“Expansion is too Clean a Name for it.”[1]

Black Perspectives on

American Imperial Expansion, 1898-1902

By

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Bachelor of Arts, University of British Columbia, 2017

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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1. John Mitchell Jr, ed., “Terrible Scenes There.,” *The Richmond Planet,* (Richmond, VA), October 14, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1899-10-14/ed-1/seq-4/. ; This quote originated from a letter written by an anonymous Black soldier fighting in the Philippines-American War.

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Abstract

This thesis examines Black American perspectives on American imperial expansion during the Spanish-Cuban-American and Philippines-American Wars. Framed through a racial and gendered analysis, I use extensive archival material, newspaper coverage, and secondary analysis to frame and explore how this marginalized population reposed to the American acquisition of Guam, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Hawai'i between 1898-1902. As Cuba broke into open anti-colonial rebellion in the late nineteenth century, Black American newspapers focused on the struggles of Cuba's enslaved and oppressed peoples. Once the Spanish-Cuban-American war began, Black newspapers sought to establish the courage, patriotism, and strength of the nation's Black soldiers through patriotic and cheerful news courage. Some Black newspapers argued that military service would fortify Black civil rights; others proclaimed that the nation had far greater troubles at home, rendering the US incapable of handling the challenges posed by imperial expansion. Letters written by Black soldiers shaped these narratives of bravery while describing how white American soldiers subjugated the coloured peoples of the lands the US occupied. Black soldiers humanized the colonized populations on the islands they occupied, reframing American expansion against the power of white oppression.

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On July 1, 1898, shortly before 6:30 a.m., John R. Conn hurriedly prepared his breakfast of half-fried bacon and hard tack under the rising Cuban sun.[1] Conn was a corporal in the 24th Infantry, one of four Black regiments within the US Army. Established shortly after the Civil War, America's Black regular regiments comprised an estimated 2,000 of the 17,000 American soldiers deployed to Cuba at the start of the Spanish-Cuban-American War.[2] As the July morning began to unfold, Conn heard the crack of a gun rip through the air; the Battle of San Juan had begun.[3]

At eight o'clock, the brigade trumpeter called the 24th Infantry to order, and Conn began his march towards the front line. The intense heat "caused a breathless silence to come over the ranks" as retreating wounded soldiers "choked" the narrow jungle paths.[4] "It was terrible," Conn recalled. "There were wounded and dead men lying all along, beside and in the road, and the air seemed alive with bullets." The Spanish fired upon the approaching army with deadly precision from atop San Juan Hill. As the Americans returned fire, their guns released a large plume of smoke, revealing their location to snipers hidden in the trees. The result was a bloody bottleneck. As Conn stumbled over the bodies of his fallen brethren, the words of his regimental chaplain echoed in his ears: "Acquit yourselves and fight like men!"[5]

The Spanish-Cuban-American War was a relatively brief conflict, categorized by a series of American victories. Beginning on May 1st, six days after the war began, the US Navy's

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1. Willard B. Gatewood, ed., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 67-68.; Frank E. Roberts, "Assault on San Juan Heights." Assembly: Association of Graduates United States Military Academy 53, no. 1-3 (September 1994): 14. https://doi.org/10.33011/assembly.
2. Joseph Smith, *The Spanish-American War 1895-1902: Conflict in the Caribbean and the Pacific* (London: Routledge, 2014). 124-125, 133-134
3. Gatewood, *'Smoked Yankees,'* 66-67.
4. Miles V. Lynk, *The Black Troopers, or the Daring Heroism of the Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War*, 2nd ed. (New York, New York: AMS Press Inc., 1971), 60.; Gatewood, *'Smoked Yankees,'* 68.
5. Gatewood, '*Smoked Yankees,'* 68-69.; Herschel V. Cashin et al., *Under Fire: With the Tenth U.S. Cavalry, Google Books* (Chicago, Illinois: F. Tennyson Neely, 1899), 120.

Asiatic Squadron, under the command of Commodore George Dewey, captured Manila Bay in a stunning defeat of the Spanish Pacific Squadron. Seven weeks later, Captain Henry Glass "captured" Guam without firing a shot.[6] On July 3, the US captured San Juan Heights, in no small part due to the contributions of America's Black regiments: the 24th & 25th Infantry and the 9th & 10th Cavalry.[7] The American troops in Puerto Rico won continuous battles against the Spanish, gaining town after town until Spain called for an armistice on August 12. Four months later, representatives from Spain and the United States signed the Treaty of Paris, officially concluding the conflict on December 10, 1898.[8]

This "splendid little war" brought Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines into the American Empire while simultaneously signaling the rise of the nation as a world power.[9] While imperialism was not new to the US, the acquisition of these islands marked a notable shift in the nation's history of expansion. The Treaty of Paris brought nearly eight million people under the jurisdiction of the Stars and Stripes, most of whom were people of color. Simultaneously, Jim Crow legislation, disenfranchisement, and lynch law threatened Black civil liberties across the country. Against this backdrop, Black soldiers found themselves at the intersection of race, nationality, and gender, navigating a complex landscape within the broader discussion of American imperial expansion.

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6. Kenneth E. Hendrickson, *The Spanish-American War*, of *Greenwood Guides to Historic Events 1500-1900* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 33, 39, 40, 57.
7. Stephen Bonsal, *The Fight for Santiago: The Story of the Soldier in the Cuban Campaign from Tampa to the Surrender* (New York, New York: Doubleday & McClure Co., 1899), 182.
8. Stuart Creighton Miller, *'Benevolent Assimilation': The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1982), 12.
9. After the Spanish-Cuban-American War, John Hay, the American ambassador in London, wrote to his friend and colleague Theodore Roosevelt, 'It has been a splendid little war; begun with the highest motives, carried on with magnificent intelligence and spirit, favored by that fortune which loves the brave." In the decades since the war's conclusion, numerous historians used Hay's description of the war in the wider discussion of American imperial expansion at the turn of the nineteenth century.; Smith, "The 'Splendid Little War' of 1898, 23.; Glenn A. May, "Why the United States Won the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902," *Pacific Historical Review* 52, no. 4 (November 1983): 353–77, https://doi.org/10.2307/3639072, 355.

Through a focused examination of Hawaiian annexation, Spanish-Cuban-American, and the Philippines-American Wars, this thesis will present a racial and gendered analysis of Black media to explore how a marginalized population responded to American expansion. What did Black soldiers experience while fighting in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines? How did race impact their understanding of gender? What was the Black response to the Philippines independence movement? How did Black soldiers influence public perception of American expansion? Through an examination of the experiences and perspectives provided by Black soldiers, newspaper editors, and newspaper correspondents, this paper aims to contribute to the (slowly) developing cultural examination of Black media as a valuable and important topic of historical analysis. This study will invite us to re-evaluate how this era of territorial expansion affected the national conversation around race, civil rights, nationality, and gender, illuminating the multifaceted nature of Black American resistance and resilience.

It took George Marks III two decades to finalize *The Black Press Views American Imperialism*, the first academic examination of Black perspectives on American expansion.[10] Following Marks, Willard B. Gatewood published "Black Americans and the Quest for Empire, 1898-1903," and *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903,* in 1972 and 1975 respectively. Through an exhaustive analysis of Black primary sources, from newspapers to autobiographies to the personal correspondence of Black soldiers, Gatewood argued that Black Americans evaluated US expansion in relation to their own deteriorating social status. My research is indebted to Gatewood's pioneering work.

In recent years, a burgeoning body of scholarship by US historians has delved deeper into the complex interplay of race and gender during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

10. Richard E. Welch, *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina press, 1979), 178.

One notable work in this field, Gail Bederman's *Manliness and Civilization* (1995), examined how societal perceptions of gender intersected with American notions of empire. In particular, she emphasized the 1890s US fascination with "primitive masculinity," a belief that men needed to find ways to maintain their virility and strength despite the debilitating ease built into modern civilization. Such thinking, however, did not extend to Black Americans. As the United States grappled with the legacy of slavery and the challenges of integrating Black citizens into society, conversations surrounding masculinity became inextricably linked to the broader discussion of racial hierarchies. White supremacists argued that Black men lacked self-control, rationality, and moral virtue, qualities deemed fundamental for a civilized man. This deeply ingrained stereotype reinforced the image of Black men as violent and dangerous, inflaming the perceived sexual threat they posed to white women. Bederman argued that these discussions justified and reinforced racial inequalities by presenting masculinity and civility as white characteristics.[11] Soon after, Kristin Hoganson published *Fighting for American Manhood; How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippines-American War*. Drawing on extensive primary source analysis, Hoganson argued that the cultural conception of gender played a significant role in the political debate surrounding American expansion. However, Hoganson's monograph examined gender primarily as it applied to men in positions of power. While she acknowledged the role of race, she focused on gender as it pertained to hegemonic social groups, shedding limited light on the Black perspective during this pivotal historical period.[12]

At the analytical intersection of race and gender, Kimberlé Crenshaw published "Demarginalizing the Intersections of Race and Sex" in 1989. Crenshaw coined

11. Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization a Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880 - 1917* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 20, 45-48, 49.
12. Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2000), 1-14.

"intersectionality" to describe how multiple forms of oppression, such as race, class, and gender, create multifaceted forms of marginalization when considered in tandem. A seminal work in critical race theory, she argued that feminist and anti-racist discourses have historically overlooked the experiences of Black women in their treatment of race and gender as separate and distinct categories of analysis. When considered intersectionally, these unique forms of oppression fundamentally altered the treatment of the individual. Race and gender functioned as compounding factors of societal oppression, creating a complex stratum of discrimination.[13] Understanding the intricate web of racial and gender oppression serves to recognize the nuanced complexities of marginalized communities presented in the Black newspapers examined.

The Black press emerged as a vocal advocate for racial equality with the first publication, *Freedom's Journal,* in 1827. Samuel E. Cornish and John Brown Russwurm, the publication's editors, sought to counter the negative racial stereotypes perpetuated by white newspapers while simultaneously providing a platform to highlight Black voices. Black newspapers fostered racial pride, connection, and public debate with their editorials while simultaneously reporting on the issues that mattered to Black Americans.[14] Literate community members frequently read articles aloud to eager (and often illiterate) crowds, sharing the editor's perspective with the masses.[15]

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13. Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140, no. 1 (1989): 139–67, http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8, 139-140, 151-157.

14. Charles A. Simmons, *The African American Press: A History of News Coverage During National Crises, with Special Reference to Four Black Newspapers, 1827-1965* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc, 1998), 5, 14.

15. Sylvia M. Jacobs, *The African Nexus: Black American Perspectives on the European Partitioning of Africa* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1981), 43; David Walker, a Black writer and business owner, wrote *The Appeal in Four Articles, with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in Particular to Those of the U.S.* in 1827 as a scathing attack on slavery. Walker wrote *The Appeal* with the expectation that it would be read aloud by the literate members of the community to the vast number of enslaved women, children, and men. This demonstrated a precedent of oral literature communication that continued in the distribution of information amongst Black American populations. Peter Buckingham, "David Walker: An Appeal to Whom?," *Negro History Bulletin* 42, no. 1 (1979): 24–26, https://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/44176304, 24.; Todd Vogel, *The Black Press: New Literary and Historical Essays* (New Brunswick, New Jersey : Rutgers University Press, 2001), 5.

These public gatherings fostered a collective discourse on racial issues, with pool halls, churches, and dinner tables serving as social spaces where individuals engaged in lively debates on local and international matters.[16] With few other trusted media sources available, Black newspaper editors held a significant degree of influence and respect within their communities.

Black newspapers provided a platform for the presentation and preservation of Black perspectives. However, many Black newspapers never found their way to the American media archives. Black editors rarely had the financial means to preserve their publication, and contemporary historians and archivists saw little value in the Black press. Consequently, few Black newspapers have a comprehensive archive, introducing a significant challenge in the pursuit of my research.

While Black newspapers exerted considerable influence over their respective communities, it is imperative to acknowledge that they did not represent *all* Black perspectives. The economic barriers to publishing proved prohibitive to most of the Black populace, significantly reducing the number of Black newspapers founded in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, impoverished Black Americans could not afford newspaper subscriptions, limiting their access and engagement with the publications examined. These structural limitations arose alongside systemic barriers to education, reducing literacy rates within the Black community. In 1880, an estimated 70% of Black Americans could not read. Twenty years later, that number had fallen to 44.5%, compared to only 6.2% of the white populace.[17] Institutionalized racial discrimination effectively silenced millions of Americans who did not have the means, privilege, or capacity to preserve their perspective.

16. Patrick Scott Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2006), 50-51.
17. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 5; Jacobs, *The African Nexus*, xii-xiii.

The silence created by America's history of racial oppression effectively rendered a significant percentage of the Black American community "subaltern." The term "subaltern," initially coined by Ranajit Guha in the early 1980s, was later employed by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in 1988 to identify marginalized groups within colonial and postcolonial systems. Spivak's utilization of the term facilitated an exploration of how dominant power structures silence, marginalize, or co-opt subaltern voices, effectively erasing their experiences from the public eye. In her in-depth analysis of subaltern subjectivity, Spivak ultimately concluded that we cannot give voice to those who left no historical record. However, she noted that oppression does not universally lead to subaltern silence.[18]

Despite this fragmented archival record, the surviving Black media produced during the Spanish-Cuban-American and Philippines-American Wars offered a unique perspective on US imperialism. The Black news media was not profitable at the end of the nineteenth century, often reducing employees to the editor alone. The articles they published rarely included a byline, making authorship difficult to discern. Operating under a tight budget, Black publications could rarely afford press correspondents. As a result, editors likely "lifted" news stories from white publications before republishing the material in their own paper.[19] Furthermore, newspaper editorials appeared sporadically throughout the publications examined, making authorship of the uncredited articles difficult to decern. Nevertheless, each article came with the presumed credence of the paper's editor, lending an air of legitimacy to the content presented.

18. Rosalind C. Morris and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea* (New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 40-47, 64-65.
19. Vishnu Vitthal Oak, *The Negro Newspaper* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Antioch Press, 1948), 84, 87.; Emma Lou Thornbrough, "American Negro Newspapers, 1880–1914," *Business History Review* 40, no. 4 (Winter 1966): 467–90, https://doi.org/10.2307/3112124, 487.

In the discussion of US military expansion, Black newspapers largely focused on social conceptions of American masculinity, introducing a limited female gendered discourse. Consequently, the perspectives of Black women largely materialized in "letters to the editor," which, though present, were fewer in number. I found more articles written *about* women than *by* women at the turn of the century. This distinction underscored a pronounced divergence, indicative of the gendered norms that tied the civilized conception of women to the domestic sphere. Regrettably, this challenge imposed a significant restriction on the implications of my study. Nevertheless, within these limitations, a compelling narrative emerged. I will interpret these publications as a source of influential media for the Black American public while presenting a complex analysis of Black publications to determine how, or indeed *if,* their readers responded.

My research will examine the perspectives of Black Americans on US imperialism from 1898 to 1902. Specifically, I will conduct a racial and gendered analysis of Black media, primarily focusing on articles from Black newspapers published during the Spanish-Cuban-American and Philippines-American War. I aim to enrich an oft-overlooked history by examining Black communities, soldiers, and journalists through the media they produced and consumed. I will investigate how racial identity informed the portrayal of colonized peoples within the Black press while framing expansion from the perspective of Black soldiers and newspaper editors. I seek to contribute to a growing examination of Black history as a valuable and nuanced field within the broader discussion of American imperial expansion.

The first chapter will begin with an overview of the Cuban independence movement, starting with the Ten Years' War (1868-1878) and culminating with the War of 1898. It will examine how Black newspapers responded to the Cuban crisis and frame the barriers that Black

soldiers faced once the war began. Chapter two will analyze the Black media's response to the US occupation of the Philippines, beginning with the Battle of Manila Bay. Black newspapers celebrated Dewey as the epitome of his gender and race, highlighting the masculine characteristics praised by Black men and the American media. From there, the chapter will turn to the Philippines-American War, examining how Black soldiers and newspapers responded to the Filipino independence movement. Finally, my third chapter will conclude with an examination of Hawai'i, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Black newspapers frequently discussed these territories in tandem, often in association with Cuba and the Philippines.[20] However, when discussed individually, Black newspapers represented these islands as beautiful, albeit uncivilized, women who needed American guidance. This characterization reinforced the image of American power while framing the annexed islands as dependent and weak.

In pursuit of the Black American perspectives on US imperial expansion, I remained acutely aware of the privilege afforded to me as a white academic living in the twenty-first century. Despite the remaining records, I have no lens through which I can understand the suppressive force of white supremacy nor the lived experience of Black soldiers like John R. Conn. I made a conscientious effort to structure each chapter around the perspectives found in the Black primary sources examined with this concern in mind. Black newspapers discussed Cuba and the Philippines frequently, bolstered by the correspondence provided by Black soldiers. These articles framed expansion through a gendered and racial lens, focusing on the heroism displayed by Black soldiers as evidence of Black excellence. As a result, the first two chapters will focus primarily on a masculine analysis of gender within the American military. Despite the limited media coverage allocated to the last three territories, several Black

20. Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 145-149.

newspapers published detailed articles on notable Chamorro, Hawaiian, or Puerto Rican women. These articles provided a rich display of female gender expectations filtered through the colonial lens of American media. Consequently, I centred the most significant analysis of female gender roles in the third chapter.

The US empire experienced a fundamental shift at the turn of the twentieth century, influenced by a complex interchange of social, political, economic, and racial anxieties. Black media contributed to an examination of American expansion from a non-white perspective. Their varied and nuanced viewpoints interrupt the traditional historical narratives so often characterized by the study of white men. I hope this work will highlight the complexity of Black perspectives and present the accomplishments of Black American soldiers with the honor and respect they deserved 125 years ago.

A Note on Language

Throughout this work, I became acutely aware of the linguistic power in the proper nouns assigned to marginalized peoples. Many contemporary labels placed upon these communities by imperial forces hold multifaceted implications beyond mere semantics. These designations carry colonial legacies, stereotypical assumptions, and power dynamics into the modern age, making their use fraught with the potential to perpetuate historical inequities and misconceptions. Navigating this linguistic terrain necessitated a delicate balance between acknowledging marginalized peoples' lived experiences and agency while avoiding the imposition of labels that may inadvertently perpetuate the erasures I seek to counter. Consequently, I have consistently tried to honour the identities of ethnic and racial communities through their native language or chosen identities. In the context of the American colonies, I worked to identify the islands and peoples by their proper, non-anglicized names. In my discussion of Hawai'i, for example, I chose to include the 'okina, a Hawaiian-language consonant pronounced with a glottal stop, when naming the archipelago and its native people.[21] Furthermore, I identified Puerto Rico with the traditional spelling rather than the anglicized version preferred by American politicians in the early twentieth century.

The paradox inherent in discussing identities shaped by centuries of colonization and oppression highlights the urgency of maintaining a dialogical approach that remains open to the evolving nuances and needs of the communities under examination. However, even as we endeavour to rectify linguistic injustices, a challenge arises in the very act of nomenclature. For instance, the term "African American" is an identifier that, while reflecting the African

21. Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States* (New York, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), 21.

diaspora's complex history, fails to capture the trauma of cultural and historical erasure forced upon Black communities through the transatlantic slave trade.

As a result of this complex interplay of colonial politics, racial identity, American nationality, and nomenclature, I chose to use “Black” with a capital B to refer to the individuals examined in this paper. Pursuant to a history marred by colonialism, slavery, and racism, the capitalization of "Black" acknowledges the significance of this term as a cultural identifier in the United States, one that encompasses a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds and cultures unified by shared experiences of oppression, resistance, and cultural pride. This capitalization acknowledges the historical struggles and systemic injustices disproportionately affecting Black communities. Drawing upon the insights of influential scholars like Audre Lorde and Frantz Fanon, I grounded this approach with the recognition that language can be both a tool of liberation and a mechanism of oppression. By capitalizing "Black," I aim to assert Black resilience and agency in a complex and developing history.

Alternatively, I chose to write "white" with a lowercase "w" to reflect the fluctuating historical relationship between European ethnic identities and the American conceptions of "white." This decision encapsulated the intricate history of European immigrants as they negotiated their distinct cultural backgrounds within the American cultural classification of racial hierarchy. By resisting the imposition of a singular and unchanging “white” identity, this linguistic choice invites a more comprehensive examination of the historical, social, and cultural forces that have shaped American racial conceptions.

Finally, I identified white American imperialist as “Anglo-Saxons” consistently throughout my analysis. Rooted in America's history of European colonization, "Anglo-Saxonism" emerged as a poignant marker of racial superiority amongst American imperialists of

the late nineteenth century. White supremacists contended that the Anglo-Saxon race was the zenith of human evolution, employing Social Darwinism to justify their claim.[22] Through the careful use of this nomenclature, I hope to contribute to a more equitable representation of history while fostering a complex dialogue on identity, power, race, and nationality.

22. Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (2002): 1315–53, https://doi.org/10.2307/2700600, 1318-1324.

Chapter 1: The Cuban Campaign

> I see before me to-night many native Cubans, who, driven by the fierce fires of Spanish oppression, have sought and found shelter in our free land. Permit me to assure you, my exiled friends, that I know that I am justified in saying to you that this meeting, and millions of American citizens, bid you God speed in your noble cause; and in their behalf [sic] I extend to you my hand, pledging ourselves to stand united with you in your efforts for the promotion of the interests of liberty, and the universal brotherhood of man. (Long continued applause) …We regret that we cannot give you that material aid we would wish to afford you, but we can do one thing—we can create a public sentiment in this land that will urge our government to acknowledge the belligerent rights of the patriots of Cuba.[23]

On a cold December night in 1872, Reverend Henry Highland Garnet took center stage at the Cooper Institute and delivered a rousing condemnation of Cuban slavery. Rev. Garnet was a Black American abolitionist and a founding member of the Cuban Anti-Slavery Committee (CASC), a Black American organization committed to the independence and emancipation of Cuba. The CASC organized the meeting to generate public support for the Cuban Liberation Army across New York City.[24] The convention continued late into the night, featuring passionate speeches on Cuban slavery, decolonization, and the Cuban independence movement. The CASC's efforts inspired Black leaders in Boston to organize a convention weeks later.[25] Through these interconnected Black activists, word of the Cuban Revolution spread through communities in major American metropoles as the first wave in the coming tsunami of public support bristling for Cuban freedom.

Founded seven years after the American Civil War, the CASC and the 1873 anti-slavery convention reflected a broader context of political and social unrest across the United States and

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23. S. R. Scottron and Henry Highland Garnet, eds., *Slavery in Cuba: A Report of the Proceedings of the Meeting Held at the Cooper Institute* (New York, New York: Powers, MacGowan & Slipper, 1872), 16-17.
24. Ibid., 4.
25. R. J. Boutelle, "Manifest Diaspora: Black Transamerican Politics and Autoarchiving in 'Slavery in Cuba,'" *MELUS* 40, no. 3 (2015): 110–33, https://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/24570165, 110-111.

Cuba, often centered on a discussion of race. Garnet condemned the Spanish use of slavery with impassioned rhetoric. The Reverend used the liberation of America's enslaved population to evoke an empathetic response, leveraging America's history with slavery to foster a politically active Black community within the United States. As the CASC noted in their 1872 report "Slavery in Cuba":

> The Colored People of the United States, who have so recently been invested with the rights of citizens of our Republic, have, very naturally, from our own experience of the evil effect of slavery in this country, been particularly interested in the condition of five hundred thousand of our brethren, now held as slaves in the Island of Cuba, and have watched, with painful interest, the struggle that has been going on in that Island during the past four years.[26]

An estimated 900,000 enslaved Africans arrived in Cuba during the Atlantic slave trade. In 1867, Cuban *Centro de Estadistica* reported that 363,288 enslaved men and women lived on the island, an estimated 26% of the population.[27] The continued use of slavery caused considerable social strife. A plantation economy, Spanish and Cuban elites relied on the labor of the enslaved to line their pockets. In response to the continued social outrage, Spain attempted to curtail the slave trade in the late nineteenth century, with limited success. Slavers continued their practice in the black market while enslaved men and women fled to rebel camps.[28]

The Ten Years' War was the first of three anti-colonial revolts to rip across Cuba in the nineteenth century. It began on the morning of October 10, 1868, when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, a Cuban-born lawyer, poet, sugar planter, and slave owner, gathered his estate's enslaved men and women and granted them their freedom. In a rousing speech that came to be

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26. Scottron and Garnet "Slavery in Cuba." (1873). 3.
27. Ye. D. Volkova, "Basic Trends in the Population Geography of Contemporary Cuba," *Soviet Geography* 10, no. 10 (1969): 612–17, https://doi.org/10.1080/00385417.1969.10770451 , 612.; Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 87.
28. Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 2.

known as the *Grito de Yara,* Céspedes called upon Cuba to take up arms against the Spanish crown. Addressing the crowd as citizens, Céspedes challenged the racial hierarchies prevalent in Cuban culture. He initiated the revolution under the banner of political independence and racial equality. As word of the revolt spread, hundreds of enslaved Cubans fled their enslavers to join the Cuban Liberation Army. This diverse fighting force united under the collective identity of Cuban nationals, forged in the fires of anti-colonial rebellion.[29]

The Pact of Zanjón ended the Ten Years' War on February 10, 1878. Psychologically and physically exhausted after a decade of civil strife, Spain and the Cuban insurgents arrived at a stalemate. Spain granted the rebel forces amnesty and emancipated all the slaves who fought with the Cuban Liberation Army. However, the pact fell short of the rebel demands for independence and complete emancipation, causing internal divisions to spread amongst factions of the rebellion.[30] Seven months later, the Guerra Chiquita or "Little War" began.[31] The Guerra Chiquita received little support from the white elite, thanks, in part, to the racial composition of the rebels. Spanish propaganda strategically framed the revolution as a race war, exaggerating racial tensions on the island and reducing the appeal of revolt for European descendants. Given the limited stock of ammunition, funding, and public support, the revolution collapsed in the summer of 1880.[32]

The Guerra Chiquita initiated the gradual march towards emancipation for the enslaved men and women of the island. In 1880, the colonial government replaced slavery with an apprenticeship program to ease former enslavers' economic transition. Although no longer "enslaved," this newly indentured class remained tied to their former masters for eight years. As

29. Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 3, 15.
30. Ibid., 63-64.
31. Ibid., 72-75.
32. Ibid., 72, 85-89.

the nineteenth century progressed, formerly enslaved Cubans migrated to major metropolitan centers along the Atlantic seaboard, where they worked to further the cause of Cuban independence. Cuban expatriate communities gathered large American metropoles, like Tampa and New York, where they lobbied politicians, held conventions, and published anti-colonial literature to galvanize international political support for their cause.[33]

Despite the revolution tension brewing abroad, a tenuous peace persisted until February 1895, when the Cuban War of Independence began. Led by the poet and political activist José Martí, the revolution espoused racial justice and social equality. Martí argued that race was a social construct used by imperialists to divide the anti-colonial movement, which placed the Cuban insurgent leader at odds with the racially segregated Jim Crow American South. Despite this significant ideological clash, the American public vehemently supported the Cuban Liberation Army at the end of the nineteenth century.[34]

The *Cuba Libre* movement gained a significant degree of attention in the United States thanks, in part, to the "yellow press." The "yellow press," or "yellow journalism," referred to a journalistic practice of sensationalism, exaggeration, or biased reporting. William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* popularized this practice in the 1890s as they competed for sales.[35] The yellow press steered public attention toward Cuban independence with highly dramatized tales of Spanish cruelty circulated years before the war began. Yellow journals published stories of beautiful Cuban women suffering at the hands of Spanish colonizers. These articles presented the readers with a vision of the Cuban revolution,

33. Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 95, 113-117.
34. Ibid.,1-5.; Joseph Smith, "The 'Splendid Little War' of 1898: A Reappraisal," *History* 80, no. 258 (1995): 22–37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24423068, 34.
35. W. Joseph Campbell, *Yellow Journalism: Puncturing the Myths, Defining the Legacies* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 25-26.; Louis A. Pérez, "The Meaning of the Maine: Causation and the Historiography of the Spanish-American War," *Pacific Historical Review* 58, no. 3 (August 1989): 293–322, https://doi.org/10.2307/3640268, 293-294.

embodied by a damsel in distress. The illustrations accompanying these articles depicted Cuban women with fair skin and dark hair, an image that failed to represent the insurgency's diverse racial composition.[36] This sympathetic portrayal encouraged readers to view Cubans as a white populous, spurring support for American intervention.[37] The press-fueled public motivated Congress to adopt a bill that called for the recognition of Cuban belligerency.[38] President Grover Cleveland, however, refused to sign the resolution. The lack of American support led to anti-American sentiments on the island, and, in January 1898, a riot broke out that threatened the lives and property of American expatriates.[39] Consequently, William McKinley, the Republican victor of the 1897 Presidential election, dispatched the USS *Maine* to Havana in February 1898.

$50,000 REWARD.—WHO DESTROYED THE MAINE?—$50,000 REWARD.

EDITION FOR GREATER NEW YORK.

NEW YORK JOURNAL

AND ADVERTISER.

NO. 3,372. NEW YORK, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1898.—16 PAGES. PRICE ONE CENT

DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR SHIP MAINE WAS THE WORK OF AN ENEMY

$50,000!

$50,000 REWARD!

For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

Assistant Secretary Roosevelt Convinced the Explosion of the War Ship Was Not an Accident.

The Journal Offers $50,000 Reward for the Conviction of the Criminals Who Sent 258 American Sailors to Their Death.

Naval Officers Unanimous That the Ship Was Destroyed on Purpose.

$50,000!

$50,000 REWARD!

For the Detection of the Perpetrator of the Maine Outrage!

Figure 1. The front page of William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal,* February 17, 1898.[40]

36. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 77.; Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 4.
37. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 45.
38. Smith, *The Spanish-American War 1895-1902*, 34.
39. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 4-5.
40. William Randolph Hearst, ed., "Destruction of the Warship Maine Was the Work of an Enemy," *New York Journal* (New York, New York), February 17, 1898.

A massive explosion sent the 324-foot USS *Maine* careening onto the ocean floor on the evening of February 15, taking 253 lives with her.[41] Once news reached the United States, the press responded with outrage. The *New York Journal* and the *New York World* published front-page headlines holding Spain accountable for the explosion (Figure 1).[42] Although Spain denied responsibility for the disaster, citizens across the US demanded justice.

McKinley established a naval court of inquiry to investigate the disaster shortly after the *Maine* sank. Due to the complicated nature of their investigation, the Naval Court of Inquiry could only conclude that the vessel *most likely* exploded when it contacted an external explosion device, such as a mine.[43] The report galvanized the American public as accusations of Spanish sabotage circulated in the press. Rising public pressure and strained political relations continued to escalate until April 21, when the American Navy established a blockade around the island while simultaneously insisting the Spanish military withdraw. Two days later, Spain declared war on the United States, which Congress returned in kind on April 25.[44]

Despite the media spotlight focused on Havana in 1898, only four Black newspapers referred to the *Maine* disaster: John Lay Thompson's *Iowa State Bystander,* John Mitchell Jr.'s

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41. Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism: 1895-1902* (New York, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 236-237. Thirty of the men who died upon the *U.S.S Maine* were Black Americans, which several Black newspapers used to foment a jingoist spirit in their readers. George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), April 30, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980430&printsec=frontpage&hl=en
42. Charles H. Brown, *The Correspondents' War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War* (New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), 123.; David R. Spencer, *The Yellow Journalism: The Press and America's Emergence as a World Power* (Evanston, Illinois: North Western University Press, 2007), 13-16.
43. The American government fully recovered the wreckage of the *Maine* on March 15th, 1912. Under the direction of Congress, American officers constructed a cofferdam around the sunken vessels before eventually floating the broken pieces to the surface as they slowly released water back into the coffer. In 1976, Admiral Hymen Rickover analyzed the recorded images and descriptions of the battleship and concluded that the explosion occurred due to the heat from the fire in the coal bunker located next to the 6-inch reserve, the powder magazine on the vessel. Rickover's explanation for the *Maine'*s destruction remains the modern explanation for the vessel's destruction.; Hyman George Rickover, *How the Battleship Maine Was Destroyed* (Washington, D.C.: Naval History Division, Department of the Navy, 1976), 128.; Allen J. Francis, "Honoring the Heroes: The Raising of the Wreck of the U.S. Battleship Maine. Part I," *Warship International* 35, no. 4 (1998): 386–405, https://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/44892605, 393.
44. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War,* 241.; Hendrickson, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War,* 23.

Richmond Planet, Julius F. Taylor's *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), and John Quincy Adam's *Appeal* (Saint Paul, Minnesota).

The *Iowa State Bystander* was a weekly Black newspaper circulated in Iowa and the surrounding region. There is little in the way of academic examination of Thompson's life, limiting my ability to supply contextual information on the *Bystander*'s editor. However, Thompson worked to "uplift" the race by promoting Black excellence to his readership.[45] The article in the *Bystander* was short and emotive, declaring that "the killing of more than 250 American seamen" seemingly pointed to "murder rather than an accident." Published on the front page, Thompson called on Spain to "produce good proof that she was not the cause of the destruction" while insisting that McKinley "should be slow in accepting the theory of an accidental explosion until they have the full details of a thorough investigation."[46] On the subsequent pages, multiple correspondents from Washington and Havana provided various accounts of the incident. While some articles reported that the Navy was "inclined to the belief that it was due to an accident," other sources suggested that "the disaster points to treachery, either Cuban or Spanish."[47]

Two articles on the disaster, "Warship Blow Up" and "The Horror Confirmed," adorned the front page of the *Richmond Planet* on February 19. The *Planet's* use of incendiary headlines and hyperbolic exaggeration ("windows were broken in all the houses") echoed practices often seen in the yellow press. Written by news correspondents in Havana and Washington, Mitchell did not author these articles. However, the *Planet*'s editor placed both articles on the front page,

45. Marlena Thomas Beavers, "Status, Behavior, And Appearance Among African Americans In A Midwestern Coal Mining Town, 1900-1923" (thesis, Iowa State University Digital Repository, 1997), 40.
46. John Lay Thompson, ed., "The Spanish Suspected of Treachery," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), February 18, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-02-18/ed-1/seq-1/
47. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Maine Blown Up," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), February 18, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-02-18/ed-1/seq-2/

reflecting their importance through the occupation of valuable newspaper real estate.[48] Like the *Bystander,* the *Planet*'s impassioned newspaper coverage reflected the magnitude of the disaster.

Amongst this limited collection, the *Broad Ax* and the *Appeal* did not publish a description of vessel's destruction. Instead, they referred to the incident in passing, often framed within a critical analysis of American foreign policy. The *Appeal* stated that the Maine disaster outdid the devil in a brief article published on February 26, while the *Broad Ax* declared:

> What business we had in sending one great war vessel into a hostile port without any invitation is hard to understand. It was the act of a bully. Think of the various hostile factions there and the character of the population, also there are Cuban revolutionists eager to plunge us into a war with their hatred tyrant and none too good to have blown up the ship in order to start the game [sic]...To plead thoughtless in such high place does not excuse. Every movement of the kind should have been weighed carefully beforehand.[49]

Published five weeks after the disaster, Taylor framed his criticism around a politically informed evaluation of American foreign policy. Although he did not describe the event outright, his tone suggested that his audience held a basic understanding of the *Maine* disaster. Furthermore, by criticizing Washington's decision to deploy the war vessel, Taylor held McKinley partially responsible for the tragedy. As one of the few Black Democratic papers examined, Taylor largely framed his criticism of American imperial expansion as a political failing of the Republican party. His informed and careful analysis, coupled with the limited discussion of the disaster, suggested that this topic occupied a significant degree of public attention early in 1898.

As political tensions escalated between the United States and Spain, Black newspapers published various articles which critically engaged the national response to the *Maine* disaster.

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48. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Warship Blown Up," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Virginia), February 19, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-02-19/ed-1/seq-1/.
49. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "A Thoughtless Act," *The Broad Ax,* (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 19, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-03-19/ed-1/seq-1/.

The sincerity of the American South's concern for Cuban suffering came under scrutiny by Black editors, who juxtaposed this compassion with the historical reality of racial violence across the US.[50]

> The Americans are queer people. They are willing to go to war with Spain to liberate Cuba, a large percentage of whose inhabitants are of African descent, yet hundreds of Afro Americans are murdered by mobs in this country each year, and it attracts very little attention. "Consistency, thou art a jewel."[51]

Published in the *Appeal* on April 2, 1898, the article's sarcastic tone reflected an immense frustration with the American public's indifference to Black suffering. While Cuban suffering incited the nation into a furry, lynch mobs consistently terrorized Black Americans across the US, facing little to no consequence. Yellow newspapers depicted Cuban insurgents as "an organized army of patriots who were in most respects just like the Americans themselves," encouraging a sympathetic understanding of the Cuban revolution.[52] In addition to the Caucasian depictions of Cuban women, this public perception fueled the call for military intervention among white Americans. Black newspapers, by contrast, openly identified this hypocrisy when they discussed the continued racial violence perpetuated against the Black community; consequently, when a lynch mob killed Frazier B. Baker five days after the *Maine* sunk, Black newspapers responded with fury.[53]

In 1897, McKinley appointed Frazier B. Baker as the Postmaster of Lake City, South Carolina. Although the city had a large Black population, Baker's appointment incited violent protests across the state. South Carolinians argued that Baker's presence made the space

50. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War*, 171.
51. John Quincy Adams, ed., *Appeal* (Saint Paul, Minnesota), April 2, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1898-04-02/ed-1/seq-2/.
52. Smith, "The 'Splendid Little War' of 1898," 34.
53. Rev. I. R. Miller, "The Press, the Pulpit and the Public," *People's Recorder* (Columbia, South Carolina), March 19, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025797/1898-03-19/ed-2/seq-2/.

unsuitable for "white gentlemen, much less ladies."[54] Yet, Baker refused to quit. He served as the Postmaster until February 22, when several white men encircled the Baker's home and set it ablaze. Witnesses reported that the mob fired roughly 100 bullets into the building as Baker, his wife, and six children attempted to escape. The gunfire killed the Postmaster and his infant daughter, Julia, who died in her mother's arms.[55]

Baker died seven days after the USS *Maine* catastrophe. Prominent Black civil rights advocates like Ida B. Wells worried that the comparable timing would reduce the attention Baker's death received from the American public and the press, with good reason. Prominent white media publications focused on the warship's destruction, fomenting the rising tide of American jingoism with fervent calls for justice.[56] For their part, Black newspapers juxtaposed the Postmaster's lynching with the naval disaster, directly comparing the racial violence of the American South to the horrors of Spanish colonialism. The *American Citizen* argued that the "southern statemen who plead for Cuba could learn a valuable lesson by looking around their own bloodcurdling confines of butchery," while George L. Knox's *Freeman* proclaimed Baker's death was "as momentous as the death of those ill-fated seamen on the Maine."[57] As the Cuban crisis escalated, few outside the Black American community expressed interest in the brutal assault. Wells arrived in Washington shortly after Baker's death and convinced McKinley to

54. David H. Jackson, "Booker T. Washington in South Carolina, March 1909," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 113, no. 3 (2012): 192–220, 196.
55. George P. Marks, *The Black Press Views American Imperialism (1898-1900)* (New York, New York: Arno Press, 1971), 11.; Willard B. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Ilinois Press, 1975), 32.; Piero Gleijeses, "African Americans and the War Against Spain," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 73, no. 2 (1996): 184–214, 187.
56. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 32.
57. Marks, *The Black Press,* 10.; Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Chips," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), April 30, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-04-30/ed-1/seq-4/

order a federal investigation in the pursuit of justice.[58] Despite the ample evidence, the all-white jury refused to convict any of the 11 defendants charged with murder.[59]

As the first Black Postmaster in South Carolina, the Black community celebrated Baker as a shining example of racial advancement. The systematic failure of the American government to seek justice on his behalf only served to highlight the racial injustice experienced by people of color. "No where [sic] upon the civilized globe," the Planet declared, "has there been chronicled a more horrible crime…We are tired of the slothful action of the officials of a government which cannot protect its own officials," a grievance that Mitchell did not carry alone.[60] A letter to the editor, published in the *Freeman* under the headline "Something Must Be Done," declared:

> The civilized world should know how Christian America treats her citizens at home while she is talking so much about the destruction of the battleship Maine… Life and liberty are as dear to the Negro as to any other man. The little babes that are born daily are crying to Christian America as well as to their black fathers for the privilege of living after being brought here. We owe it to our children to do something…It does appear to me that with the proper steps by the race, led by intelligent men, some law could be enacted which would at least give us a right to live…I make this suggestion because the Constitution of the United States seems a failure when it comes to protecting the Negro. Something must be done…For the sake of thousands and thousands of your race who can not talk, continue the fight till we are free.[61]

The author, Thomas D., centred his letter on racial injustice to frame the importance of collective action against discrimination. He used the provocative image of a Black father caring for his crying child to frame the struggle for Black civil rights. The child embodied those who could not fight for equality, while the father occupied the traditional masculine role of the protector.

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58. Marks, *The Black Press*, 32.
59. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 109, 253.
60. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "A Horrible Crime," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Virginia), February 26, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-02-26/ed-1/seq-2/.
61. Thos. D., "Something Must Be Done," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), March 19, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=ogwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=6143%2C798069.

Framing racial injustice as a battle, Thomas placed Black men at the vanguard of social change, while simultaneously reinforcing American gender norms.

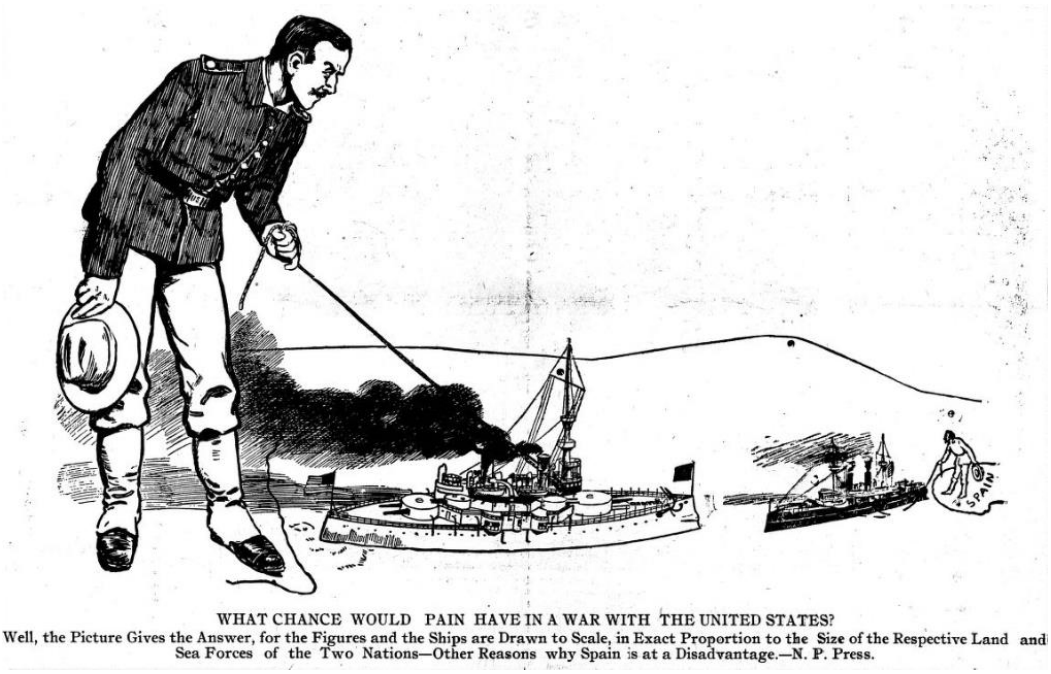

Figure 2. A political cartoon depicting the naval strength of the United States and Spain with toy boats. Published in the *Appeal* on March 12, 1898. "What Chance Would [S]pain Have in a War with the United States?" *Appeal* (Saint Paul Minnesota), March 12, 1898.[62]

With the outbreak of the war, Black newspapers withheld their criticisms, swept up as they were in a tide of jingoistic patriotism. Publications that once expressed skepticism at the thought of American intervention ran articles highlighting the power and prestige of the military. Recruitment ads called on men to volunteer for the army, while political cartoons celebrated the US military. Figure 2, originally published in the "N.P. Press," depicted two white military officers standing on opposite ends of the illustration with two Naval vessels in the center. A rope line connected the vessels to their officers like dogs on a leash. The American officer held a firm grip on the rope as his warship released a large plume of smoke, charging toward the enemy. The

62. John Quincy Adams, ed., "What Chance Would Spain Have in a War with the United States?," *Appeal* (Saint Paul Minnesota), March 12, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1898-03-12/ed-1/seq-2/.

artists used the image to convey the strength and hawkish enthusiasm of the American military while simultaneously representing the army with a white general. This cartoon reinforced the notion that the military was a white man's domain and challenged the masculine construction of the Black soldier as a national hero. The origins of the cartoon remain ambiguous as the *Appeal* offered no clarifying information on the "N.P. Press." Operating on the assumption that Adams republished this cartoon from a white source, the *Appeal* quietly contributed to the national belief that military leaders should be white men – and white men alone.

Only four states accepted Black volunteer soldiers in April 1898: Massachusetts, Ohio, North Carolina, and Alabama.[63] Across the rest of the country, Black Americans flocked to churches and town halls to volunteer their services, to no avail. Frustrated by these discriminatory practices, Black advocates nationwide petitioned their elected officials, demanding admission to the army. Representative John A. T. Hull of Iowa, incited by the citizens of his district, successfully convinced Congress to pass S.R. 4468, a bill that called for an additional 10,000 volunteers and created four Black regiments.[64]

Classified as the "immune regiments," Congress argued that Black men were less susceptible to tropical diseases, especially yellow fever, making them the ideal candidates for the Cuba campaign. Black publications, however, challenged this racially based assertion directly:

> Nearly every paper and magazine have an article about the Negro as a soldier and how he could stand the tropical climate of Cuba better [sic] the white man. We do not believe that, for the colored Americans are just as much American in their habits, customs, and nature as the white man. The Cuban climate is just as hard on the northern colored man as it is on the northern white man and the southern white man can endure as much heat as the southern Negro.[65]

63. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 80.
64. Ibid., 81-82, 98-99.
65. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Valor of the Colored Man," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), April 15, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-04-15/ed-1/seq-1/.

The *Bystander* fundamentally rejected the idea that biological differences originated from racial complexion. The paper asserted that Black Americans were "just as much American…as the white man," presenting Black and white individuals as equals, united in ideals and capabilities.[66] The *Bystander* refused to accept race as a plausible determinant of an individual's capacity to defend against disease and challenged this bigoted practice through assertive and critical language. In doing so, the publication challenged the notion that race was the sole determinant of an individual's abilities or limitations and established the masculine strength of Black men, akin to their fellow light-skinned brethren.

When featured, stories of Black women focused on their patriotic support of the American military. On June 30, 1898, the *Freeman* described how the Women Relief Corporation, a Black female organization, fundraised "to supply the colored soldiers with some extra necessities of camp life."[67] Though rarely discussed, the charitable efforts of these women embodied what Evelyn Higginbotham identified as "Black clubwoman's adherence to Victorian ideology."[68] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the social construction of Black female identity applied widely different standards of protection and privilege between Black and white women. Higginbotham explored the means through which political, social, and legal standards idealized motherhood and enforced the protection of white women's bodies" while simultaneously oppressing the bodies of Black women. "[S]egregation's meaning for gender," Higginbotham argued, "was exemplified in the trope of "lady." Ladies were not merely women; they represented a class, a differentiated status within the generic category of 'women.'"[69]

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66. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Valor of the Colored Man," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), April 15, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-04-15/ed-1/seq-1/.
67. George L. Knox, ed., "Lawn Fete for the Colored Soldiers," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), July 30, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980730&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 8.
68. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 17, no. 2 (1992): 251–74, https://doi.org/10.1086/494730, 266.
69. Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," 261.

Constructed within class and race-based ideologies, only "proper" white women belonged to this category. This hegemonic social understanding of Black women stemmed – in part- from "centuries-long European perceptions of Africans as primitive, animal like, and savage."[70] This belief justified not only slavery but the sexual exploitation of Black women.

The harmful stereotype of Black promiscuity followed female Black bodies well into the twentieth century. Prominent and often middle-class Black women worked to disprove and dismantle this negative categorization by embodying "white middle-class models of gender roles and sexuality."[71] Organizations like the National Association of Colored Women embodied this belief in their motto – "lifting as we climb." Black women's patriotic support of the American military exemplified a convergence between their actions and white conceptions of appropriate female comportment.[72]

As tens of thousands of American soldiers mustered in Florida, the War Department scrambled to find adequate naval transportation for the army's 23,000 men.[73] During this "rocking-chair period," Black newspapers fed the wartime spirit with inspiring tales of Black military service during the American Civil War and the Mexican War of 1846-1848.[74] The Civil

70. Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," 263.
71. Ibid., 271.
72. Ibid., 271.
73. Captain Alfred Paget, a British naval attaché designated to observe the American forces in the field, noted that the American military operated almost exclusively within the continental U.S. They had little to no experience fighting overseas, and American soldiers did not have the equipment necessary for the hot equatorial summers. To complicate matters further, the War Department attempted to organize the transportation of American troops without the assistance of the Navy. When the War Department realized they did not have the administrative capabilities to organize a fleet of ships, few unoccupied Navy vessels remained, significantly reducing the number of American forces deployed to Cuba. Of the original 25,000 men, only 16,800 men made it to Cuba. Furthermore, there was insufficient room for the Cavalry's horses, meaning that the entire Army would have to proceed on foot.; E. Ranson, "British Military and Naval Observers in the Spanish-American War," *Journal of American Studies* 3, no. 1 (1969): 33–56, https://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/27552863, 38.
74. For movement of Black troops, see: George L. Knox, ed., "Our Black Troops." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), Apr. 30, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=qAwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=5891%2C1159396.; George L. Knox, ed., "Interest at Chickamauga." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 14, 1898,

War reshaped the social, legal, and political landscape of the United States, leaving an immeasurable impact on Black Americans. In the wake of the Union's victory, Congress passed the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, which collectively abolished slavery, granted citizenship, and established voting rights for Black Americans across the country. The Civil War illustrated how Black (male) participation in the military could advance civil rights and improve race relations. This racial construction tied military conflict to Black civil advancement, instilling significant importance in Black military service. Black veterans contributed to a communal understanding of Black American masculinity in the wake of the Civil War, built on the tenets of bravery, sacrifice, and loyalty. Inspired by the military service of Black forebears, the soldiers of 1898 attempted to shift the racial paradigm once more through the militaristic display of Black excellence. Black newspapers encouraged this mindset by actively presenting Black soldiers as heroic role models.[75]

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https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=qgwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=2093%2C1286501.; *Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Penn), June 9, 1898; Captain T. B. Francis, "About the Army Cook." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), June 11, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=rgwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=5900%2C1562002.; A. E. Meyzeek, "Our Colored Soldiers." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), Aug. 13,1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=twwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=2078%2C2160845.; M. W. Sadler, "How El Caney Was Won." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), Aug. 27, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980827&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, For Descriptions of The Army Food Service, see: Cyrus Sylvester, "How the Army is Fed." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 7, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=qQwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=5962%2C1226050. For News Articles on Charles Young, see; John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Colored Men Not Wanted." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), June 18, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-06-18/ed-1/seq-2/.; George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 21, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980521&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.; John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Colored Men and Mr. McKinley." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), July 22, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1899-07-22/ed-1/seq-4/. Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 77.

75. Andrew D. Amron, "Reinforcing Manliness: Black State Militias, the Spanish-American War, and the Image of the African American Soldier, 1891-1900," *The Journal of African American History* 97, no. 4 (2012): 401–26, https://doi.org/https://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5323/jafriamerhist.97.4.0401, 402-403.

The courageous complex constructed around Black American soldiers additionally came with a high expectation of Black excellence. The Black regiments of 1898 represented the Black race to the hyper-critical eye of the white American public. Every mistake, every fight, every challenge to Jim Crow legislation by Black soldiers suddenly became evidence of Black incompetence to white newspapers across the country. Consequently, Black journalists urged Black soldiers to act responsibly. Illustrating this point, the Governor of Indiana, James Atwell Mount, addressed Black soldiers directly in a speech published in the *Freeman* on July 30, 1898:

> Your position is an honorable one and fraught with grave responsibilities. You are about to write a page in the history of your race which will either tend to eliminate or fix more strongly race prejudice.[76]

Through their actions, patience, and military service, Mount acknowledged the responsibility placed on the shoulders of these men while honoring their sacrifice. He argued that the future of Black Americans relied upon the perception of these Black soldiers. Their conduct on the battlefield represented more than personal courage; these Black soldiers stood as beacons of racial representation, performing in front of an international audience. Edward A. Johnson reflected upon the social significance of this cultural process in his 1899 monograph, *History of the Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War*. He argued that Black regiments "were the representatives of the whole race in that conflict; had they failed it would have been a calamity charged up to the whole race."[77] As a result, Black excellence became a standard of expectation for Black soldiers, both at home and abroad.

This expectation placed the burden of social change on the actions of Black individuals, a narrative promoted by numerous editors across the Black press. However, some publications like

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76. Governor Mount, "Governor Mount and the Colored Soldier," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 30, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980730&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.
77. Edward A. Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War and Other Items of Interest.* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Capital Print. Co., 1899), 208.

the *Richmond Planet* shifted the narrative from Black excellence to a pointed criticism of the systems that demanded exceptional behavior from marginalized citizens. Based out of Virginia, the *Richmond Planet* was a militant Black newspaper founded by John "Fighting Editor" Mitchell Jr. in 1883.[78] Mitchell used the disenfranchisement of the Black population to challenge the assumption that Black men should serve in the army. In doing so, the *Richmond Planet* tied voting rights and military service together as fundamental and interdependent tenets of American citizenship. This argument echoed the logic used to deny female suffrage in the United States; women did not fight on behalf of their country, and so they did not have the right to vote.[79] The *Planet* circulated through the former capital of the Confederacy, where issues concerning race and equal rights remained prevalent.[80] Virginia effectively disenfranchised their Black population in 1896.[81] The *Planet* opposed these policies aggressively, earning Mitchell the reputation of a man "who would walk into the jaws of death to serve his race."[82]

However, the *Richmond Planet* was not the only paper to express such bold sentiments. Julius F. Taylor's *Broad Ax* emerged as a virile advocate of racial equality and religious tolerance in the late nineteenth century. Born into slavery, Taylor relocated to Utah after the American Civil War, where he founded his weekly newspaper in 1895. Four years later, he relocated to Chicago, where the *Broad Ax* continued to circulate until 1931. A Black Democrat and a sharp-tongued critic of Booker T. Washington, Taylor occupied a unique place amongst

78. Ann Field Alexander, "Black Protest in the New South: John Mitchell, Jr., 1863-1929, and the Richmond 'Planet'" (dissertation, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1973), iii-iv.
79. John Mitchell Jr, editorial, "The Times Answered," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 21, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-05-21/ed-1/seq-4/.
80. "An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia," *He Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 118, no. 4 (2010): 366–87, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41059426 371.
81. Charles E. Wynes, *Race Relations in Virginia 1870 - 1902* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 1961), 147.
82. Alexander, *Black Protest in the New South,* iii-iv.

the Black publications examined for this study. His political positionality permitted the *Broad Ax* to criticize the Republican President without fear of political reprisal.[83]

Edward E. Cooper's *Colored American,* on the other hand, stood as a vocal advocate for McKinley's policy of expansion. Cooper adopted an extreme stance on militarized American expansion. He believed that Black Americans would fulfill their role as citizens through military service, thus improving the conditions for the Black race.[84] He believed that, with increased exposure to people of color, white Americans would gain an appreciation and understanding of people of color. However, as American imperial warfare continued in the Philippines, the *Colored American* lost a significant degree of enthusiasm for McKinley's policies. Cooper identified with the Filipino people in their struggle against American imperial expansion, declaring they were "struggling for the right of liberty and the pursuit of happiness."[85]

With the national declaration of war, the War Department quickly replaced the nation's few Black officers with white men. The *Planet,* accompanied by Black soldiers and race leaders across the country, insisted that if Black men must live through merciless discrimination, the color line should be maintained; exceptional Black soldiers should command Black regiments. The War Department and the federal government collectively disregarded this appeal, firm in their conviction that white officers alone could command Black troops.[86] In direct response to this policy, The *Planet* adopted the maxim "No Officers, No Fight!" This adage first appeared on April 30, 1898, in an article that discussed the demotion of Major J. B. Johnson, one of two

83. Amron, "Reinforcing Manliness," 401-403, 420-421.
84. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 28, 156, 196.
85. Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army 1891-1917* (Columbia, Missouri: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1974), 48-49.
86. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 82.

Black officers who directed the "colored" battalions of Utah. Mitchell concluded, "[c]olored men must contend for their rights now, or they will lose them hereafter."[87]

Week after week, "No Officers, No Fight!" appeared at the end of countless articles within the *Richmond Planet.* Mitchell's motto attracted criticism from both Black and white newspapers. The *American* Eagle, a Black newspaper published in St. Louis, declared that the Black community could not "right public wrongs by committing another public wrong."[88] In response, Mitchell argued:

> A country that will not accord to a citizen his rights and make good to him its guarantees releases him from any obligation to comply with his part of the contract. This is equity and it is law. Where he is denied the right to muster in and is turned down in the matter of military appointments simply on the account of his color, he has a right to decline to submit to such indignities... He does not ask to fight in his own way, but insists upon fighting in accordance with the laws of the land and the dictates of justice…A man, be he white or black, educated or ignorant, who is not good enough to vote and hold office in a nation is not good enough to fight and shed blood for it.[89]

Mitchell asserted that when a government did not uphold the rights guaranteed to its citizens, it relieved those citizens of their obligation to the social contract. This framework presented "the right to muster" and the right to vote as fundamental rights for American men, which, in exchange, granted the government male civilian military service. Constructed around a militaristic understanding of American citizenship, Mitchell pulled on the tenets of the American democratic system to undermine Washington's racially motivated legislation.

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87. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Promotion of Colored Officers." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), April 30, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-04-30/ed-1/seq-2/.
88. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Eagle's Criticism." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 28, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-05-28/ed-1/seq-2/.
89. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Times Answered." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 21, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-05-21/ed-1/seq-4/.

Although the *Richmond Planet* remained outspoken, they were not the only Black paper to argue on behalf of Black officers. In the wake of McKinley's failure to appoint Black officers to Black regiments, William C. Chase, editor of the *Bee,* responded with fury:

> A man would be a very big fool to show patriotism for a government that says she does not want a people – not even to die in defence of a righteous cause, on account of the color or previous condition…Of the great number of colonels, generals, majors, captains, lieutenants, etc., that have been appointed, how many who fought to destroy the union, and how many loyal blacks have been selected – who fought to uphold the government. It is a diabolic, hypocritical and damnable for anybody to challenge the patriotisms of the negro in America.[90]

Chase condemned the American military for their discriminatory practices while questioning the appointment of former Confederate soldiers to high-ranking positions military positions. He echoed the disillusionment among Black publications as the war progressed. Countless Black advocates framed the War of 1898 as an opportunity for Black Americans to illustrate their national devotion. However, as Chase illustrated, racial prejudice continued to pervade the military's decision-making processes, undermining the belief that military service would improve race relations.

The *Freeman*, cognisant of this discrimination, wrote that it was "regrettable" that Black men were unable to serve as officers in the army, albeit, with an air of resignation:

> The race should have been represented in the war even though the present arrangements should never have materialized. Lines drawn here are about the same as drawn elsewhere in public or private life, and patriotism with a four-in-hand arrangement is not always permitted the race.[91]

The phrase "four-in-hand arrangement" in the context of the article referred to a metaphorical concept rather than a literal four-in-hand carriage (a type of horse-drawn carriage). The *Freeman*

90. William C. Chase, ed., "Colored Troops Wanted," *Bee* (Washington, D.C.), May 28, 1898, https://www.newspapers.com/image/46286951/
91. George L. Knox, ed., "Indiana's Negro Volunteers." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 2, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980702&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.

insinuated that Black patriotism, while important, failed to circumnavigate the ingrained racial stereotypes in the US The analogy underscored the intricate challenges faced by Black individuals striving to contribute to the war effort. Where the "four-in-hand arrangement" benefited Anglo-Saxon soldiers, Black soldiers met constant barriers, despite their national fervour. The phrase captured the nuances of striving for patriotic participation within the constraints of a society marred by racial inequalities and discrimination. Despite this criticism, George L. Knox, a Black businessman and the editor of the *Freeman,* did not believe that racial issues stood as a legitimate excuse to deny military service to the American government.[92]

Following the Congressional declaration of war, thousands of enlisted soldiers travelled to Tampa, Florida, awaiting departure orders. A predominantly white municipality, Tampa did not react kindly to the arrival of 2,000 armed Black men camped on the outskirts of town. The *Morning News*, a white publication from Georgia, declared that Black soldiers "made themselves very offensive to the people of the city" only days after the company arrived.[93] Tampan civilians directed this racial malice into their everyday interactions with the army, refusing to dignify Black soldiers with their proper titles. "It mattered not if we were soldiers of the United States, and going to fight for the honor of our country," Sergeant Frank W. Pullen wrote, "we were 'niggers' as they called us and treated us with contempt."[94] When confronted, the white Tampans excused their action with the epithet "all niggers look alike to me."[95] Black regulars did not take this blatant racial hatred lightly. Physical confrontations followed the Black regiments from city to city as armed Black men pushed back against racial discrimination. The perpetrators,

92. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 8, 192
93. J. H. Estill, ed. "Not to Rush to Cuba," *Morning News* (Savannah, Georgia), May 5, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063034/1898-05-05/ed-1/seq-1/
94. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 45.
95. Ibid., 50.

unsparingly, rarely suffered any consequences for their actions, to the frustration of Black newspapers nationwide.[96]

The escalating tension between Black soldiers and white residents of Tampa reached a critical point, resulting in a violent and devastating race riot on June 6, 1898. The incident began when a drunk group of white Utah volunteers seized a two-year-old Black toddler directly out of his mother's arms. The soldiers suspended the crying child by the ankle and used him as a target in a shooting match. The goal was to fire a bullet as close to the child as possible without hitting him.[97] The winner tore a hole in the young boy's sleeve before the drunken soldiers returned the screaming child to his traumatized mother. As news of the encounter spread, Black soldiers descended upon Tampa, storming the white-only saloons and brothels that previously denied them service.[98] The soldiers overwhelmed local police, prompting the all-white Second Georgia Volunteer Infantry to intervene.

In the aftermath of the Tampa Race Riot, conflicting information appeared in newspapers nationwide. The official report claimed no loss of life. However, the *Atlanta Constitution* testified that 27 Black soldiers sustained severe injuries, while various Black news correspondents reported that multiple soldiers died.[99] Unfortunately, the ambiguity of these reports leaves little certainty on the matter.

The white press used the Tampa riot as an opportunity to justify discriminatory military practices, declaring that as "long as these negro soldiers are under the eyes of their white officers they may behave very well; but…when free from the control they have always been used to, they

96. Willard B. Gatewood, "Black Americans and the Quest for Empire, 1898-1903," *The Journal of Southern History* 38, no. 4 (November 1972): 545–66, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/2206149, 553.
97. Gleijeses, "African Americans and the War Against Spain," 196.
98. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 52-53.
99. Jerome Tuccille, *The Roughest Riders: The Untold Story of the Black Soldiers in the Spanish-American War* (Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Review Press, 2015), 41.

are dangerous characters." Black newspapers responded with a moral sense of indignation. Under the headline "Cross-Eyed Argument," the *Richmond Planet* referred to the riot as a "free fight" between "some of the colored United States troops and the saloons-keepers, who, by the way, on account of their color refused to sell them drinks." Mitchell argued that the white press publicized their version of events without the situational context necessary to justify the actions of these soldiers. Furthermore, he juxtaposed the Tampa riot with similar misconduct perpetuated by white regiments. Finally, the *Planet* proposed that the riots illustrated white officers' inability to manage Black regiments effectively. Their failure challenged the prevailing notion that white officers held complete command over the Black regiments and opened the opportunity for Black men to prove their capabilities in their stead, as Mitchell argued:

> "Our Army" is good. Yes, it is our army. Remember that please. Colored troops under white officers and white troops under white officers are guilty of the offences charged against them by the *Dispatch.* Who wants any better argument against white officers than this and any stronger argument in favor of the colored ones? [100]

By identifying the American Army as "Our Army," Mitchell asserted that the military belonged to all citizens, transcending racial discrimination. This assertion highlighted the equality in the armed forces and the shared responsibility for misconduct, challenging the discriminatory undercurrents in the article's portrayal of Black soldiers. Mitchell countered the biased narratives perpetuated by the media by holding Black *and* white soldiers equally accountable for military misconduct. He argued that if white officers could not prevent Black soldiers' misconduct, the War Department had no justification for denying Black officers the opportunity to lead. However, Mitchell's argument held little value to those who used the Tampa riots as evidence of

100. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Cross-Eyed Argument." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), June 18, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-06-18/ed-1/seq-2/.

Black violence and insubordination. The white press reinforced a narrative that positioned Black men as a threat to civil Anglo-Saxon society.

On June 14, 1898, eight days after the riot, the US Army set sail for Cuba, leaving approximately 8,000 troops and all the cavalry mounts behind. The American Navy and Army had a tense relationship in the late nineteenth century, resulting in a complete lack of coordination in the months before the invasion. The Navy did not have enough vessels to transport the American Army, and once the War Department realized the weight of their problem, they scrambled to borrow, rent, or buy private vessels to get their men to Cuba, with little success. When news of the limited passenger capacity reached base camp, soldiers scrambled to get on the train that connected Tampa to the port docks, nine miles from the city. Of the original 25,000 men, only 16,800 men made it on to the vessels. After eight days at sea, the army arrived on the Southeast Coast of Cuba.[101]

The first major Cuban military encounter occurred on June 24 at the Battle of Las Guásimas. Las Guásimas was a small military outpost on a trail that advanced toward Santiago. General Wheeler, the commanding American officer of the Cuban campaign, directed two cavalry units into battle; the First Volunteer Cavalry (more commonly known as the Rough Riders), commanded by Theodore Roosevelt, and the 10th Cavalry. Roosevelt's troops, at the head of the garrison, quickly fell victim to an ambush as they approached Spain's stronghold deep in the Cuban jungles.[102] The Spanish fired upon the Americans with deadly precision, killing eight and wounding thirty-four.[103] The 10th Cavalry, following close behind, charged through "undoubtedly the strongest point in the Spanish position." Their brave and timely

101. Ranson, "British Military and Naval Observers,*"* 38.; Smith, "The 'Splendid Little War' of 1898," 24, 27-29.
102. Gary Gerstle, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (December 1999), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/2568615, 1289.
103. Tuccille, *The Roughest Riders,* 96-97.

intervention successfully repelled the Spanish assault, earning the soldiers praise from the Rough Riders.[104] One quotation, provided by an unknown white American corporal and published in the *Richmond Planet,* the *Iowa State Bystander,* and the *Freeman,* praised the Black regiment for their brave conduct:

> They [the 10th Cavalry] were with the Rough Riders, and ran into an ambuscade, though they had been warned of the danger…If it had not been for the Negro Cavalry, the Rough Riders would have been exterminated. I am not a Negro lover. My father fought with Mosby's rangers, and I was born in the South, but the Negros saved that fight and the day will come when Gen. Shafter will give them credit for their bravery.[105]

The republication of this quotation illustrated how the Black press contributed to and sought validation from the masculine and heroic reputation of the Black regiments. The author highlighted the undeniable bravery of the 10th Cavalry, and his analogous association with white supremacy only amplified the weight of his opinion. His praise validated a masculine American identity within these Black soldiers, who defied racial stereotypes with their fearless advance into enemy fire.

Six days later, the United States engaged in the largest battle of the Spanish-Cuban-American War: the Battle of San Juan. The San Juan Heights encircled the city of Santiago in a half-moon crescent.[106] General Shafter divided his forces and selected two targets along the strongly fortified ridge; El Caney and San Juan Hill. The 1st Division, including soldiers from the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th Infantry, charged up San Juan Hill, while the 25th Infantry participated in the assault on El Caney. As the white officers of Black units fell, Black non-commissioned officers rose to the challenge, effectively maintaining the advance in the wake of enemy fire. Their courageous conduct under fire assured the American victory, leading one

104. Gatewood, *'Smoked Yankees,'* 41.
105. John Mitchell Jr, ed., *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Virginia), July 23, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-07-23/ed-1/seq-4/.
106. Roberts, "Assault on San Juan Heights," 14.

Rough Rider to declare: “I don’t think it an exaggeration to say that if it had not been for the timely aid of the Tenth Cavalry, (colored) the Rough Riders would have been exterminated.”[107]

The United States declared victory over the San Juan Heights on July 3, leaving Santiago surrounded.[108] The Spanish garrison capitulated the city to the United States on July 17. Spain initiated peace discussions two weeks later, culminating in the Paris Peace Treaty.[109]

As the dust settled on the battlefield, a far deadlier enemy emerged. Exacerbated by the movement of military troops, yellow fever, malaria, dysentery, smallpox, and enteric fever quickly spread across the island. American military commanders established a medical facility in Siboney to address the rising number of infected. Reportedly, this hospital maintained horrific sanitation standards, allowing disease to spread from the infected to the healthcare providers. Faced with a sudden shortage of medical personnel, the commanding officers turned to the nation’s soldiers.[110] After eight successive regiments refused the request to serve in the Siboney hospital, the 24th Infantry accepted the commission. “This was the crucial test of the metal [sic] of men,” the *Freeman* declared in February 1899:

> In it is revealed the highest quality of the black man: the quality of being able to turn from the field of strife and bloodshed to that of humanity from that of killing to succoring the dying… However rife pessimism may grow as to the destiny of the black man in America, the bold marital spirit in him, coupled with that of ever being willing to turn his hand where it can do the most good; sympathetic, loyal, and yielding, reassures us of his future. As a soldier he has come to stay and through his I truly feel our future structures of solider manhood is to come.[111]

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107. Caesar A. A. Taylor, “The Modern Spartan,” *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), October 22, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18981022&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 6.
108. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 60.
109. Smith, "The 'Splendid Little War' of 1898," 31.; Hendrickson, *The Spanish-American War, x*xi.
110. Timothy D. Russell, “‘I Feel Sorry for These People’: African American Soldiers in the Philippine-American War, 1899–1902,” *The Journal of African American History* 99, no. 3 (2014): 197–222, https://doi.org/10.5323/jafriamerhist.99.3.0197, 216.
111. George L. Knox, ed., “The Negro Soldier,” *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), February 4, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990204&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 3.

The *Freeman* celebrated these Black soldiers for their ability to transition from the brutalities of warfare to the compassionate care of the sick and dying. Through this juxtaposition, the article highlighted the humanity of these Black men. Not only had they fought for their country, but they accepted a job that put their lives at risk to help the ill. The strength and compassion of these Black men illustrated the humane and civilized nature of Black American soldiers, contributing to the reputation of American exceptionalism and Black excellence on the world stage.

By September 30, tropical diseases claimed the lives of over 500 American soldiers, including a sizable number of the 24th Cavalry. As yellow fever continued to spread, the US Army amended its enlistment protocols, allowing women to serve as nurses in Cuba. The Surgeon General, George Miller Sternberg, actively sought out Black nurses for the role, enlisting Namahyoka Gertrude Curtis, an accomplished Black nurse, to recruit female medical caregivers. Like the Black soldiers, the War Department valued Black nurses because of their race, suggesting that Black worth stemmed from their perceived immunity to tropical disease. Classifying Black bodies as immune bodies echoed the racial logic used to justify slavery: Black bodies experienced pain, illness, and hardship differently than white bodies.[112] The War Department used this evaluation system to reduce Black Americans to their racial differences. Despite this discriminatory practice, Curtis inducted over a hundred nurses into the program across the American South, at least 32 of whom were Black.[113]

The Black press limited the discussion of these nurses, which reduced my capacity to evaluate the perspectives of the Black women who contributed to the American war effort.

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112. Khary Oronde Polk, *Contagions of Empire: Scientific Racism, Sexuality, and Black Military Workers Abroad, 1898–1948* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 48-51, 60.
113. Ingrid Gessner, "Heroines of Health: Examining the Other Side of the 'Splendid Little War,'" *European Journal of American Studies* 10, no. 1 (2015), 17.

Brief newspaper clippings highlighted the social activities of these women, with little discussion of their service on the front lines. One such article celebrated May B. Williams as "one of the most efficient of the corps of nurses that went to Cuba during the Spanish-American War [sic]" before describing "the latest feather in Mrs. Williams' cap... the passing of an examination...in midwifery,"[114]

The limited coverage of Black nurses presents an intriguing phenomenon, as Black newspapers typically highlighted the accomplishments of Black Americans with a noted sense of enthusiasm. While various articles discussed the charitable efforts of Black women, the silence surrounding Black nurses hinted at a deliberate effort to limit the discussion of female gender roles. The social barriers created by poverty, racial discrimination, and gendered expectations pushed Black women to embody the idealized archetype of (white) American housewife to gain public acceptance. However, the individuals who dedicated their time to the war effort challenged this gendered understanding of women as mothers and domestic governors in the late nineteenth century.[115] In "Women in Wartime," the *Broad Ax* argued that "the front line is no place for women, and few good ones ever go there," inherently presenting "war" as a masculine milieu. Despite this framework, the article examined the service of two (white) female war veterans: Annie Etheridge and Molly Pitcher. Taylor's newspaper presented Pitcher and Etheridge as two of the "few good ones,' as the article credited the women for their bravery.[116] As white women, the public perception of Etheridge and Pitcher reaped no negative consequences for the Black American community.

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114. Edward E. Cooper, ed., "Passed High in Midwifery," *Colored American* (Washington, D.C.), September 7, 1901, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83027091/1901-09-07/ed-1/seq-9/.
115. Cherisse Jones-Branch, "The Arkansas Association of Colored Women and Early Twentieth-Century Maternalist Political Activism," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (Autumn 2020): 218–30, https://doi.org/https://www.jstor.org/stable/27019091, 218-222.
116. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Women in Wartime," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), September 10, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-09-10/ed-1/seq-3/.

Other articles highlighted how these nurses "did not seem to regard it of consequence if flies crawled in and out of a sick man's mouth," illustrating their unwavering commitment to compassionate care.[117] In a world that often restricted female participation in traditionally male-dominated spheres, these nurses challenged the perception of female gender roles while simultaneously asserting their inherent value as American citizens. Their actions demonstrated the shifting understanding of female civic responsibilities on the cusp of the twentieth century. However, when juxtaposed with the extensive coverage offered to Black soldiers, the differential treatment of female Black nurses underscored how Black newspapers reflected the suppressive nature of gendered expectations in the US. While they celebrated the valour of Black soldiers, Black nurses remained largely marginalized and overlooked.

The national spotlight focused on America's Black regiments reached a climax in the immediate aftermath of the war. The War Department awarded twenty-six Certificates of Merit and five Congressional Medals of Honor to exceptional Black soldiers after the American victory, illustrating the courage Black soldiers demonstrated on the field.[118] The press emphasized the heroic accomplishments of Black regiments while Black troops took part in victory parades across the country.[119] These acts of inclusion led Black newspapers to claim that the Spanish-Cuban-American War had united the North and the South, erasing the hostility of the Civil War.[120] As the *Broad Ax* published:

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117. John Lay Thompson, ed., "War Department Inquiry," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), October 21, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-10-21/ed-1/seq-3/.
118. For further reading on this matter, see Gatewood's, *"Smoked Yankees,"* 41.
119. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 105.
120. For examples, see; John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Times' Friendship for Us." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), June 18, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-06-18/ed-1/seq-2/.; George L. Knox, ed., "Reconciliation." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 30, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980730&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.; Caesar A. A. Taylor, "The Modern Spartan," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), October 22, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18981022&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 6.; R. C.

> Since the memorable days of 1861 the country has not been convulsed as it is at this moment. Then it was divided. Now it is united. Then two angry sections stood at arms. Now those sections - more homogenous than ever they were before - stand shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart, as one man, under the flag of their fathers, then as now, and ever, the symbol of human freedom.[121]

The presentation of the Black and white man standing shoulder to shoulder presented a united vision of the United States. The sacrifice and gallant heroics displayed on the battlefield earned these men a collective sense of dignity and honor, shared amongst Black and white soldiers in the *Broad Ax.*

On rare occasions, white soldiers contributed to this shared national identity, as Private Smith of the Seventy-first Volunteers illustrated:

> I am a Southerner by birth, and I never thought much of the colored man. But, somewhat, now, I feel very different towards them, for I met them in camp, on the battlefield and thats [sic] where a man gets to know a man. I never saw such fighting as those Tenth Cavalry men [sic] did. They didn't seem to know what fear was.[122]

The shared battle experience transformed Smith's perspective on Black soldiers, challenging the racial bias he learned in the American South. Through his acknowledgement of exceptional Black soldiers, he transcended the racial prejudice of the American South and recognized the indomitable courage displayed by the Tenth Cavalry men. The shared crucible of war dissolved the barriers of race and presented American men as brave military heroes. In this evolution of sentiment, Smith witnessed to the transformative power of collective struggle in forging bonds of unity and appreciation, marking a pivotal step toward eroding the divisive walls that once separated soldiers based on race. This example illustrated how firsthand experiences of Black

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Ransom, "Past and Present." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), Nov. 5, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18981105&printsec=frontpage&hl=en .

121. Julius F. Taylor, ed., *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 21, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-05-21/ed-1/seq-2/.

122. Caesar A. A. Taylor, "The Modern Spartan," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), October 22, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18981022&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 6.

excellence challenged deeply entrenched racist ideologies, reinforcing the narratives promoted by Black leaders and Black newspapers. Numerous Black newspapers published Smith's testimony, symbolizing the metaphoric importance of white praise. White validation held significant weight in a society that upheld white supremacy and marginalized or dismissed Black perspectives. The endorsement of white American men provided a sense of legitimacy and acknowledgement that was otherwise difficult to attain in a system that perpetuated racial and gender inequalities.

The United States celebrated the conclusion of the Spanish-Cuban-American War with a series of parades, public speeches, social events, and luncheons thrown in honor of the nation's victorious veterans, including the Black regiments.[123] Yet, the Black soldiers quickly fell out of favor as the public turned their praise and attention to another man: Theodore Roosevelt.[124]

Bill Brown, author of "Science Fiction, the World's Fair, and the Prosthetics of Empire," noted that Roosevelt and his Rough Riders encapsulated the "theatricalization of the American male that took place during the Spanish-American War."[125] However, I would take that argument one step further and contend that Roosevelt embodied the theatricalization of the Anglo-Saxon male in 1898 – while excluding his Black counterparts. In the late nineteenth century, there was a direct connection between Anglo-Saxon identity and the white American conception of self. American men established this unique "Anglo-Saxon" ethnic identity through the colonization of North America. Consequently, the western settlement of the frontier forged a unique masculine identity that allegedly justified the Anglo-Saxon conceptions of racial superiority.

123. Tuccille, *The Roughest Riders*, 182-183.
124. Amron. "Reinforcing Manliness," 401.
125. Bill Brown, "Science Fiction, the World's Fair, and the Prosthetics of Empire, 1910-1915," essay, in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1993), 129–63, 138.

Fredrick Jackson Turner tied the masculinity forged in the conquest of the western frontier to the American identity in his 1893 essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” Turner argued that the frontier cultivated the rugged and individualistic qualities embodied by American men. He viewed the frontier as a crucible where men developed strength, resilience, and self-reliance. According to Turner, the wilderness demanded that men confront and conquer the harsh realities of nature, thereby shaping their character and forging a distinctly American masculinity. This vision of masculinity intertwined with Turner's broader argument that the frontier played a significant role in shaping the nation's identity and fostering its democratic spirit. [126]

Maintaining this model of American masculinity was important to Roosevelt during his time as a soldier and a politician.[127] Theodore Roosevelt illustrated his connection to this racial theory in his four-volume autobiography, *The Winning of the West*, Roosevelt presented this narrative as a tale of triumph, recounting how the European ancestral bloodlines of the British, French, German, Spanish, Celtic, Norse, and Danish peoples merged to create a unique American lineage forged through the struggles and efforts of westward expansion.[128] Proponents of Social Darwinism also argued that the Anglo-Saxon's success on this frontier offered further proof of the superiority of the white American man, tying this concept to a myriad of moral and social implications. As the “predominant race,” Anglo-Saxons believed they had earned the right to “civilize” the world, following in the footsteps of their ancestral homeland, Great Britain.[129]

126. Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1966), 132.
127. Gerstle, “Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism,” 1285.
128. Theodore Roosevelt, *Winning of the West* (New York, New York: Current Literature Pub. Co., 1905), 20.
129. Miller, *“Benevolent Assimilation,”* 123-125.

As the frontier continued to slip away, Roosevelt believed that urbanization and modern amenities would diminish America's racial edge.[130] He believed that the ruggedness and self-reliance associated with the frontier played a crucial role in shaping the distinctive quality of American masculinity. This perception shaped Roosevelt's understanding of American expansion and, in turn, the Spanish-Cuban-American war. For Roosevelt, the war represented a chance to reinvigorate and reaffirm American masculinity in the face of societal changes brought about by urbanization. By engaging in military action and embracing the spirit of conquest, Roosevelt believed that the nation could rejuvenate its racial vigor and safeguard its standing in the world. He maintained this perspective well into his presidency, declaring on May 10, 1902, that the United States would fall to those "who have not lost their manly or adventurous qualities."[131] In doing so, Roosevelt inherently tied the strength of a nation to the masculine qualities of male citizens and, to a further extent, the nation's army.[132]

On April 1, 1899, Scribner's Magazine published Roosevelt's account of the Battle of San Juan in an article entitled "Rough Riders":

> No troops could have behaved better that [sic] the colored soldiers had behaved so far; but they are, of course, peculiarly dependant on their white officers. Occasionally they produce non-commissioned officers who can take the initiative and accept responsibility precisely like the best class of whites; but this cannot be expected normally, nor is it fair to expect it.[133]

Roosevelt effectively minimized the accomplishments of the Black soldiers. He qualified his praise by asserting that such qualities were anomalies amongst Black Americans and that Black men needed white leadership. In doing so, Roosevelt perpetuated the idea that Black soldiers

130. Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation,"* 1280-1307, 1285.
131. Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1987), 128.
132. Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization,* 189.
133. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 116.

were less capable than their white counterparts and, therefore, fundamentally less valuable. In contrast, he highlighted the self-reliance and authority of white soldiers, echoing prevalent gender norms assigned to white men in the nineteenth century. Roosevelt compounded this rhetoric further when he argued:

> None of the white regulars or Rough Riders showed the slightest sign of weakening; but under the strain the colored infantrymen (who had none of their officers) began to get a little uneasy and to drift to the rear, either helping wounded men, or saying that they wished to find their own regiments. This I could not allow, as it was depleting my line, so I jumped up, and walking a few yards to the rear, drew my revolver, halted the retreating soldiers, and called out to them that I appreciated the gallantry with which they had fought and would be sorry to hurt them, but that I should shoot the first man who, on any pretence whatever, went to the rear.[134]

Published in the *New York Age* under the heading "What Roosevelt Missed," Sergeant Presley Holliday wrote an impassioned refutation of this narrative. A member of the 10th Cavalry, he accompanied the Rough Riders to the top of San Juan Hill.[135] Holliday clarified that, before Roosevelt's outburst, Lieutenant R. J. Fleming ordered the 10th Calvary to the rear to refurnish supplies. Ignorant of this fact, Roosevelt drew his revolver on the Black soldiers, giving credence to the story he published in Scribner's Magazine. "Everyone who saw the incident knew the colonel was mistaken about our men trying to shirk duty," Black soldiers reported, a fact reinforced by the apology that Roosevelt offered the Tenth Cavalry the following day.[136]

Black soldiers had few opportunities to challenge Roosevelt's narrative in full view of the American public. Instead, they told their personal war stories in Black newspapers. In an article entitled "How El Caney Was Won," M. D. Sadler, the First Sergeant of the 25th Infantry, stated: "All we need is leaders of our own race to make war record so that [Black soldiers] may go down in history as a reward for the price of our precious blood." Despite their hope, Roosevelt's

134. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 116.
135. Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees,"* 92-97.
136. Ibid., 92-97.

narrative of the Spanish-Cuban-American War took hold, mythologizing the efforts of the future President and the Rough Riders through to the modern age. In recognition of his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty," Congress awarded Roosevelt a Congressional Medal of Honor in 2001, which only served to highlight his lasting impact on the national memory of the Battle of San Juan.[137]

Black Americans celebrated Black soldiers with books, poems, paintings, drawings, and songs at the end of the Spanish-Cuban-American War. Advertisements for *The Tenth United States Cavalry Under Fire*, a memoir written by various cavalrymen, appeared in numerous issues of the *Freeman* across 1899. Claiming "the most interesting and thrilling narrative yet given to the public," the monograph told the war story from the Black perspective. General Wheeler celebrated the contributions of these Black soldiers in the introduction of the book, stating:

> With unfaltering courage and devotion they (the Negro soldiers of the Tenth) took part in the heroic charge of the cavalry at La Guásimas and after that gallant fight, moved steadily forward with the cavalry division, forded the San Juan River, and under a murderous fire, gained the crest of San Juan Hill and captured the formidable entrenchments of the Spaniards, driving back the astonished enemy, fighting by day and working by night until glorious victory crowned their efforts and peace once more dawned upon our beloved country. The reports of all their commanders unite in commending the Negro soldiers.[138]

Written for a Black audience, the monograph offered a tangible piece of history that celebrated the accomplishments and bravery of Black soldiers.

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137. "Theodore Roosevelt: Spanish-American War: U.S. Army: Medal of Honor Recipient," Congressional Medal of Honor Society, 2023, https://www.cmohs.org/recipients/theodore-roosevelt.
138. Charles Alexander, "Special War Notes." *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), Apr. 1, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=2AwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=6066%2C4526917.

The Black regiments garnered praise from several white poets, including B. M. Channing and George E. Powell.[139] These poems emerged at the intersection of race, gender, and nationalism as the poets celebrated the American victory through the actions of the Black soldiers. One instance, published in the *Freeman* on February 25, 1899, introduced "the very excellent poem 'The Charge of the 'Nigger Ninth' on San Juan Hill,' by George E. Powell. The *Freeman* took note of the racial slur in the title but declared that Powell did not need to apologize as it was "extremely fitting." Despite the lack of criticism, the article alternated between "Negro" and "Nigger." Such a declaration can be difficult to discern, but ultimately demonstrated acquiescent acceptance of the white poet's portrayal of Black soldiers. Printed on the same page as the poem, Knox introduced "The Nigger Ninth" with resounding praise:

> It seems too much, all too sweet to know and to feel that the strangers [sic] harp has been so happily attuned - breaking through the breast works of hate, prejudices, oppression and the proud man's contumely…To have written such a poem in such a time is as a receipt in full for the payment of all obligation due mankind from man. Mr. Powell who ever [sic] he is is a strict disciple of Christ and Abraham Lincoln in making the hard lot of lowly mankind less burdensome…It is the spiritual upliftment of the poem rather than its heroic measures and rehearsal of exploits that will breathe a blessing.[140]

The *Freeman* highlighted the merits of "The Negro Ninth" with praise while ignoring the derogatory language, once more signifying the importance of white acknowledgement. Knox reprinted Powell's verse weeks later due to "the constant demand of the celebrated poem."[141]

The American military occupied Cuba until the Spring of 1902. During this period of occupation, Black newspapers turned their media coverage to examinations of Cuban culture,

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139. John Cullen Gruesser, *The Empire Abroad and the Empire at Home African American Literature and the Era of Overseas Expansion* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 129.
140. George L. Knox, ed., "The Nigger Ninth," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), February 25, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990225&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.
141. George L. Knox, ed., "Announcement Extraordinary," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), March 18, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990318&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.

history, and people, often in prologued personality profiles that discussed Cuban women. These articles then used Cuban women as a symbolic representation of the Cuban people, as depicted by the women the US was so eager to protect months before. "Our Cuban Sister,' published in the *Richmond Planet*, argued that Americans expected "to find the Cuban girl very Spanish in her tastes and inclinations...Her loves and hatreds are intense, and there is the same fondness for such brutal amusements as the bull-fight." The article suggested that their "Spanish blood" played a significant role in their personality, painting Cuban women in line with stereotypes of Spanish passion, beauty, and temperament. The article concluded that Cuban women were "not wanting in spirit or ability to share in man's privileges and work as the many stories of the women's heroism during Cuba's long struggle go to prove."[142] The *Planet* emphasized the cultural differences as potential failings, suggesting that American occupation would lead these women towards a more "civilized" Anglo-Saxon conception of female duty. However, their contributions to the revolution were neither challenged nor degraded. Instead, the paper presented these women as political actors who fought for civil liberties, regardless of gender. While the prevailing American social norms dictated a more restrictive view of women's roles, the *Planet* acknowledged and celebrated the agency of Cuban women in the context of the revolution, challenging the conventional narrative that confined women to domestic spheres.

The CASC pointed to a storied history between Cuban insurgents and Black Americans, framed through racial empathy and collective opposition to slavery. Long before blood soaked the hills of San Juan, Black Americans called upon the American government to recognize the belligerent status of the isle while spreading the word of the horrendous crimes perpetrated by the Spanish. With the outbreak of the war, a vocal opposition ground their complaints in the

142. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Our Cuban Sister." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), November 19, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-11-19/ed-1/seq-6/.

inhumane treatment of America's Black population. The bravery and dignity illustrated by these Black soldiers failed to curb the violence or racially motivated discrimination directed at the Black community. However, the Black press highlighted the heroism of Black soldiers, introducing them as masculine protectors of the nation; brave, loyal, and strong. Their articles spread the word of American imperial expansion to communities across the country, establishing a complex relationship between American military service, racial discrimination, and national pride.

Chapter 2: The Philippines

On April 25, 1898, Commodore George Dewey received a cable from the Secretary of the Navy, John Davis Long:

> War has commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to the Philippine Islands. Commence operations particularly against the Spanish fleet. You must capture vessels or destroy. Use utmost endeavor.[143]

Commodore Dewey commanded the American Asiatic Squadron, a fleet of six war vessels and two supply ships stationed in the South China Sea. After reading Long's telegram, Dewey's squadron set sail for Luzon, arriving well after sunset on April 30. "As the gloom of night gradually shut out the details of the coast," Dewey recalled, "the squadron steamed quietly on toward the entrance of Manila Bay with all lights masked and the gun crews at the guns."

Apart from a brief encounter with a Spanish battery upon El Fraile island, Dewey sailed into Manila Bay unopposed. "With the coming of broad daylight," the Commodore sighted the Spanish squadron. At 5:40 in the morning, once the ships were within range, Dewey ordered his men to open fire. In six hours, the American squadron successfully destroyed or scuttled every Spanish war vessel in the South Pacific, eliminating the possibility of a Spanish assault on the American West Coast and securing Manila Bay for the United States.[144]

143. George Dewey, *Autobiography of George Dewey, Admiral of the Navy* (New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 168, 195.
144. Ibid., 168, 195.

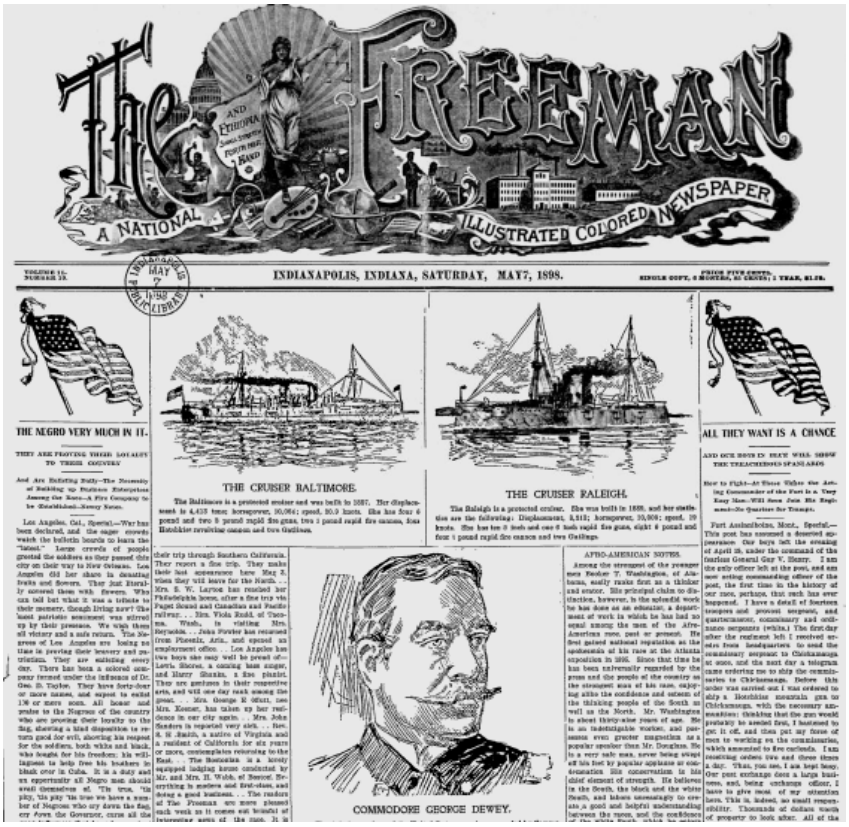

Figure 3. Illustrations of the USS *Baltimore*, the USS *Raleigh*, and Commodore George Dewey. Published on the front page of the *Freeman*, on May 7, 1898.[145]

The Battle of Manila Bay catapulted George Dewey into the national spotlight. "Among naval men, military men and civilians, Europeans and natives here," the *Richmond Planet* reported, "there is only one subject of discussion, the brilliant, dashing, annihilating victory of the American fleet under Commodore Dewey."[146] Dewey's portrait graced the front page of the *Richmond Planet* and the *Freeman* alongside illustrations of the American Asiatic Squadron (see Figure 3). At the same time, the *Broad Ax* described him as a "great hero...the uncrowned king of the world."[147] The response from these newspapers highlighted the jingoistic fever that gripped

145. George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 7, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980507&printsec=frontpage&hl=en.
146. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Fall of Manila," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Virginia), May 14, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-05-14/ed-1/seq-1/.
147. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Commodore Dewey's Great Victory," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 14, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-05-14/ed-1/seq-1/.

the nation in 1898. Black newspapers, gripped by the raptures of national pride, framed Dewey as a hero. Several States declared May 1 "Dewey Day" while stores sold everything from "Dewey's Chewies" chewing gum to miniature busts of the man.[148]

As a white American military commander, Commodore George Dewey embodied an idealized militaristic understanding of white American men. The cultural image of an Anglo-Saxon household in the nineteenth century established men as the protectors of the family, thus placing an inherent value on their strength and military prowess. Black newspapers highlighted Dewey's masculine traits in several articles that discussed his honourable character and military prowess, attributing an air of intelligence and moral standing to the accomplished Commodore. Consequently, Dewey became the ideal representative of American masculinity: brave, chivalrous, powerful, and refined. A week after his victory, the *Broad Ax* professed:

> Every story that travels across the Pacific about Admiral Dewey presents the hero of Manila in a more attractive guise and heightens the interest of Americans in their beloved idol... [He] has a sense of humor as well as many other things that go to make up a capable officer and charming man… And no one can doubt that behind the iron commander, with the eye of an eagle, the brain of lightning and the will of steel, there exists the very tender heart of a gentleman of the old school.[149]

The *Broad Ax* emphasized Dewey's accomplished nature, depicting him as a skilled officer and a charming individual. This portrayal contributed to the image of Dewey as an exceptional leader, both strategically competent and possessing qualities associated with a genteel upbringing. The media presented the Commodore as a shining example of the "immense superiority of Western

148. William P. Leeman, "America's Admiral: George Dewey and American Culture in the Gilded Age," *The Historian* 65, no. 3 (Spring 2003): 587–614, https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6563.00032, 589.
149. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "First in Peace as in War," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 16, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1899-05-16/ed-1/seq-3/.

brain and brawn," using the accomplishment of one individual to represent the superiority of Anglo-Saxon masculinity on and off the battlefield.[150]

Yet, Black newspapers additionally used the example set by Dewey to appraise Black soldiers. In one example, the *Freeman* reminded the public that the Commodore was not the only brave American soldier fighting on the front lines:

> Tis said that 'the proper study of mankind is man'. If this is true, then let the whole civilized world study our brave black soldiers who have won prestige for this nation abroad. While the poet is rhyming for Geo. Dewey, let him not forget that the famous 24th and 25th and 9th and 10th colored regulars are just as daring and brave, just as true and loyal to our bestarred and be-striped ensign, that has never been allowed to trail in the dust where the sinews of the black soldiers were strong enough to support it.[151]

Through this comparison, the *Freeman* argued that Black American soldiers embodied the same masculine characteristics that defined Commodore Dewey. The article used the evocative imagery of the American flag to establish the patriotic nationalism of the Black soldiers when he suggested that they would die before they let the Stars and Stripes "trail in the dust." [152]

Despite the fervour generated by Dewey's victory, none of the compliments, headlines, or newspaper articles reached the Commodore in the Philippines. Don Basilio Augustin Davila, Spanish Governor of Manila, refused the Americans access to the only telegraph on the island. Once negotiations deteriorated, Dewey severed the cable, eliminating the possibility of telegraphic communication on the archipelago.[153] The closest telegram outside of Manila was in Hong Kong, over 1,100 kilometres away. Unable to communicate with the Spanish crown, the

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150. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "First in Peace as in War," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), May 16, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1899-05-16/ed-1/seq-3/.
151. George L. Knox, ed., "Major's Melange," *Freeman*, (Indianapolis, IND), February 4, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990204&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 2.
152. George L. Knox, ed., "Major's Melange," *Freeman*, (Indianapolis, IND), February 4, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990204&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 2.
153. Joseph L. Stickney, *Admiral Dewey at Manila and the Complete Story of the Philippines: Life and Glorious Deeds of Admiral George Dewey, Including a Thrilling Account of Our Conflicts with the Spaniards and Filipinos in the Orient*, 1899, 41.; Dewey, *Autobiography of George Dewey*, 224-225.

Spanish garrison refused to surrender the city. Although the Americans suffered few losses during the Battle of Manila Bay, Commodore Dewey needed reinforcements to capture the capital by force. Consequently, in the Summer of 1898, Manila stood at the crossroads of three separate entities vying for control: the Spanish imperialists, the American military, and the Filipino insurgents under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo.

Aguinaldo emerged as a central figure in the Philippine independence movement in the late nineteenth century. Fueled by a growing tide of nationalism, the Philippines erupted into open revolt in the spring of 1896. Following months of civil conflict, Aguinaldo emerged as a leader of the insurrection, calling on local Filipinos to join the revolution with a promise of independence. The revolt lasted for months, with no clear victor emerging. By December 1897, the warring parties agreed to a truce. In exchange for mild reforms and a cash indemnity, Aguinaldo accepted exile and relocated to Singapore by the Spring of 1898.[154] Following the destruction of the *Maine,* Aguinaldo contacted American emissaries in East Asia, attempting to share intelligence about the Spanish garrison. Despite his best efforts, Aguinaldo failed to meet with Commodore Dewey before the American Asiatic Squadron departed for Manila Bay.[155]

The USS *McCulloch* brought Aguinaldo to Manila Bay on May 19, 1898.[156] By Aguinaldo's account, Dewey greeted the Filipino General as an equal and promised that the United States would recognize Philippine independence. Dewey, however, assiduously denied these claims and stated that he had only informed Aguinaldo that he "consider[ed] insurgents as friends, being opposed to a common enemy," and not an independent people.[157] Despite the

154. Russell, "'I Feel Sorry for These People,'" 201.
155. Paul Alexander Kramer, *The Blood of Government* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 91-93.
156. Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: American's Forgotten Bid for Empire Which Cost 250,000 Lives* (London, England: Longmans, 1961), 64-65.
157. Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 94.

brewing tension, the two military dignitaries established a strategic alliance, allowing the United States to capitalize on the intel of the Filipino rebels while Aguinaldo reignited the insurgency across Luzon.

Despite Dewey's assurances, Aguinaldo was apprehensive of US intentions in the Philippines. As a result, the Filipino revolutionary declared the Philippines independent on June 12, 1898. The "Act of the Proclamation of Independence of the Filipino People" severed all ties to the Spanish crown and asserted the sovereign right of the Filipino people to self-govern.[158] Aguinaldo's declaration emphasized the political will of the Philippines Republic and galvanized public support against imperial rule. However, as American reinforcements arrived in Manila, the tenuous alliance between the Filipino rebels and the US army began to fray.

The first American reinforcements arrived in the Philippines two months after the Battle of Manila Bay, providing Dewey with sufficient troops to seize the island of Luzon by force.[159] The Spanish officers, conscious of their weakened state, agreed to surrender Manila to the United States in a predetermined battle with the assurance that no Filipino troops would enter the city. On the day of the assault, Thomas Anderson, the commander of the American Army, warned Aguinaldo that the US would shoot any insurgents if they attempted to breach Manila's walls. Despite these warnings, the rebels gained significant control over the suburbs surrounding Manila as the United States toppled the final remnant of Spanish imperial control in the Philippines.[160]

The Battle of Manila occurred immediately after American and Spanish representatives signed the Peace Protocol. This timing may help explain why so few Black newspapers

158. Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 95.
159. Ibid., 143.
160. Ibid., 97.

published articles on this battle, as "Manila Captured," published in the *Richmond Planet,* was the only article I could find. The *Planet* credited the "humane" capture of the city to the army's leading commanders: General Merritt and General Dewey.[161]

The remainder of the Black press turned their attention to matters of national concern. Articles on the Philippines shifted into the "War News of the Week" column or lengthy discussion of the military officers assigned to the archipelago. In one such example, the *Freeman* published an article on General Wesley E. Merritt, the first military governor of the Philippines. Despite the article's title, "Philippines Ruler" offered little information about the governor's role in the Philippines. Instead, the author, S. R. MacDonald, focused on Merritt's military career, describing him as a "dashing, brilliant, reckless young cavalry officer who won fame" during the American Civil War "and added to it a few years later as an Indian fighter" across the American West. MacDonald portrayed Merritt as a "gallant and meritorious" American soldier who reflected the qualities of a civilized man.[162]

Furthermore, the article tied Merritt to the Union and the battle for Black emancipation. Through this framing, the author presented Merritt as a sympathetic military officer who may have shared the battlefield with some of the *Freeman*'s readers. Although the article described Merritt as the "military governor of a conquered land," whose authority was "most autocratic," MacDonald did not criticize the dictatorial governance forced upon native Filipinos.[163]

The interwar period in the Philippines unfolded amidst rising political and racial tension. Competing conceptions of Filipino sovereignty emerged from Filipino and American officials as

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161. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Manila Captured," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Virginia) August 20, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-08-20/ed-1/seq-1/.
162. S. R. MacDonald, "Philippines Ruler," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 28, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980528&printsec=frontpage&hl=en.
163. S. R. MacDonald, "Philippines Ruler," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), May 28, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980528&printsec=frontpage&hl=en.

they attempted to assert increasing control over the island's governance, engaging in what Paul Kramer identified as "competitive state building." When the United States signed the Treaty of Paris, the Philippines had a constitution, a national anthem, a state flag, an executive cabinet, and plans for a congress elected by eligible male Filipinos. These two competing systems of sovereignty signified two widely different visions of the future for the Philippines; one governed by the United States and one by Filipinos.[164] With the war's conclusion, the question of annexation, occupation, and colonization loomed over the heads of America's politicians, leading Reverdy C. Ransom of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church to ask, "What shall we do with the Philippines[?]"[165]

Published on the front page of the *Freeman*, "The Scope of War," by Revery C. Ransom, argued that "the scenes upon the stage of the great theater of the present war" changed so quickly that any "student of contemporaneous history [would be] unable to grasp the magnitude of their significance much less to read out the profound influence which they shall have upon the future." Framed within the context of the Spanish-Cuban-American war, Ransom worried that the US victory would bring "deeper humiliation and greater woes if we, like many others who have gone before us, become intoxicated through victories and fail to remember that their only proper use is to help and benefit not only this nation but mankind." The article portrayed US military achievements with pride but cautioned that the United States had neither the precedent nor constitutional backing for annexation. Ransom presented annexation as an antithesis to "the banner of liberty and justice" that the United States "unfurled to the nations of the earth," tying

164. Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 95-9.
165. Ransom, Revery C., "The Scope of War," *Freeman*, (Indianapolis, IND), September 17, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=vAwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=2103%2C2498886.

these conceptions to his proper understanding of American identity. [166] His concluding nod toward the humanitarian motivations for the war reminded the readers that the US entered this conflict in the name of Cuban liberation, not imperial conquest.

Ransom did not stand alone in his criticisms of the American expansion. On the fourth page of the *Freeman*, under the headline "Why Annex the Philippines," Knox devoted a column to Booker T. Washington's perspective on imperial annexation. Drawn from an interview published in an unnamed "religious paper,' Washington stated:

> My opinion is that the Philippine Islands should be given the opportunity to govern themselves. They would certainly make mistakes, but [they] will learn from these errors. Until our nation has settled the Negro and Indian problems I do not think we have a right to assume more social problems.

Washington pointed to the continued racial tensions in the United States as a viable reason to avoid expansion, suggesting that Filipino annexation would only exacerbate the nation's list of troubles. Furthermore, he illustrated a degree of political faith in the governing capacity of the Filipino people rarely echoed by Washington's contemporaries in the nation's capital.[167] Washington funded numerous Black publications, using his economic prosperity to bolster a widely unprofitable industry. His economic association with the Black press only magnified the weight of his opinion.[168] However, Washington's influence could not stop various Black publications from presenting American expansion in a positive light.

In a short editorial, the *Iowa State Bystander* framed the Philippines as a new obligation and responsibility brought on by the American victory. The article argued that occupation was courageous and that the United States must "free [the Filipinos] from oppressive rule." Here, the

166. Ransom, Revery C., "The Scope of War," *Freeman*, (Indianapolis, IND), September 17, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=vAwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=VwMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=2103%2C2498886.
167. George L. Knox, ed., "Why Annex the Philippines," *Freeman*, (Indianapolis, IND), September 24, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980924&printsec=frontpage&hl=en.
168. Thornbrough, "American Negro Newspapers, 1880–1914," 486-487.

Bystander suggested that the United States would lift the Philippines out of the bonds of colonial oppression through territorial conquest. Although the United States imposed a military government over the Philippines in May 1898, the article defined American rule as benevolent. In this perspective, the *Bystander* insinuated that America's exceptionalism, rooted in the belief of being a uniquely virtuous and enlightened nation, would lift the Philippines from the shackles of colonial oppression through territorial expansion. This categorization starkly contrasted the public conception of European colonialism, particularly when juxtaposed with the news reports of Spanish cruelty in Cuba and the Philippines. The article concluded that the United States must keep the islands in the name of "our commercial interest in the far East."[169]

Annexation remained popular in the eyes of the American public, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the war, and with congressional elections fast approaching, the Republican party added pressure to the presidential decision. By October 1898, McKinley sent word to Paris, demanding complete annexation of the Philippines, which Spain was unwilling to concede. Consequently, the US agreed to pay a $20,000,000 indemnity for the territory.[170]

The Treaty of Paris failed to acknowledge the political aspirations of Filipino nationals, despite Aguinaldo's best efforts. Shortly after the American conquest of Manila, Aguinaldo sent Felipe Agoncillo to Washington to begin negotiations with the American government. When McKinley refused to address the political future of the Philippines, Agoncillo traveled to Paris to testify before the colonial commission. Once rebuffed, Agoncillo "returned to the Philippines

169. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Our Duty to the Philippines," *Iowa State Bystander,* (Des Moines, IA), August 5, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-08-05/ed-1/seq-1/.
170. Russell, "'I Feel Sorry for These People,'" 201.; Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation,"* 20-25.

with considerable bitterness towards the American government" and no promise of political independence.[171]

On December 21, President McKinley addressed the question of Filipino sovereignty directly. Written by Elihu Root, the "Benevolent Assimilation" proclamation asserted America's right to govern the Philippines before announcing the imposition of an American military government over the archipelago. The President promised to defend Filipino human rights while highlighting the "civilizing" influence of American rule. McKinley concluded:

> Finally, it should be the earnest wish and paramount aim of the military administration to win the confidence, respect, and affection of the inhabitants of the Philippines by assuring them in every possible way that full measure of individual rights and liberties which is the heritage of free peoples, and by proving to them that the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule.[172]

McKinley's imperial policy prioritized private property and personal freedom as fundamental tenets of a functioning governmental system. However, the threat of "assimilation" still seemingly bore an inherent air of malevolence, given that Root felt the need to preface the "benevolent" nature of the imposed American policy.

"Benevolent assimilation," as a political speech and a colonial foreign policy, fueled the fire of civil unrest in the Philippines. On January 13, four articles in the *Bystander* reported that Manila was a city on the precipice of rebellion:

> A dispatch from Malolos, seat of the so-called Filipinos government says the governors of all the province of Luzon have assembled at Malolos for the purpose of offering their lives and property in adhesion to the policy of the president and the government…They say they fought only for the independence of the Filipino.[173]

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171. Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation,"* 46.; Whitelaw Reid, *Making Peace with Spain; The Diary of Whitelaw Reid, September to December, 1898*, ed. H. Wayne Morgan, 82.
172. William McKinley to the Secretary of War, December 21, 1898, in "Message from the President of the United States," Senate Document No. 208, 56th Cong., ist sess. (1899-1900), 82-3.
173. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Brevities" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, Iowa), January 13, 1898 https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1899-01-13/ed-1/seq-2/.

The dismissive tone used in the *Bystander* ran on the assumption that the Filipino government was illegitimate. While these articles promoted American expansion through the delegitimization of Filipino governance, it is important to contextualize what information was available for the Black press. General Elwell Otis, the commanding American general in the Philippines from August 1898 until May 1900, exacted strict censorship over the press dispatches sent from Manila. Amidst the increasing tensions between Filipino and American troops, Otis dismissed any criticism of American rule as unfounded rumors while ensuring that negative news coverage never found its way into the press. Finally, on the evening of February 4, 1899, a brief military spat between Filipino rebels and the Frist Nebraska Volunteers escalated to an all-out war. The Americans drove the Filipino rebels from Manila in the bloodiest battle of the Philippines-American War.[174]

Initially, the Black newspapers examined did not devote much attention to the war's outbreak. Where the *Freeman* made a passing reference to the conflict, the *Broad Ax*, a Republican newspaper, used the conflict to justify Senator Rawlins' opposition to expansion. Rawlins was a Democratic Senator from Utah, magnifying the weight of his criticism against his political party.[175] The *Iowa State Bystander* published the only full-length article on the battle under the headline "Bloody War at Manila." The article presented the conflict as a "long expected rupture between the Americans and the Filipinos," acknowledging the rising colonial tension in the region. Yet, the *Bystander* identified the Filipino insurgents as the instigator of the battle when the Americans fired the first shot. The US media maintained the illusion that the United States military acted in defense, projecting an image of American civility juxtaposed with

174. Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation,"* 59-62.
175. Julius F. Taylor, ed., *The Broad Ax*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 11, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1899-02-11/ed-1/seq-4/.

Filipino aggression. Following a summary of the battle, the article concluded with an air of apparent order in the final line; "All is now quiet."[176]

Members of the War Department, including General Otis, openly opposed the deployment of Black soldiers to Manila. They framed their argument around race, suggesting that Black Americans would prove unwilling to fight Filipino insurgents due to their similar skin tone. The *San Francisco Daily Chronicle* argued that Black soldiers were "enthusiastic in their claim that they have nothing against the Filipinos, and will never fight them as they fought the Spaniards in Cuba" before suggesting that Black troops wanted "an opportunity in the Philippines to avenge the wrongs heaped upon them by the white people of America."[177] The *Richmond Planet* challenged these "slanderous utterances" in an article published on July 1, 1899:

> We believe that every native slaughtered is a native murdered and yet we should feel humiliated indeed were any of the troops of color to mutiny in the face of plain duty and fail to uphold the flag at the command of the government, to which they have sworn allegiance. Our mission is to change the policy of the government, not to induce mutiny among its soldiers.[178]

The *Planet* drew a distinct line between the support of the American military and the criticism of American foreign policy. Mitchell did not want to encourage insubordination amongst America's Black soldiers, regardless of his opinion on the war. However, he did not hold them accountable for the violence they enacted in the name of the American government. He focused his criticism

176. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Blood War at Manila," *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), February 10, 1899. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1899-02-10/ed-1/seq-2/.; John Lay Thompson, ed., "All Over the World," *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), February 10, 1899. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1899-02-10/ed-1/seq-2/.; John Lay Thompson, ed., "The Filipinos Yield," *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), February 10, 1899. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1899-02-10/ed-1/seq-2/ ;
177. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "A Libel on the Regiment.," *Richmond Planet*, (Richmond, VA), July 1, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1899-07-01/ed-1/seq-4/.
178. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "A Libel on the Regiment.," *Richmond Planet*, (Richmond, VA), July 1, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1899-07-01/ed-1/seq-4/.

on US policymakers, aware of the symbolic importance of exceptional Black military service in the eyes of the American public.

In response to the constant pressure from Black activists, the Presidential election of 1900, and the decreasing number of white army recruits, Congress passed the Army Act on March 2, 1899, which expanded the regular army and established two additional Black regiments; the 48th and 49th Volunteer Infantry. The War Department permitted Black soldiers to proceed up to the rank of Lieutenants, a small victory for the newspapers that advocated for Black officers. However, the promotion came with a stipulation; all Black officers would return to their former rank when the war concluded, a compromise between the demands of Jacob Lyon, a prominent Black official, and the War Department. Considering their outstanding performance in Cuba, military officials promoted several Black soldiers from the 24th and 25th Infantry to command Black regiments in the Philippines.[179]

The president announced the establishment of the 48th and 49th regiments as the United States approached the Presidential elections of 1900. Seeking to secure the Black vote, McKinley made a significant effort to shape the perceptions of the Republican Party within the Black press.[180] Various publications critical of McKinley faced external pressure from the White House to change their tune as the election approached. In January 1899, the Washington *Bee* argued that it was criminal for the United States to annex the Philippines without the consent of the governed. Originally published in the L.A. *Southern Republican*, the article based this claim on "the immortal principle enunciated in the Declaration of Independence."[181] However, the *Bee*

179. Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 125.
180. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 213-216.
181. William C. Chase ed., "Where We Stand," *Washington Bee*, (Washington, DC), January 28, 1899, https://www.newspapers.com/image/48300462/.

experienced a tonal shift in the fall of 1899, shortly after Chase visited the White House. Suddenly, Chase declared that McKinley "was on the right track" and that Black soldiers would "liberalize racial attitudes at home."[182]

A similar editorial reversal occurred in the pages of the *Indianapolis Recorder* and the *Colored American*, as the editors celebrated the racial advancement achieved by their political party. In his 1975 publication, Gatewood argued that this about-face amongst Black editors came, in part, from their national affinity for the Republican party. Black editors jumped at the opportunity to celebrate the party that freed enslaved Americans, despite their issues with the national policy of territorial expansion. An examination of the few Democratic Black papers of the late nineteenth century only substantiated this argument further. The *World*, alongside the *Broad Ax*, Democratic papers based in Indianapolis and Chicago, framed McKinley as an "enemy and traitor to the Negro race" while arguing that Black men should abstain from military service.[183] Despite the incendiary coverage in these Black Democratic newspapers, the majority of eligible Black Americans voted for President McKinley, helping to secure his victory on November 6, 1900.[184]

Black soldiers began to arrive in the Philippines in the summer of 1899. Assigned to civic surveillance, the 24th and 25th Infantry assumed stations around Manila, guarding water pumps, protecting strategically important train lines, and patrolling the city for enemy combatants.[185] Veterans of the Spanish-Cuban-American War, these Black soldiers often found this work tedious and unrewarding, albeit necessary. Outgunned by the American invaders, Aguinaldo

182. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 212.
183. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "President McKinley and the Negro Soldier," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, Utah), July 22, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1899-07-22/ed-1/seq-1/.; Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*, 213-216.
184. Gleijeses, "African Americans and the War Against Spain," 187.
185. Gatewood, "*Smoked Yankees,"* 240.

adopted guerrilla war tactics shortly after the arrival of the Black regiments. Rebels often hid amongst the crowds, disguising themselves to evade capture or launch sneak attacks against enemy soldiers. The fluidity of the battlefield and the unfamiliar terrain made it harder to distinguish between friend and foe, raising tensions between the American soldiers and the Filipino insurgents.[186] Consequently, combat remained contained to minor skirmishes, offering few soldiers the opportunity for military glory.

With Black soldiers on the front lines, Black editors gained access to uncensored accounts of the Philippines-American War. The Black soldiers discussed the Filipino people with an innate sense of kinship, particularly in the wake of rising racial tension between white Americans and native Filipinos. In a letter published on October 14, 1899, an unnamed Black soldier argued that insurrection could have been avoided "if the army of occupation had treated [Filipinos] as people." He substantiated his claim with examples of (white) American cruelty, comparing the treatment of Filipinos to the "home treatment for colored people:"

> They talk with impunity of "niggers" to our soldiers never once thinking that they are talking to home "niggers" and should they be brought to remember that at home this is the same vile epithet they hurl at us, they beg pardon and make some effeminate excuse about what the Filipino is called... We don't want these islands, not in the way we are to get them, and for Heaven's sake put the party in power that pledges itself against this highway robbery – expansion is too clean a name for it. [187]

The white soldier's use of the slur to demean Filipinos was a reminder of the racial subjugation enforced upon Black Americans back home. This classification united these marginalized groups against American expansion and the racial hierarchies it promoted. The anonymous Black soldiers used examples of racial discrimination perpetuated by the American military, in part, to argue against expansion. While Black anti-imperialism operated along a broad spectrum of

186. Russell, "'I Feel Sorry for These People,'" 203.
187. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Terrible Scenes There.," *The Richmond Planet*, (Richmond, VA), October 14, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1899-10-14/ed-1/seq-4/.

social, political, legislative, and economic criticisms, racial discrimination in the American colonies received considerable attention. This criticism sharply contrasted with the sanitized press releases dispatched from Manila. The racial discrimination faced by Filipinos and Black American soldiers created a shared sense of identity that fostered anti-imperial sentiments in the Black newspapers examined. It shed light on the unfiltered reality of the war and sparked a shift in the public discourse, challenging the prevailing narrative of American benevolence overseas.[188]

On March 20, 1901, operating on intelligence from a captive Filipino rebel, US General Fredrick Funston successfully ambushed Aguinaldo's base camp, capturing the Filipino revolutionary leader.[189] After eight days in custody, the self-declared President of the Philippines swore an oath of allegiance to the United States. He then publicly proclaimed that all rebels should surrender and accept American sovereignty. Following the decree, most of Aguinaldo's top generals abandoned the cause, further deflating the revolution. The impact of Aguinaldo's surrender and proclamation reverberated throughout the Filipino ranks, leading to a series of surrenders by many of Aguinaldo's top generals. With each capitulation, the revolution lost momentum. The surrender of these leaders undermined the armed resistance and significantly weakened the revolution, leading to the gradual "conclusion" of the Philippines-American War in July 1902. However, the Southern Filipino island of Moroland, home of the Islamic Morro

188. American military officers operating in the Philippines ordered the white soldiers to stop using the slur when referring to Filipinos because they did not want Black soldiers to identify with the Filipino people. However, Jim Crow segregation remained prevalent, even in military base camps in the Philippines; Michael C. Robinson and Frank N. Schubert, "David Fagen: An Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899-1901," *Pacific Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (February 1, 1975): 68–83, https://doi.org/10.2307/3637898, 70-73.
189. Matthew J. Seelinger, "A Desperate Undertaking: Funston Captures Aguinaldo," *On Point* 5, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 7–10, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44608163, 8-10.; Kramer, 151-152.

people, continued to resist American occupation for the first decade of the twentieth century, classified as "under civilian rule" until 1913.[190]

Few Black newspapers reported on Aguinaldo's capture, with articles only appearing in the *Iowa State Bystander* and the *Richmond Planet*. As the insurrection subsided, the Black newspapers focused on reports of American cruelty on the battlefield. In one of the most dramatic instances, after a skirmish in the fall of 1901 left 58 Americans dead, General Jacob H. Smith ordered his men to kill every male Filipino "over the age of ten" in a retributive assault on a local village. Labeled the Butcher of Samar by the anti-imperialist press, the military court-martialed Smith as a scapegoat for the war crimes committed in the Philippines.[191]

Black editors chronicled the offences of the American military with a skeptical and distrustful attitude and used their cruelty to deride the concept of white supremacy. On July 5, 1902, the *Colored American* ran an article titled: "Civilization's Peril: Is the white man retrograding." This article compared the "great American Republic" to the conditions of the near past. It concluded that the American men of 1901 were "weaker, in many respects, than his foreparents [sic]." This weakness, the author argued, was a moral weakness embodied in the "class of criminals and misfortunates" that aggravated racial tensions within the nation. The influence of these "inferior minds" placed white Americans "in a whirlpool of corruption, from which he has emerged with weakened backbone and stimulated brain, even questioning the negro's title as an American." Cooper pointed to discrimination as a sign of American degradation, suggesting that racism threatened the strength and glory of the nation. The article then called into question the nation's Christian morals with the declaration, "Oh Christianity, that

190. Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire,* 103-107.; Kramer, *Blood of Government,* 151-154.
191. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood,* 191; John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Horrible Disclosures.," *The Richmond Planet,* (Richmond, VA), May 3, 1902, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1902-05-03/ed-1/seq-4/.

would lend hands to an insane mob, burning at stake [sic] some poor temple, the abode of one of God's souls; or the strapping from that soul the framework in which God incased [sic] *because it was black?"* America's propensity for Jim Crow legislation additionally presented a "weakening of the fortitude that once guarded true Americanism." Stories of torture, rape, pillage, and plunder published during the Philippines-American War illustrated this point further.[192]

Black Americans, by contrast, developed a good relationship with Filipino natives, and their officers continuously spoke highly of their skill, combat, and morale in the field. Despite their contributions, William Howard Taft, the self-appointed Chairman of the Second Philippines Commission, did not trust Black soldiers. He believed they had grown far too close with local women. Taft discharged all the Black soldiers who married Filipino women, severing interpersonal connections between these two marginalized peoples. His fears echoed the concern that the Black soldier would not be able to fight against the Filipino insurgents due to their similar skin tone. In the Spring of 1902, Taft ordered the premature withdrawal of Black soldiers from the Philippines months before the war's conclusion.[193]

In their time overseas, Black soldiers developed a complex relationship with the Filipino people, shaped by the broader context of race, colonialism, and war. Black soldiers saw the racially discriminatory behavior perpetuated against Filipino natives and responded empathetically. Their correspondence challenged the national narrative on American exceptionalism and "benevolent assimilation," simultaneously forging transnational bonds of racial solidarity with the Filipino community.

192. Edward E. Cooper, ed., "Civilization's Peril," *Colored American* (Washington, D.C.), July 5, 1902, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83027091/1902-07-05/ed-1/seq-1/.
193. Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation,"* 193.; Russel, ""I Feel Sorry for These People,"" 213,

Chapter 3: Guam, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i.

> Mrs. Helen A. Cook, to whom The Colored American is always pleased to pay homage as an honor to her sex and her race, was the only Afro American lady honored by a place on the program at the recent meeting of the Women's Society at the Vermont Avenue Christian church an organization composed of the most cultured and aristocratic elements of the nations [sic] capital.… After a sparkling introduction…the essayist pertinently asked: "With the Europeans striving for Africa and the United States taking in Hawai'i, Cuba, Porta Rico [sic] and the Philippines,… what is to be the future of the dark-skinned races of mankind?"[194]

Cook began her address with a question that echoed in the minds of many Black Americans during this era of expansion. However, gender often functioned as a prohibitive characteristic for women in the political spheres of the late nineteenth century, reducing the importance of Cook's speech to her contemporaries. Consequently, the quote published in the *Colored American* offers one of the few perspectives provided by Black women on American expansion at the turn of the century. The article continued with a summary of Cook's speech and an examination of the Colored Women's League (CWL), an organization that elected Cook as President in 1900. The CWL was "founded in the apparent necessity for concert of action amongst those who were endeavoring in diverse ways to uplift humanity," the gendered expectations of women in the nineteenth century conception of an American family. Their perspectives on expansion, however, received far less media attention. In the power hierarchies of the late nineteenth century, Black women faced the compounding intersectional ideologies of racism, sexism, and class bias as significant burdens in their bid for political power. Prominent members of society openly opposed women's suffrage, declaring that men earned the right to vote through military service. The War of 1898 emphasized the gender expectations of American men while simultaneously drawing attention away from conversations of Black civil rights or female suffrage.

194. Edward E. Cooper, ed., "Mrs. Helen A. Cook," *Colored American* (Washington, DC), May 19, 1900, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83027091/1900-05-19/ed-1/seq-3/.

Much like Cook, the women of the conquered territories had few opportunities to tell their story in their own words to the American Press. However, that did not keep articles about Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, or Chamorro women out of Black newspapers.

The story of territorial conquest across the last three territories involved few Black soldiers. With the sole exception of Company L of the Sixth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, no Black soldiers served in Guam or Puerto Rico during the Spanish-Cuban-American War.[195] Although invariably complicated, Hawai'i's story of annexation brought no Black soldiers to the archipelago's shores. Without Black war correspondence, Black newspapers turned to white news sources, introducing a notable change when compared to the letters written by Black soldiers. The limited deployment of Black soldiers reduced coverage of these territories significantly. Despite the challenges, the Black press published several in-depth personality profiles of indigenous women, presenting Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, or Chamorro women in a sexual and subservient manner. These articles provide a perfect testing ground for an intersectional examination of colonized people in the Black press. Consequently, my closing section will summarize the imposition of American governance in Hawai'i, Guam, and Puerto Rico before delving into a nuanced examination of colonial women in the Black press. By exploring the stories and representation of these women, this chapter will shed light on the complexities and perspectives often overlooked in traditional historical accounts of colonial expansion.

Hawai'i

The Kingdom of Hawai'i retained its sovereignty until 1893, functioning as a pivotal geographic coaling station for American, European, and East Asian vessels traversing the

195. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 61-62.

Pacific. As trade increased between the US and Hawai'i, American businessmen, merchants, and missionaries relocated to the archipelago. Across generations, these settlers, known as "haoles" in Native Hawaiian, established churches, businesses, political parties, and sugar plantations across the land.[196] As their wealth increased, so did their influence over the Hawaiian crown. By 1887, discontent with King David La'amea Kamanananakapu Mahinulani Liliuokalani Kalakaua's rule, an influential group of haole men forced the Hawaiian monarch to institute a new constitution. The "Bayonet Constitution," as it would be known, shifted a significant degree of political power from the Hawaiian crown to the haole-controlled legislature.[197]

By 1893, King Kalakaua's sister and heir, Queen Lili'uokalani, implemented a revised constitution to reverse the changes enforced six years before. The Annexation Club, a secret society of powerful haole politicians and businessmen, launched a coup d'état in response. With the backing of the USS *Boston*, the Annexation Club (publicly introduced as the Committee of Safety with the induction of the revolt) seized Honolulu on January 17, 1893.[198] The Hawaiian monarchy had fallen. In its stead, the Committee of Safety immediately sought American annexation. Committee representatives traveled to Washington, where they lobbied for Hawaiian annexation. The haole representatives gained the support of President Harrison, but annexation failed to pass through the Senate before Grover Cleveland took office in 1885.[199]

President Cleveland was not enthusiastic about territorial expansion. Shortly after taking office, he removed the annexation treaty from the Senate and sent James H. Blount on a fact-

196. Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawai'i to Iraq* (New York, New York: Times Books/Henry Holt, 2006), 10-14.
197. Merze Tate, *Hawaii: Reciprocity or Annexation* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State Univ. Pr, 1968), 198-199.
198. Edward Joesting, *Hawaii: An Uncommon History* (Toronto, Ontario: George J. McLeod, 1972), 334-340.; William C. Chase, ed., "Revolution in Hawai'i," *Washington Bee* (Washington DC), February 4, 1893, https://www.newspapers.com/image/49283975/.
199. Eric T. Love, *Race Over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 75-78.

finding mission to the archipelago. After reading Blount's report, Cleveland refused to annex Hawai'i and called for the immediate restoration of the Queen. The Hawaiian provisional government, secure in its power, refused Cleveland's request. They established the Republic of Hawai'i and awaited an American administration more amenable to annexation.

In 1896, the Republican candidate, William McKinley, emerged victorious, reigniting the haole dream of annexation. Although McKinley demonstrated little interest in the archipelago during his Presidential campaign, representatives from the Hawaiian Republic, alongside expansionists within the White House, secured the President's support shortly after he took office. Despite the Presidential seal of approval, Congress continued to oppose annexation until the Spanish-Cuban-American War.

The Hawaiian Republic actively supported the United States during the war of 1898, permitting American military vessels to dock and refuel as they sailed across the ocean.[200] The Pacific theatre of war highlighted the strategic significance of the Hawaiian Isles, particularly following the American victory at the Battle of Manila Bay, increasing the legislative support for annexation. As a result, on July 6, 1898, the House of Representatives adopted the Newlands Resolution, officially designating Hawai'i as an American territory.[201]

Black newspapers centered their coverage of Hawai'i around the possibility of annexation early in 1898. Publications discussed the archipelago through economic or political terms, framing annexation as a political process orchestrated by Congress and/or as a means of expanding America's economic potential. However, individuals like W. N. Armstrong, framed annexation around a question of racial discrimination:

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200. Ralph S. Kuykendall and A. Grove Day, *Hawai'i: A History, from Polynesian Kingdom to American State* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961), 187-188.
201. Allen H. Merriam, "Racism in the Expansionist Controversy of 1898-1900," *Phylon (1960-)* 39, no. 4 (1978): 369–80, https://doi.org/10.2307/274902, 370.

> Some extended inquiry among the natives discloses their general and sincere suspicion that, in the event of annexation, they will be treated in social, if not in political, matters, like the American negroes.[202]

Published in the *Appeal* on January 29, 1898, editor John Quincy Adams responded to Armstrong's racially motivated concern with his views on racial prejudice and societal progress in the United States. Adams emphasized the Black experience in his editorial but argued that "condition, not color," served as the foundation of American bigotry, framing his analysis alongside race and class-based discrimination:

> A poor, ignorant and unclean Hawaiian will find it just as uncomfortable in the United States as a poor, ignorant and unclean African or Chinaman, while a rich, cultured and clean one will find that he can stop at the Astoria and ride in palace cars and spend all the cash he wants to there, and that there will be no limit on the fun he can have as long as his money holds out. The plain truth is, however, that the common Hawaiian rabble will not be regarded as white folk in the United States any more than the common Chinese rabble, and for the simple reason that they are not.[203]

Adams' editorial went beyond addressing racial matters to incorporate a discourse on class dynamics in the United States. By presenting the example of a wealthy individual—whether from Hawaii, China, or elsewhere—enjoying a life of luxury, he implicitly emphasized the significant role of class in shaping one's acceptance and integration into society. Adams's analysis shed light on the complex interplay of race and class in societal dynamics, particularly within the United States. By advocating that "condition, not color" was the pivotal factor behind prevailing biases, the article initiated a dialogue on the intricate relationship between socio-economic status and the degree of acceptance one experienced in a diverse society. In doing so, he underscored the importance of class in shaping opportunities and perceptions, offering a layered perspective that extended beyond racial considerations.

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202. John Quincy Adams, ed., *Appeal* (Saint Paul, Minnesota), January 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1898-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/.
203. John Quincy Adams, ed., *Appeal* (Saint Paul, Minnesota), January 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1898-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/.

Four months before Congress adopted the Newlands Resolution, the *Freeman* published a range of condemnations against Hawaiian annexation. “The seizure of the Hawaii islands was a reprehensible net measured by the well-known policy of the government,” one article criticized in March 1898.[204] A week later, George L. Knox continued, “It is very notable that the Negro Press has no sympathy for the annexation hippodrome,” before he launched into prolonged discussion of Postmaster Baker’s lynching.[205] These objections were short, broadly positioning American expansion as the forcible imposition of governance onto a sovereign population who demanded political independence. However, two weeks before the US annexed the archipelago, the *Freeman* admitted:

> Hawaii, it is evident, will be annexed. It is very probable that the present war has shown a necessity for such action which peaceful times could never have demonstrated. "All is well that ends well. Hurrah! for the United States and United Islands of America!"[206]

The tone of this article, although difficult to discern, united Hawai’i with the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico under the American Empire. Given Knox’s open opposition to expansion, it was likely that the *Freeman’*s editor celebrated ironically.

The *Richmond Planet,* by contrast, left no ambiguity in their denunciation of Hawaiian annexation. On August 27, 1898, John Mitchell Jr. published a scathing indictment of Hawaiian annexation under the headline, “The Rape of the Islands.” The editorial began, “The Hawaiian Islands have been formally annexed to the United States, despite the protest of the native inhabitants thereof.” Mitchell continued with an analysis of “a text of protest” published by representatives of the Native Hawaiian community. The protest listed a series of political

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204. George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), March 5, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980305&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.
205. George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), March 12, 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980312&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.
206. George L. Knox, ed., *Freeman* (Indianapolis, Indiana), June 25 1898, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18980625&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 4.

objections centered on the argument that the United States annexed Hawai'i "without reference to, or obtaining the consent of the Hawaiian Islands." Mitchell indignantly responded to this accusation: "Could a stronger case be made out? Could the infamy of the deal be more strongly and convincingly expressed? We believe not."[207]

The article then pivoted to an analysis of a speech delivered by Moorefield Storey at the National Conference on US foreign policy in 1898. Storey was a lawyer and civil rights advocate who argued that annexation was a process that fundamentally disregarded the nation's principles. Echoing concerns of racial inequality offered by the Native Hawaiians, the *Planet* quoted Storey at length:

> We have said that the native population of Hawai'i was not entitled to vote upon the vital question which we decided against their will, that by reason of their color, or race, or ignorance they may be governed without their consent. It will be far more difficult hereafter to insist that the colored voters of the south are entitled to rights denied to the colored voters of Hawai'i. So that equality of rights, which is the first of rights, is jeopardized within our own border.[208]

Storey framed the disenfranchisement of Black Americans and Native Hawaiians as a discriminatory practice while asserting the inherent importance of political equality within the American political system. He used this logic to contend that the United States should permit each territory to form its government, echoing the political relationship between the United States and Cuba. Articles like "The Rape of the Islands" framed expansion through a multifaceted lens of anti-imperialist criticism, which presented American annexation as a process that ran counter to the categorization of the United States as an exceptional nation.

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207. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Rape of the Island," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), August 27, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-08-27/ed-1/seq-4/.
208. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "The Rape of the Island," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), August 27, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-08-27/ed-1/seq-4/.

The gendered dimensions of American expansion additionally found purchase in the articles written about Queen Lili'uokalani. In "The Queen Writes Back: Lili'uokalani's Hawaii's Story by Hawaii's Queen," Lydia Kualapai noted that white publications continually disparaged Queen Lili'uokalani in demeaning articles and political cartoons.[209] They focused on her "portly" figure, "chocolate-colored" skin, and "superstitious" Hawaiian customs to disparage the monarch and challenge her claim to the throne. These publications accused Lili'uokalani of engaging in "disgusting orgies," which inherently presented the Queen as uncivilized, unprincipled, and unworthy the position her held.[210] Black publications, by contrast, advocated on behalf of economic compensation for the deposed queen, if not outright reinstatement. It is important to note that Kualapai examined various American newspapers published in 1893 when American imperial expansion lacked the support fuelled by the War of 1898. However, the sympathetic portrayal of Queen Lili'uokalani offers a unique intersection of gender, power, and imperialism represented within the Black press.

209. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, "Native Hawaiian Decolonization and the Politics of Gender," *American Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2008): 281–87, https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.0.0000, 284.
210. Lydia Kualapai, "The Queen Writes Back: Lili'uokalani's Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 17, no. 2 (2005): 32–62, https://doi.org/10.1353/ail.2005.0053, 45.

Figure 4. Illustrations of Queen Lili'oukalani published in the *Richmond Planet*
"Liliuokalani, Still Popular in Hawai'i," *Richmond Planet*, October 15, 1898.[211]

Of the newspapers examined, the *Richmond Planet* published the only political cartoon of Queen Lili'uokalani in the fall of 1898. The illustration presented the readers with a regal portrait. Mitchell's paper refrained from overemphasizing traits, like the nose, lips, and skin color, which the white press often exaggerated to dehumanize non-white people. Instead, the *Planet* published a simple yet dignified portrait (Figure 4). The Queen faced relentless character defamation in the wake of the American coup as white men attempted to weaken the public perception of a woman who held such respect amongst her people. Although likely influenced by the gendered dimensions of Lili'uokalani's rule, the *Richmond Planet* did not adopt cruel or dehumanizing rhetoric discussing the fallen queen. They represented her as a leader, beloved by her people, and deposed from her rule.

211. John Mitchell Jr, ed., "Liliuokalani, Still Popular in Hawai'i," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), October 15, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1898-10-15/ed-1/seq-3/.

Figure 5. Photography of Maria, a Spanish-Hawaiian native diagnosed with leprosy. Published in Richmond *Planet.* "Maria," *Richmond Planet,* February 16, 1901.[212]

The media's objections to Hawaiian annexation died quickly. With the conclusion of the Spanish-Cuban-American war, the news on Hawai'i ranged from the labor shortages faced by the island's sugar plantations to the "oddly sculptured" and "grotesque" effigies of Gods "once worshiped by Pacific Islanders."[213] The centralized focus on Hawaiian culture manifested in a discussion of Hawaiian religion, language and, most notably, in a gendered examination of Hawaiian women. These articles examined noteworthy individuals in prolonged personality profiles, such as "Maria – A Sketch from Life in Hawai'i," a lengthy article accompanied by a

212. Katherine Pope, "Maria," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), February 16, 1901, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1901-02-16/ed-1/seq-3/.
213. William C. Chase, ed., "Grotesque Deities," *Washington Bee* (Washington, DC), August 17, 1901. https://www.newspapers.com/image/46376921/.

large photograph of the "Spanish-Hawaiian beauty" (Figure 5). The article told a "sad yet romantic story of a beautiful child" stricken with leprosy. Katherine Pope, the author, introduced Maria as an individual unbefitting of the name she bore; "it seemed so incongruous. That name belonged rather to a staid, dignified New England woman," not a wild, brown Hawaiian child. Pope described Maria as a:

> [L]aughing, fearless girl; a creature with flashing eyes, wavy mane; a lithe, beautifully rounded form; the softest, smoothest skin; a creature one moment in perfect repose, a sleeping kitten; the next alert, eager, joyous.[214]

The adjectives used to describe Maria emphasized her wild, animalistic nature, suggesting that she was uncontrollable and undisciplined, a far cry from the demure gendered expectations placed on American women. She embodied neither grace nor serenity despite her "perfect physical specimen." The juxtaposition provided by her name, "Maria," with her adventurous nature highlighted the clash Pope observed between Hawaiian and American gendered expectations. Pope continued:

> Although Maria was so charming, she could be so naughty, so naughty. She wouldn't mend her clothes if she could help it…She would look at the boys, and you may be sure they looked at her. She would sit on the grass, strum on a guitar and talk about –"A ruby lip to kiss, love," when she should have been at her tasks.[215]

Pope attributed Maria's sexuality to the young girl's actions before noting her inability to accomplish basic tasks often associated with domestic women, such as mending clothes. In doing so, she reduced Maria to a simplistic, sexualized beautiful "creature." Her diagnosis of leprosy seemingly stemmed from her adventurous nature, illustrating the need for a civilizing presence.

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214. Katherine Pope, "Maria," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), February 16, 1901, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1901-02-16/ed-1/seq-3/.
215. Katherine Pope, "Maria," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), February 16, 1901, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84025841/1901-02-16/ed-1/seq-3/.

The article's analysis of the "beautiful child of nature" created an impression of Hawaiian women that extended far beyond Maria. Her unusual physical dress, depicted in the illustration, and the differentiating cultural practices described stigmatized Maria as unusual, uncivilized, or simply an "other." Standing as a representative of her race, much like Black soldiers on the front lines, Maria represented the cultural failings of Hawaiian women. They did not meet the standard of Western female practice, despite their "stuffy English names."[216] Furthermore, the article did not mention the racial tension between Native Hawaiians and US settlers, suggesting that the island was an effeminate, nonconfrontational territory needing American guidance, much like Maria. The United States embodied the masculine, civilized protector, while Hawai'i assumed the feminine, dependent territory.

Figure 6. Illustration of Helen Wilder, published in the *Broad Ax*. "She Wears a Star," *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 9, 1899, https://www.newspapers.com/image/72065477/ .

216. Lisa Kahaleole Hall, "Navigating Our Own 'Sea of Islands': Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism," *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 15–38, https://doi.org/10.1353/wic.0.0038, 17, 30.

Shortly after the Philippines-American War began, the wealthy Hawaiian heiress and police officer Helen Wilder caught the attention of the American press. The first full-length article on Wilder appeared in the *Jersey City News* on April 1, 1899, under the headline "Policewomen Wilder." Five weeks after the *Jersey City News*'s article, the *Lamar Register* published their own article on Wilder entitled "She Wears a Star," which subsequently reappeared in the *Broad Ax* two weeks later.[217]

Wilder was a Hawaiian Native and a police officer, defying the female gender expectations of the United States. Despite her unorthodox ways, the article described Wilder with an amused and novel tone:

> She is simply a plain woman with plain ideas, no fuss or fizzle, believing herself on an equality with man, neither asking nor giving favors. Helen Wilder calls a spade a spade. She chooses to be called a policeman, disclaiming her right to the title of "special officers." [218]

This quote framed Wilder with a charming light, celebrating her "no fuss or frizzle" personality alongside the unusual nature of her work. She dressed casually (see Figure 6), rode horses with daring, and paddled boats skillfully, presenting Wilder as an individual who rejected everything "dear to the heart feminine," including dances, teas, "or the dilly dallying of society."[219] Instead, the article framed Wilder as protector of children and animals, tying her career to her maternal instincts, and American conceptions of female gender roles.

> Hawaiian society, which itself complex and odd, does not often frown upon her eccentricities. They like her because she is bright and original, because her personality is refreshing as it is peculiar. They recognize her clear-grained human worth.[220]

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217. "She Wears a Star," *Lamar Register* (Lamar, Colorado), April 26, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063147/1899-04-26/ed-1/seq-2/.
218. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "She Wears a Star," *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 9, 1899, https://www.newspapers.com/image/72065477/ .
219. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "She Wears a Star," *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 9, 1899, https://www.newspapers.com/image/72065477/ .
220. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "She Wears a Star," *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 9, 1899, https://www.newspapers.com/image/72065477/ .

The article suggested that Wilder was valuable due to her charm and humanity, regardless of employment. Although her ethnicity remained ambiguous, Wilder subtly reflected the different gender roles that shaped life in Hawai'i. Women in Hawai'i commanded a significant degree of social and political power under the Hawaiian crown. Native Hawaiians viewed women with respect and valued their cultural association with the land. "She Wears a Star" presented Wilder as respectable while simultaneously valuing her individuality. Rather than deride Wilder, the article concluded: "Men who are tired of the inane or the clinging vine act find in Helen Wilder a comrade who is interesting, amusing and altogether charming." In doing so, the article presented Wilder as a refreshing deviation from traditional gender norms.

"A Honolulu Belle," attributed to *Harper's Weekly* in the *Freeman,* focused on Wilder's "beautiful and eccentric" nature. Much like "She Wears a Star," the article declared that the police officer loved "children and animals, and it was to protect her small and lowly friends that she asked an appointment on the police force," utilizing a nurturing troupe to justify Wilder's interest in police work.[221]

221. George L. Knox, ed., "A Honolulu Belle," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 29, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990729&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 11.

Figure 7. Illustration of Helen Wilder, published in The *Freeman*. "Helen Kinat Wilder," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 29, 1899.[222]

The article additionally described Wilder as a "mistress of the feminine art of coquetry" and used the testimonials of two men in the "gloom of spirit" to justify their accusation. Despite these gendered and sexualized portrayals, both articles published images of Wilder dressed in armor, carrying a rifle on the back of a charging stallion (see Figure 7). Wilder adopted many of the telling monikers of martial masculinity in this portrait, from her facial expression to her armor. The sole indications of her gender were her eyelashes and face shape. However, her charismatic personality painted Wilder as an intriguing foreign beauty, now a part of the American Empire.

222. George L. Knox, ed., "A Honolulu Belle," *Freeman* (Indianapolis, IND), July 29, 1899, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=FIkAGs9z2eEC&dat=18990729&printsec=frontpage&hl=en, 11.

The Black press coverage of Hawai'i reflected a complex cultural and political history that developed between the United States and Hawai'i in the late nineteenth century. These articles reflected stark intersectional boundaries between race, gender, and nationality in the American territories. Through their coverage of Native Hawaiian women, Black newspapers reflected the underlying power dynamics and cultural biases inherent in Western perceptions of female gender roles. However, the Native Hawaiian opposition to annexation fueled an empathetic response from publications like the *Richmond Planet.* It encouraged Black Americans to view expansion as a colonial extension of Jim Crow politics.

Guam

Encompassing approximately 225 square miles, Guam was a secondary target for the United States in 1898.[223] On the morning of June 20, Captain Henry Glass arrived off the coast of the Spanish colony. Captain Glass directed a convoy of four vessels, ordered to Manila as reinforcements for Commodore Dewey. Shortly after Glass departed Honolulu, he opened a sealed letter from the Secretary of the Navy, John Davis Long: "On your way," the order read, "you are hereby direct to stop at the Spanish Island of Guam" and capture the port. The entire encounter, Long speculated, "should be very brief and should not occupy more than one or two days."[224]

Guam was a largely self-sufficient island inhabited by the indigenous Chamorro people and Spanish officials for most of the nineteenth century. Spain did not invest much time or effort into commercializing this Micronesian isle, which reduced trade significantly.[225] Consequently,

223. John A. Grenville, "American Naval Preparations for War with Spain, 1896–1898," *Journal of American Studies* 2, no. 1 (1968): 33–47, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0021875800009890, 35, 43-44.
224. U.S. Congress. House et al., *Annual Reports of the Navy Department for the Year 1898.*, vol. No. 3754, of *Serial Set* (Washington, D.C.: United States G.P.O., 1898), 151.
225. Julian Go, "The Provinciality of American Empire: 'Liberal Exceptionalism' and U.S. Colonial Rule, 1898–1912," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 1 (2007): 74–108, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0010417507000412, 90.

the Spanish garrison stationed in Fort Santa Agueda did not know about the Spanish-Cuban-American War when Captain Glass arrived. The Spanish Lieutenant Commander boarded the USS *Charleston*, only to learn that he and his men were now prisoners of war.[226] Glass demanded the immediate surrender of the Spanish forces, to which Captain Lieutenant Colonel Don Juan Marina, the Spanish Governor of Guam "under the sad necessity of being unable to resist such super forces," consented.[227] The Spanish officials boarded the American vessels as prisoners of war, and, at 2:45 pm, the USS *Charleston* performed a twenty-one-gun salute as the American flag flew over Fort Santa Cruz. The following morning, eager to arrive in Manila, Glass departed, taking all Spanish and American officers, soldiers, and administrators off the island.[228] Without a colonial chief executive, Glass left Guam in a state of political confusion that persisted until the arrival of the first US Naval Governor, Richard Phillips Leary, in August 1899.

Valued as little more than a coaling station for the South and Central Pacific, Guam did not attract much attention in the Black press. The American victory came swiftly, and the Chamorro did not protest loudly or publicly, leaving little news to report. Across the four years examined, I found only 22 articles referencing the island, most of which included Guam in the list of "recent acquisitions" brought into the American empire.[229] However, the *Bystander* published a lengthy travelogue in the summer of 1898, which provided the only in-depth report of the island in the

226 Robert F. Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall: A History of Guam* (Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 104-106.
227. Stephen Kinzer, "Cruel Realities: The American Conquest of Guam," *World Policy Journal* 23, no. 2 (2006): 100–104, https://doi.org/10.1162/wopj.2006.23.2.100, 102.
228. Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall*, 103-106.
229. John P. Green, "Territorial Expansion," *World* (Seattle WA), January 4, 1899, https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth596210/m1/1/zoom/?resolution=4&lat=5986.530649909874&lon=1498.9465695589206.

four years examined. Consequently, this section will closely examine "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones'."[230]

Accompanied by illustrations and a map of Guam "in line with Hawai'i and the Philippines," the article began:

> A few days ago we stopped over for a moment, picked up the Ladrones off the map of Spanish possessions and added them to the United States. We've been too busy since to think whether or not we would keep them.[231]

The *Bystander* adopted a nonchalant and somewhat jovial tone in the article's introduction, reducing the significance of this military victory to the reader. While this quote reinforced the image of a robust American military, the article's tone remains somewhat difficult to decern. Whether acknowledging the island's perceived insignificance or offering a subtle critique of American imperial expansion, the paper presented Guam annexation as an "exceedingly simple operation, polite and bloodless."[232] Following this brief military summary, the article delved into the island's colonial history, beginning with the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan.

Magellan and his men arrived off the coast of Guam in 1520, nearly dead from hunger and thirst. The Chamorro people received the sailors with open arms and "relieved the material wants of the Spaniards with the greatest liberality." The relationship between these two parties remained cordial until Magellan uncovered the "natives persistent pilfering" of Spanish goods. With limited success, Magellan attempted to communicate the concept of private property with the Chamorro people. The language barrier significantly impacted communication, complicating

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230. Harry R. Davis, "John P. Green," *Negro History Bulletin* 5, no. 8 (1942): 184–85, https://doi.org/http://www.jstor.org/stable/44246838, 185.
231. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-29/ed-1/seq-3/.
232. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-29/ed-1/seq-3/.

the first colonial encounter. This article presented the Chamorro people as uncivilized and simple, living in a land "where every pleasure of the sense could be had for the asking."[233]

"Naturally in these circumstances," the article continued, "the development of the islands, was far below that of other South Sea natives." This cultural evaluation classified Chamorro people as undeveloped due to their geographic location. Guam allegedly "furnished all the necessaries of life and almost all the luxuries of which the islands had knowledge," reflecting a common trope surrounding the indigenous populations of tropical lands.[234] Consequently, the Chamorro people did not need to conquer their physical environment. This narrative directly opposed the American concept of masculinity, forged in hardship and strife on the Western frontier.[235]

Echoing similar trends displayed in the discussion of Helen Wilder, the *Bystande*r noted the extreme cultural differences illustrated by the women of Guam. The clothing, footwear, smoking, drinking, and dancing displayed by these South Pacific islanders contradicted the American conception of proper female action. With that in mind, the *Bystander* placed the actions of these women on display without criticism or ire. Instead, the article described the Chamorro as "exceptionally moral and well-behaved, at least from the South Sea point of view."[236] This "othering" of the Guam Natives removed any shared sense of national identity between the United States and Guam. The *Bystander* used the distinct cultural differences

233. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-29/ed-1/seq-3/.
234. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-29/ed-1/seq-3/.
235. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 141.
236. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Magellan Called Them Thieves, But We Will Say 'The Ladrones,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 29, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-29/ed-1/seq-3/.

between the two territories as evidence of American superiority. This juxtaposition fed the assumption that Guam needed the United States to achieve the standard of living advocated across America.

Guam received little more than a passing reference after the conclusion of the Spanish-Cuban-American War. The *Bystander* discussed the island as a military asset, not a colonized territory. Without Black voices or Black public interest pulling attention toward the Pacific Isle, Black newspapers presented Guam as little more than a fueling station for American vessels, downplaying the island's imperial status. Furthermore, the absence of Black voices contributed to a one-dimensional understanding of the colony. "Magellan Called Them Thieves" likely came from a white journalist whose perspectives failed to encapsulate the nuance of racial and cultural diversity on the island. The limited Black media discourse surrounding Guam exemplified the interplay between media representation, marginalized perspectives, and the complexities of race relations perpetuated in the American colonies.

Puerto Rico

The Spanish war vessels docked in Puerto Rico's waters posed a considerable threat to the United States at the onset of the Spanish-Cuban-American War. Located a mere 1,633 kilometres from Miami, the War Department formed a blockade around the island on April 21, where they maintained until General Nelson A. Miles invaded Guanica on July 25. The invading army captured the cities of Ponce, Guayama, Caye, and Mayaguez before receiving word of the Peace Protocol on August 13.[237]

Puerto Rico did not receive much individual attention from the Black press during the War of 1898. Black newspapers primarily referred to the island as a geographic reference point.

237. Luis Martínez-Fernández, "Puerto Rico in the Whirlwind of 1898: Conflict, Continuity, and Change," *Magazine of History* 12, no. 3 (1998): 24–29, 24.

Frequently, these references appeared within articles about Cuba, reducing the centrality and importance of the islands within the broader discussion of the war. The Puerto Rican campaign included Company L of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, the only Black volunteer regiment to serve in the War of 1898.[238] My research only revealed two letters where Black soldiers discussed their experiences in Puerto Rico: one by W. C. Payne and the other by James Miller.[239]

The *Colored American* published W.C. Payne's letter on August 13, 1898. Payne detailed America's military victories before turning to a description of the Puerto Rican people. "They are most all colored people," Payne declared, "very enlightened and tidy-looking...they cheered for the United States" and received the American soldiers "with open arms." This description of the native population, coupled with the positive reception of the American soldiers, led Payne to conclude that the island was "another field for Negro colonization and they should not fail to grasp this great opportunity." The celebrated presence of the American Army presented Payne (and the United States) as a humanitarian savior, justifying his role in American imperial expansion.[240] Furthermore, Payne framed expansion as an opportunity to improve the standing of any willing Black American citizen, framing this national concern through a racial worldview.

James Miller offered his contrasting "sketch" of the island in a letter published in the *Savanah Tribune* on August 6, 1898. Miller focused on the Puerto Rican people, describing the natives as impoverished and malnourished. He alleged that the church bell had not rung in four years, suggesting that the Spanish neglected the religious needs of their people. He proceeded to criticize the alleged Spanish intention to punish any rebellious Puerto Rican "in this manner: Corset jackets with nails in them for women and children and gloves the same for men."

238. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden,* 61, 68-69, 76.
239. Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees,"* 54-55.
240. Ibid., 54-55.

Although no secondary sources confirmed Miller's accusation, his account presented Spain as a barbarous nation unfit for colonial governance. In their stead, Miller framed the United States as a hero who arrived just "in time to save the natives of this place" from Spanish cruelty.[241]

Most Black newspapers did not receive correspondence from Puerto Rican war camps. They published brief, though frequent, updates on the war effort, in addition to the deployment of troops, the appointment of military officers, and the victorious advance of US forces on the island. Days before the invasion, without a single American soldier on the island, the *Bystander* declared, "Porto Rico will be held as a permanent possession of this country as a price of the war." Under the headline "Ours for All Time," the "official statement made to the Associated Press" continued: "[Puerto Rico] will pass forever into the hands of the United States. There never has been any other thought."[242] Although this article stemmed from the Associated Press, a white organization known for its yellow journalistic tendencies, it presented Puerto Rican annexation as a decided course of action. Once more, without the consent of the governed.[243]

Following the conclusion of the War of 1898, Black newspapers rarely discussed Puerto Rico. Three military governors ruled over the island until May 1, 1900, when the provisions from the Organic Act, also known as the Foraker Act, established a civilian government. The Act imposed a 15% tariff on imported goods between the two territories, which upset anti-imperialists, capitalists, and Democrats alike.[244]

Black newspapers did not dedicate much coverage to the Organic Act, with a few notable exceptions. Under the headline, "Human Rights the Paramount Issue," the *Colored American*

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241. Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees,"* 60-61.
242. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Ours for All Time,'" *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), July 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1898-07-22/ed-1/seq-2/ .
243. David R. Spencer, *The Yellow Journalism: The Press and America's Emergence as a World Power* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 125.
244. Julian Go, "Chains of Empire, Projects of State: Political Education and U.S. Colonial Rule in Puerto Rico and the Philippines," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 2 (2000): 333–62, 346.

argued that "the immature character of [Puerto Rico's] government render special legislation and quasi-military supervision necessary for a time." Cooper echoed the rhetoric publicized by the White House when he argued that the American government would "administer the affairs of the island in accord with the purest American principles," which placed an extraordinary amount of faith in the American government and lofted the ideals of liberty and freedom to the reader. He argued that the "low tariff provided by the new law" was "simply as a temporary expedient, to bridge over an extraordinary emergency," and contended that Black Americans had "no interest in the issues…as we have no money invest in Porto Rican products…. What the Negroes of this land are most vitally interested in," he wrote, "is the question of 'human rights.'" The human rights, that was, of Black Americans. Cooper argued that Black civil rights took "precedence over all other issues," including Puerto Rico.[245]

The articles published in the *Bystander* and the *Broad Ax* echoed different narratives produced in the wake of the Presidential campaign. The *Bystander*, a Republican paper, argued that the Foraker Act was "the most liberal towards that island of any ever incorporated into law," and described the imposed tariff as a "slight" matter. The article celebrated the liberal nature of McKinley's policy and minimized the negative impact of the tariff through a consequential analysis. The *Bystander* argued that the American government would reinvest the tariff proceeds into the Puerto Rican people, helping to establish a civil society on the island. Despite the substantial number of Black Republicans in the United States, Thompson's newspaper was the only publication to make this argument.[246]

245. Edward E. Cooper, ed., "Human Rights the Paramount Issue," *Colored American* (Washington, DC), April 28, 1900, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83027091/1900-04-28/ed-1/seq-8/.
246. John Lay Thompson, ed., "Work of Congress," *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), June 22, 1900, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1900-06-22/ed-1/seq-7/.

On May 19, 1900, adjacent to an illustration of President McKinley "drunk with the lust of empire," the *Broad Ax* argued that imperialism could only succeed if "a people have been bred to accept the doctrine of Divine right of kings." The article contended that imperialism was illegal and unconstitutional, based on America's history of democratic rule. Consequently, the article opposed annexation because he did not believe that territorial conquest adhered to the guiding principles established in the foundational documents of the United States.[247] As a Democratic paper, Taylor criticized McKinley's governmental policies, focusing little attention on racial equality or Black civil liberties in Puerto Rico.

Republican newspapers, however, received these criticisms with incredulous skepticism. In May 1900, the *Colored American* published:

> The Southern Democracy disfranchises the Negro, runs Jim-crow cars on the railroads, taxes them without giving them representation, lynches those whom it chooses to accuse, without the formality of a trial, and yet holds up its hands in holy horror because they fear the Republicans are going to "oppress" the natives of Porto Rico.[248]

This comparative analysis shifted the center of focus from the American territories to the struggles faced by Black Americans. The article named the racist policies of the Democratic party as evidence of their inherent hypocrisy when it came to issues of imperial conquest. He questioned why Democrats cared about the rights of the Puerto Rican natives when they did not care about the rights of Black Americans. Consequently, the *Colored American* condemned the anti-imperial rhetoric of the Democratic party as evidence of their moral failings.

Following the Presidential election in 1900, editorial references to the territories dropped significantly. Black newspapers shifted their focus toward issues that more directly concerned

247. Julius F. Taylor, ed., *Broad Ax* (Chicago, IL), May 19, 1900, https://www.newspapers.com/image/72101485/.
248. Edward E. Cooper, ed., *Colored American* (Washington, DC), May 19, 1900, https://www.newspapers.com/image/85300159/.

the Black American public. Consequently, when the Supreme Court heard the first case against the Foraker Act, few Black papers cared to take note.

Early in 1901, the Supreme Court issued its first ruling in a series of decisions that came to be known as the "Insular Cases." Decided between 1901-1914, this collection of Supreme Court decisions determined to what degree the Constitution applied to the American territories. Downes v. Bidwell, "considered the most far reaching" by modern academics and Black publications alike, ultimately determined that Puerto Rico was "not a part of the United States, but a territory appointed and belonging to the United States…over which congress has unrestricted control."[249] The Insular Cases shaped the nature of Puerto Rican governance, trade, statehood, and American citizenship, although they inspired little to no editorial opinions from the Black press. Consequently, this section will focus on two articles published on two widely different women in Puerto Rico: Valencia Monica and Margaret Livingston Chanler.

249. Cesar J. Ayala, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History Since 1898* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 27.

Figure 8. Valencia Monica escaping Spanish soldiers on horseback, published in the *Broad Ax*, "Fired Upon.," *Broad Ax*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), October 22, 1898.[250]

Valencia Monica appeared on the second page of the *Broad Ax* in a lengthy article entitled "Bille A Mazeppa." Accompanied by a large illustration (Figure 8), the article told the story of a young woman's journey across Cuba. Before outlining her "remarkable escape from the hands of the Spaniards," the article introduced Monica as a Puerto Rican refugee who found asylum in the United States. Under American rule, Monica declared that Puerto Rico "will be greatly changed...the fields will yield rich harvest and we will all be happy again." Her gratitude and excitement justified American expansion because she framed the United States as a liberator

250. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Bille A Mazeppa," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), October 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-10-22/ed-1/seq-2/.

from Spanish cruelty. Furthermore, the first paragraph introduced the United States as the hero when no Americans actively participated in the narrative.[251]

Monica's story began in Cuba, where "in company with a family," she escaped Spanish rule and sought refuge in the United States. As this party journeyed toward Santiago, "a dozen or more Spanish guerrillas" overturned Monica's cart and attacked the party. "I cannot tell you what happened or at least repeat one-half of the horrors of that terrible night," Monica declared. "While drinking and carousing they butchered the man who was with us with their machetes and laughed at his dying agonies." The Spaniards taunted Monica before tying her to the back of a "wild-looking black stallion," which she used to escape. As Monica fled across the Cuban countryside, strapped to a charging horse, a Cuban battalion intervened to rescue the young heroine. She then informed her saviours of her desperate tale, causing the "frenzied soldiers" to descend upon the drunken Spaniards and kill them all.[252]

The article separated Cuban soldiers into two categories: those who helped Maria and those who did not. The first soldiers introduced failed to help a distressed woman, which suggested they lacked moral guidance. Although the second troop of Cuban soldiers saved Maria from disaster, the article also attributed negative racial stereotypes to these men. Once Maria "told her friends" how she escaped, "there was no limit to the fury that prevailed in the camp." The Cuban officers "were powerless to control the frenzied soldiers in their desire to be avenged" and concluded with the death of the Spanish "land pirates." When juxtaposed with the articles published on the American army, "Bille A Mazeppa" presented Cuban rebels as undisciplined, despite their heroic actions. Their failure to heed authority culminated in the extra-judicial

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251. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Bille A Mazeppa," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), October 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-10-22/ed-1/seq-2/.
252. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Bille A Mazeppa," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), October 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-10-22/ed-1/seq-2/.

slaughter of the Spanish soldiers, further exemplifying their unethical actions. Black newspapers frequently criticized this genre of mob justice when Black Americans lost their lives. However, the article expressed no sympathy for the dead, illustrating a lasting national prejudice against Spain.

The first Spaniard Monica's party met was an officer. Monica described him as a man "with a spark of humanity in his bosom," who supplied Monica's party with "a pass and assured the young lady that no soldiers would harm them."[253] Although they encountered "several columns of soldiers who did not molest them" on their journey across Cuba, the article focused primarily on the descriptions of the drunken Spanish guerrillas. The author introduced these soldiers as the villains, indicated by their rampant use of alcohol, theft, and the attempted rape of the heroine.

Two separate drawings accompanied the article. The first illustrated Monica lashed to a wild-eyed charging horse as she escaped her Spanish tormentors. The second was Monica's portrait, positioned in the top left-hand corner of the first image (see Figure 8). Monica's hair in the first image resembled the stallion's; dark, wild, and untamed. Her portrait, however, presented a dramatic juxtaposition. The smaller image portrayed Monica with her dark hair in a loose bun, sporting a layered dress stereotypical of Caribbean cultures in the nineteenth century. The young woman's hand sat next to her eye, and her gaze pulled off to her left as if she were flirtatiously gazing at someone just behind the reader. The first image displayed a beautiful young woman bound to a horse who ran sprinting from the villains behind her, while her portrait presented a flirtatious individual who embodied the gender and racial serotypes of her home. These drawings contributed to the narrative that Puerto Rico was willing and grateful for

253. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Bille A Mazeppa," *Broad Ax* (Salt Lake City, UT), October 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-10-22/ed-1/seq-2/.

American occupation. Monica represented the island, saved by the United States from the cruelties of Spanish rule.[254]

Figure 9. Illustration of Margaret Chanler, published in the *Appeal*, "Miss Margaret Livingston Chanler," *Appeal*, January 28, 1899.[255]

"Bille A Mazeppa" presented a stark juxtaposition to the image and brief description of Miss Margaret Livingston Chanler. Margaret Chanler and Anna Bouligny were American nurses who received gold medals from Congress "in recognition of their work for ill and wounded soldiers in Porto Rico." The *Appeal* described the "valuable work of these young women" entirely within the context of their medical care.[256]

Adam's newspaper did not illustrate Chanler with a coquettish smile or playful eyes. Instead, they gave her face a stark expression, with the inkling of a frown suggested along her

254. Julius F. Taylor, ed., "Bille A Mazeppa," *Broad Ax*, (Salt Lake City, UT), October 22, 1898, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1898-10-22/ed-1/seq-2/.
255. John Quincy Adams, ed., "Miss Margaret Livingston Chanler," *Appeal* (Saint Paul, MN), January 28, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1899-01-28/ed-1/seq-2/.
256. John Quincy Adams, ed., "Miss Margaret Livingston Chanler," *Appeal* (Saint Paul, MN), January 28, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1899-01-28/ed-1/seq-2/.

brow, drawn lips, and deep eyes. Chanler's portrait demanded a degree of respect that came with the color of her skin and her celebrated status as an Anglo-Saxon woman (Figure 9). Furthermore, the brief article focused exclusively on these nurses as caregivers, celebrating the gendered narratives dictated by American culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[257]

These publications shed a small yet important light on the complex relationship forged between Black soldiers, Black newspapers, and their readers. Where many articles likely originated from (presumably) white authors, Black newspapers provided readers with a trusted examination of the world beyond their front door. Hawaiian annexation received considerable pushback from publications like the Richmond Planet, fueling a nuanced understanding of the archipelago's political and cultural heritage. By emphasizing the dignified portrayal of Queen Lili'uokalani and the empathetic representation of Maria, these publications underscored their commitment to portraying Hawaiian women as resilient individuals. The articles on Helen Wilder additionally celebrated non-conforming gender roles and celebrated individuality beyond societal norms. However, as a conquered territory, Guam received little attention beyond its value as a coaling station and Navy base underscoring the island's pragmatic value while sidestepping concerns of national autonomy. Despite the limited coverage, these newspapers illustrated a diverse and multifaceted positionality in Black media. The republication of "She Wore a Star," and "Honolulu Belle" pointed to Black editors' reliance on white news correspondence. In the discussion of Puerto Rico, Black newspapers pointed to the necessity for American development to improve the quality of life on the island. Monica's escape exemplified

257. John Quincy Adams, ed., "Miss Margaret Livingston Chanler," *Appeal* (Saint Paul, MN), January 28, 1899, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016810/1899-01-28/ed-1/seq-2/.

Puerto Ricans as grateful beneficiaries of American intervention, aligning with broader themes of the US as a heroic, masculine liberator.

These articles marked significant political change for the United States as its imperial empire expanded. They illustrated a complex tapestry of American identity, race relations, gender norms, and imperial expansion within a micro-historical examination of Black news media.

Conclusion

Celebrated though they were at the time of their military action, the Black regulars and "immune" regiments spurred little racial advancement for Black Americans. Yet, these brave and gallant soldiers exemplified Black honor, courage, and patriotism within their communities. Amid US imperial expansion, a powerful narrative emerged in Black media that celebrated Black soldiers. Black media presented Black soldiers as rightful American citizens through their exceptional military prowess across the US empire. This evaluation, however, faced a significant challenge from white anti-imperialists and expansionists, both of whom centered racialized bodies of the annexed territories as undesirable or incapable of self-government. The acceptance and perpetuation of these narratives only served to reinforce cultural conceptions of white supremacy, juxtaposed against the colonial 'other.'

Nevertheless, Black American soldiers did not allow this narrative to go unchallenged. They resisted white supremacy by critiquing the racism driving the Philippine-American War and even expressing sympathy for Filipino rebels. Black newspapers painted individuals like Helen Wilder with an unconventional charm, attributing a masculine bravado to the Hawaiian police officer that rejected traditional gender roles. They acknowledged her individuality while noting the societal norms she defied, illustrating the coexistence of divergent gender narratives within the Black newspapers examined. This analysis revealed an intricate interplay of power, cultural bias, and empathy, offering a multifaced representation of gender.

Above all, Black soldiers and nurses dedicated their lives to improving their race and defending their country. They were not passive victims of oppression. Instead, they continuously advocated for social and political change. In the face of systemic racism and discrimination, they boldly asserted their presence and advocated for racial advancement. Their efforts and sacrifices

paved the way for future generations, impacting the ongoing pursuit of racial equality and the understanding of the United States' complex history of expansion. Through the lens provided by the Black media, marginalized voices found an opportunity to assert their perspective, even if those in positions of power refused to listen.

Epilogue

On March 29, 2007, President George W. Bush stood in front of an audience of US military veterans, American politicians, and political dignitaries to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the Tuskegee Airmen, 62 years after they returned from service. The Tuskegee Airmen served in the Second World War as the first Black pilots commissioned into the US Army Air Force. From the beginning, they faced many of the same racially discriminatory attitudes that defined the military service of the earlier generation of Black men discussed in this thesis. During the airmen's training, white officers enforced Jim Crow regulations, restricted the movement of Black cadets on the base, and openly doubted their capacity to operate an aircraft, often calling on the same pseudoscientific arguments used by Social Darwinists in 1898. Despite these indignities, nearly a thousand Black men graduated from the Tuskegee Army Airfield (TAAF) between 1941 and 1945 and served in numerous campaigns overseas. Six decades later, the remaining Tuskegee veterans gathered alongside the widows and family members of their fallen brethren gathered in the Capitol Rotunda to receive the nation's highest honor. President Bush declared:

> These men in our presence felt a special sense of urgency. They were fighting two wars: One was in Europe, and the other took place in the hearts and minds of our citizens… The Tuskegee Airmen helped win a war, and you helped change our Nation for the better. Yours is the story of the human spirit, and it ends like all great stories do—with wisdom and lessons and hope for tomorrow. And the medal that we confer today means that we're doing a small part to ensure that your story will be told and honored for generations to come. And I would like to offer a gesture to help atone for all the unreturned salutes and unforgivable indignities. And so, on behalf of the Office I hold and a country that honors you, I salute you for the service to the United States.[258]

At the conclusion of his speech, Bush saluted the veterans before him with tears in his eyes.

258. Alan Gropman, "In Recognition of Their Unique Record: Tuskegee Airmen Awarded the Congressional Gold Medal," *Air Power History* 54, no. 2 (2007): 46–51, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26274847, 51.

The accomplishments and recognition of the Tuskegee Airmen echoed many of the most optimistic outcomes envisioned in the Black press during the Spanish-Cuban-American and Philippines-American Wars. The exceptional service of these Black pilots led to President Harry Turman's establishment of the Committee of Civil Rights in 1945. The report, issued in October 1947, identified the promotion of racial intolerance as a threat to democratic institutions and an imposition on the capacity of a targeted group to live without the "freedom from fear." As a result of the committee's findings, Truman issued an executive order on July 26, 1948, which abolished segregation in the American military.[259]

US imperial expansion left a legacy of racial "othering," which employed racial stereotypes and systems of oppression to exclude people of color under American jurisdiction from the fullest extent of privileges and rights guaranteed to the white American man. These systems and cultural perceptions continue to sow seeds of division, which promote exclusive access to the fundamental elements of democratic rule, such as voting. The continued attempts to restrict the rights of the Black American populace through gerrymandering and the imposition of strict voting regulations serves to limit the political power of the Black American populace once more, echoing the nation's racially charged history. Black newspapers have long stood as a witness to this attempt to limit and debilitate the power of Black American, and their contributions to the historical record serve as a valuable means of accessing the voices and people often dismissed in the broader discussion of American politics. Their voices mattered; they still matter. Furthermore, the history they impart to any reader helps to establish an increasingly empathetic and rich understanding of Black strength, resilience, and patriotism against the powerful white voices who attempted to silence them.

259. F. Michael Higginbotham, "Soldiers for Justice: The Role of the Tuskegee Airmen in the Desegregation of the American Armed Forces," *William & Mary Bill of Rights Journal* 8, no. 2 (February 2000): 273–321, 316.

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