.S.-Philippine relations. As knowledge of English spread, American books, magazines, advertisements, music, movies, and (later) television shaped Filipino culture and consciousness.

“USS Enterprise, Pacific Fleet, 1966.”

U.S. military bases, and U.S. corporate plantations and factories dominated the Philippine economy in the twentieth century, benefiting an elite few while confining most Filipinos to low-wage service and agricultural jobs. Environmental problems caused by military and industrial toxic wastes are an enduring legacy of the U.S. presence.

National Archives



Another legacy was Filipino migration to the U.S. Filipino students won government scholarships to study in U.S. colleges, and returned to take leading roles in government, education and business. In the 1920s and 1930s, West Coast farmers recruited Filipino men as workers. Though these men faced harsh regulations (which prohibited them from buying farms or marrying “white” American women), they planted the seeds of a Filipino community in the U.S. After World War II, the trickle of migration swelled again, and today Filipino-Americans are among the largest immigrant groups in the U.S.

The second half of the century brought new changes. Filipino soldiers fought alongside Americans to defeat Japan in World War II. Afterwards, the U.S. finally granted independence to the war-ravaged islands. However, the U.S.



kept key economic rights and maintained large military bases in the Philippines. In the era of the Cold War and Vietnam War, the Philippines were important outposts of American power.

In the 1970s, the U.S. supported Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos as he imposed martial rule and abolished democratic institutions from the Philippine Congress to the press. Marcos’ reign led to increased poverty and terrorism by the police and military. But knowledge of democracy could not be quelled among the Filipinos, who had fought for independence for so long. In a dramatic 1986 uprising, some two million Filipinos challenged Marcos’ rule and overthrew his government.

This Manila demonstration in 1983 was an early protest of the People’s Power Revolution of the 1980s.

Free Library of Philadelphia

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## SEEING IS BELIEVING?



As this still image from a 1899 Edison film *Advance of Kansas Volunteers at Caloocan* illustrates, the flag was the central feature of recreated battle scenes. These films were used to promote patriotism during the war.

Motion Picture Division, Library of Congress

**T**he battlefield footage shown in *Savage Acts* was filmed in rural New York and New Jersey, shortly after the events they portrayed. These recreations, shown to audiences around the country, were an early use of film as information and propaganda. These films blurred the distinction between actual and staged events. They highlight the role of moving images in shaping viewers' perceptions and understandings.

The wars of 1898-1902 were the first U.S. wars to take place in the era of moving pictures. When war erupted, cameramen went to Cuba; however, burdened with bulky equipment, their footage mainly recorded ordinary events, such as troops marching in camp. Soon filmmakers found that more exciting battle scenes could easily be re-enacted for the camera.

These war films were screened in small storefront movie theaters (nickelodeons), just becoming common in 1898-1900. They also became featured attractions

in patriotic events staged across the country. The audience was aware that these films were recreations. Nevertheless, the power of film was such that it surpassed the stage in capturing audience attention and swaying their emotions. These early film reenactments helped shape the form of "newsreel" movies and, later, television news.

Motion picture footage is often stirring and persuasive, seeming to portray actual events. But movies, whether documentaries or Hollywood hits, are always interpretations of reality, not reality itself. Many factors shape their message: what is included or excluded from the picture frame; whose point-of-view the camera shows; how the action is edited; and what "story" is being told. Filmmakers make such decisions, shaping what we see and how we respond. To understand images from the past—and from the present—we must consider not only who created the image but also how and why it was produced.

# LEARN MORE ABOUT SAVAGE ACTS

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*A War in Perspective: Public Appeals, Memory, and the Spanish-American Conflict*. A New York Public Library exhibit designed to commemorate the centenary of the Spanish-Cuban-American War. It traces the patriotic campaigns and public perceptions of the war in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. <http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/epo/spanexhib/>

## CREDITS

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## THE *WHO BUILT AMERICA?* MATERIALS

*Savage Acts: Wars, Fairs and Empire* and nine other documentaries are a part of the *Who Built America?* series, which explores the central role working women and men played in key events and developments of American History. See also the two-volume *Who Built America?* textbook, *Freedom's Unfinished Revolution*, a high school text on the Civil War and Reconstruction, and the *WBA?* interactive CD-ROM.

Complete list of *WBA?* documentaries:

*History: The Big H*— This film-noir detective story introduces the history of working people and the challenge of understanding the past.



*Tea Party Etiquette*— Boston shoemaker George Robert Twelves Hewes narrates his experience of the Boston Tea Party, Boston Massacre, and the American Revolution.

*Daughters of Free Men*— Lucy Hall leaves her New England farm to work in the Lowell textile mills of the 1830s and confronts a new world of opportunity and exploitation.

*Five Points*— The story of 1850s New York City and its notorious immigrant slum district, the Five Points, is seen through the conflicting perspectives of a native born Protestant reformer and an Irish-Catholic family.

*Doing As They Can*— A fugitive woman slave describes her life, work, and day-to-day resistance on a North Carolina cotton plantation during the 1840s and 1850s.

*Dr. Toer's Amazing Magic Lantern Show*— The struggle to realize the promise of freedom following the Civil War is told by ex-slave J.W. Toer and his traveling picture show.

*1877: The Grand Army of Starvation*— In the summer of 1877 eighty thousand railroad workers went on strike and hundreds of thousands soon followed. The Great Uprising began a new era of conflict about equality in the industrial age.

*Savage Acts: Wars, Fairs and Empire*— The story of the Philippine War (1899-1902) and turn-of-the-century world's fairs reveal the links between everyday life in the U.S. and the creation of a new expansionist foreign policy.

*Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl*— Framed by the 1909 New York shirtwaist strike, this program presents a panoramic portrait of immigrant working women in the turn-of-the-century city.

*Up South: African-American Migration in the Era of the Great War*— Narrated by a Mississippi barber and a sharecropper woman, *Up South* tells the dramatic story of African-American migration to industrial cities during World War I.