by the author's instructive, even if at times hystericlal railings, on the threats posed by such plays to the American regime. Hereinafter, references to this volume appear in the main text.


17 See Ito's nuanced discussion of how popular notions of "freedom" (kalayaan, from the root word layaw, a condition of perfect reciprocity usually associated with the child's relationship with its mother) varied considerably from American and Filipino elite understandings of "independence" as originating from the actions of the state in *Passion and Revolution*, chap. 5; and in "Orators and the Crowds," in Stanley, *Reappraising an Empire*, pp. 85–113.


19 My remarks on the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality in this particular colonial setting are preliminary and for that reason, unsatisfactory. The colonial articulation of gender (and race) in the Philippines is undoubtedly more complex than what I've just sketched above, and it is a complexity that I am at present trying to unpack. In fact, where Philippine studies is concerned, it is these complex relations among race, gender, sexuality, and class that remain acutely understudied.

In the case of nationalist discourse, I have sought to outline not so much the patriarchal basis of nationalism as its tendency to produce a desire for patriarchy in the face of colonial fathers (e.g., Spanish friars) deemed illegitimate and degenerate. See Vicente L. Rafael, "Nationalism, Imagery and the Filipino Intelligentsia of the Nineteenth Century," in *Critical Inquiry* 16 (Spring 1990): 59–61. For a regional overview and comparative case studies of the intersection of gender categories with the construction of local notions of power, see the illuminating essays in Jane Atkinson and Shelly Errington, eds., *Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

What Virginia Woolf wrote of books, that they "continue each other," can also be said of wars: wars continue each other.¹ Wars generate and accumulate symbolic value by reenacting, reinterpreting, and transposing the cultural meaning of prior wars. The Spanish-American War of 1898 can be understood to have continued the Civil War in an imperial national discourse of the United States at the turn of the century. Politicians and journalists represented the war with Spain as a nostalgic recuperation of the heroism of an earlier generation and as a purgative final battle, healing the wounds and divisiveness of their internecine war while continuing the goals of national reunification. While the hundred-day brevity of the later conflict counteracted the interminable length of the earlier one, the international war also promised to reunify the nation by bringing together the North and the South against a common external enemy. Moreover, new battlefields abroad reputedly restored health and vigor to the male body, so massively dismembered in the war between the states. In fact, the vitality of the male body became the symbolic medium for national restoration, as masculinity figured the common ground between previously warring factions. And all this, staged on the remote islands of Cuba and the Philippines, leaving the American landscape unscathed. No wonder John Hays called it a "splendid little war."

Yet to continue the Civil War as the final destination on what has been called the "road to reunion," the Spanish-American War had to collapse and undo the thirty-year history separating the two conflicts by waging an ideological battle against Reconstruction, the prior "continuation" of the Civil War. The conflicted legacy of Reconstruction disrupted this unilinear narrative of continuity. Rep-
resentations of the later war can thus be seen doing battle on two related fronts: the international struggle with Spain and its colonies aspiring for national independence and the domestic struggle with African Americans fighting to achieve civil rights during Reconstruction. External and internal fronts met to pose the question of the position of African Americans in relation both to the union reconfigured by the Spanish-American War and to the newly colonized subjects acquired by that war. Would these subjects be assimilated into a post-Reconstruction model of race relations at home and would the empire abroad facilitate the subjugation of blacks as colonized subjects at home? Would African Americans position themselves in a relation to American nationhood that reinforced or resisted their assimilation into the role of either imperialized or imperialists?

The representation of empire at the turn of the century could function both as an external catalyst and as a medium for resolution of domestic racial conflict. This complex interaction underlies one of the most enduring cultural icons of the Spanish-American War: the battle for San Juan Hill. The charge up San Juan Hill can easily be debunked or demystified, and it has been since the earliest reports of the war: it was not heroic, but a military fiasco; not a massive orderly charge, but a straggling line of desperate soldiers, pitlessly exposed to enemy fire; not even the romantic San Juan Hill, but the more mundane "Kettle Hill" (itself an apocryphal name). But more useful than demystifying is to understand how the battle of San Juan Hill was produced as an icon precisely because it processed, contained, and crystallized multivalent and contradictory political meanings into a monumental frieze.

No American has remained more visible and virile in the iconography of San Juan Hill than Theodore Roosevelt leading his Rough Riders. In Richard Harding Davis's words, "he was without doubt, the most conspicuous figure in the charge...mounted high on horseback, and charging the rifle-pits at a gallop and quite alone, [he] made you feel that you would like to cheer." In contrast to his own conspicuousness, Roosevelt, in his account of the battle (which first appeared in Scribner's in April 1899 and later in The Rough Riders), calls attention to how "astonishing what a limited area of vision and experience one has in the hurly-burly of a battle." In fact, so limited was his vision that he only killed one Spanish soldier—whom he could see point-blank—and that, not surprisingly, with a revolver from the sunken battleship Maine (given to him by a brother-in-law in the navy).

In marked contrast to this blurred vision is the remarkable clarity with which Roosevelt notes the presence of black American soldiers "completely intermingled" with his own troops. "Such mixing," he explains, "was inevitable in making repeated charges through thick jungle," but was in need of "reforming" under his command (135). As the American troops entrench themselves on the top of San Juan Hill, Roosevelt's narrative retrenches along racial lines. The battle concludes without a cathartic shoot-out with Spanish soldiers, but instead with a sustained confrontation with African American soldiers that caps the horizontal narrative throughout the report of the threatening intermingling of blacks and whites. An emblem of this threat comes into focus when the color sergeant of the black Tenth Regiment ends up bearing his own colors and those of the white Third Regiment as well (whose flag bearer was killed).

Toward the end of the battle, Roosevelt notes that neither white regulars nor volunteers were weakening, in contrast to the "strain of the colored infantrymen" whose white officers had been killed—and who were left as masterless men in vague affiliation with Roosevelt's troops. When the black soldiers start to drift to the rear to join their own regiment or transport the wounded, Roosevelt perceives them as "depleting my line" and confronts them violently and theologically: "So I jumped up, and walking a few yards to the rear, drew my revolver, haled 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 pretense whatever went to the rear" (138). When he vows to keep his word, all of his men watched with "utmost interest"; his "cow-punchers, hunters, and miners solemnly nodded their heads and commented in chorus, exactly as if in a comic opera, 'He always does, he always does!'" (138-39). Roosevelt claims that his show worked when the black soldiers, the "smoked Yankees"—as the Spaniards called them,—played their own minstrel parts. They "flashed their white teeth at one another, as they broke into broad grins, and I had no more trouble with them" (139). Roosevelt concludes this confrontation with a paean to racial harmony and national unity: "they seem[ed] to accept me as one of their officers" and the Rough Riders, with their "strong color prejudice, grew to accept them with hearty good-will as comrades, and were entirely willing, in their own phrase, 'to drink out of the same canteen!'" (139). At this point in the narrative, with racial trenches dug deeply and national unity thus affirmed, Roosevelt can return to the battle in a roll call that names and praises the gallantry of the individual Rough Riders, as though their individual integrity has been protected by his confrontation with African American troops.

This showdown on San Juan Hill, which serves as both the climax to
and digression from the narrative of the battle, raises several interesting questions. Why did the presence of African American soldiers loom so large to Roosevelt as to disrupt the uphill trajectory against the Spanish, with a counternarrative of sidelong glances to the racial intermingling of American soldiers? Why did the potential absence of the African Americans in returning to their regiments, appear even more threatening? In addition, why is the scene at once so startlingly violent and yet so comically theatrical?

There is a familiar trope in war fiction and journalism of dislocation and loss of vision on the battlefield, in response to which a visual anchor must be found—a comrade, a flag, a feature of the landscape—to reorient the soldier and reader. For Roosevelt, black and white intermingling provides both an emblem of this chaos as well as a familiar footing or anchor. Roosevelt’s confrontation with the black troops reestablishes the reassuring order of the domestic color line in a foreign terrain, as their heightened visibility displaces and compensates for the occluded vision of the Cuban political landscape. Intermixing is not the only challenge to Roosevelt’s order posed by black soldiers in blue uniforms. Their presence raises the white fear of armed insurrection and of national self-representation, which African American soldiers pursued in their printed rebuttals of Roosevelt’s account. This double threat of revolt and representation resonated with the claims of the Cuban revolutionaries whom the American soldiers were sent both to liberate and to subdue. This scene of domestic racial confrontation in The Rough Riders cannot be separated from its international context of shifting alliances and conflicts between the Americans and the Cubans.

To analyze this scene in The Rough Riders, it is necessary to understand how American journalism was remapping the political coordinates of the Cuban battlefield, how reports were implicitly working to supplant Cuban counternarratives scripted by a prior long revolutionary struggle against Spain. A repeated theme that emerges from the reports of the Cuban battlefield is the contrast between the invisibility of both the Spanish enemy and the Cuban allies and the almost suicidal conspicuousness of the American troops. Soldiers and reporters repeat the refrain: “I didn’t catch sight of a single Spaniard, not a one,” a lack of visibility which comes to signify their cowardly lack of manliness (as they are often compared to “red Indians”). As many reporters commented, in contrast to the Spanish who hid behind trenches, their Cuban guerillas who sniped from behind tree tops—and the Cuban insurgents who covered behind their American liberators, the American soldiers marched out into clear view. They offered an inviting target made even more obvious by their outdated smoking guns, in contrast to the Spanish modern smokeless weapons. In addition, reporters noted the large lumbering observation balloon sent up ahead of the troops, which proved not only impotent in surveying enemy positions, but even worse, drew dramatic attention to the position of the Americans and turned them into open targets.

The lack of overarching surveillance of the enemy presented a problem for representation as well as for military strategy, as one photographer for Harper’s Weekly explained: “Although I was thus on the first firing line, and many men were wounded and killed all about me, as you will see by my photographs. . . . I found it impossible to make any actual ‘battle scenes,’ for many reasons—the distance at which the fighting is conducted, the area which is covered, but chiefly the long grasses and thickly wooded country.” This absence of a “scene,” a context for the wounded bodies, is due to more than the hindrance of the landscape, but to a kind of political myopia. Whereas Elaine Scarry has argued that wounded bodies in warfare give meaning to an otherwise abstract political conflict, I would suggest the inverse here; the spotlight on wounded bodies effaces the political context by fetishizing those bodies as the only meaningful focal point. In other words, the conspicuousness of American bodies and the corresponding invisibility of all other combatants had to be produced ideologically as subject positions, not just perceived as military positions. The positions were plotted in part by a narrative that effaced the prior history of the Cuban war against Spain and located the U.S. entry into the war as the point of historical origin. Although the exposure of the American soldier was lamented as strategically suicidal, it had the important ideological effect of defining American masculinity itself. Report after report praises officers for needlessly yet gallantly standing up in full view under fire, and the charge is portrayed as a kind of grandstanding conspicuousness of sheer bodies hurling themselves up the hill against impregnable trenches. Pictorial representations depict the battle from the point of view of the artist looking up the hill behind the troops and drawing their backs. But a figure usually breaks this perspective by turning around frontally to the spectator, even when he is shooting ahead of him. Rather than directing his focus to confront the enemy, he turns to pose for an audience at home.

The spectacle of the American male body remaps the coordinates of the battlefield to wrest political agency from the Cubans on both sides of the conflict, a process put in motion as soon as the ‘Americans land in Cuba. Roosevelt’s first impression of the insurgents was as a “crew
of as utter tatterdemalions as human eyes ever looked on, armed with every kind of rifle in all stages of dilapidation" (71). Their appearance provides evidence for him and many others not of the prior history of the dire material context in which the Cuban insurgents had been fighting their three-year war of independence, but of the fact "that they would be no use in serious fighting, but it was hoped that they might be of service in scouting" (71). When the battle begins, however, Roosevelt is disappointed, but not surprised, to find that the Cuban guide at the head of the column ran away at the first sign of fighting. He contrasts this figure with two Americans who remained, "who though non-combatants—newspaper correspondents—showed as much gallantry as any soldier in the field" (82). The replacement of Cuban scouts with American newspaper reporters is apt; better guides in remapping the coordinates of the battlefield to foreground the spectacle of American manhood, they supplant the Cuban map of the entangled political terrain that antedated U.S. intervention. This triangulation of the soldier with the journalist and domestic audience recuperates an image of American masculinity by denying masculinity and political agency to the Cubans, who were in the midst of a long revolutionary process, which is made to disappear.

This displacement can be seen quite starkly in Stephen Crane's aptly titled "Vivid Story of San Juan Hill" published in the New York World. (Crane himself was said by Davis to have engaged in this theatrical visibility by exposing himself to fire atop the hill until Davis embarrassed him by calling attention to his self-dramatizing conspicuousness.) Crane represents the charge as a sporting event, referring to the absent audience who "would give an arm to get the thrill of patriotic insanity that coursed through us" and referring as well to the international audience of foreign attachés who were shocked and impressed by such foolish gallantry (158). In a populist note, Crane also represents the charge as a "grand popular movement" led by the "gallantry of the American private soldier" whose officers were left behind (155). Yet when the Americans reach the top of the hill to entrench themselves for the night, Crane abruptly interrupts his narrative and shifts direction from the upward battle for Santiago to the horizontal struggle with America's allies, the Cuban insurgents. "It becomes necessary to speak of the men's opinion of the Cubans," pauses Crane. "To put it shortly, both officers and privates have the most lively contempt for the Cubans" (163). Class divisions within the American army between privates and officers—which Crane previously celebrated—are healed in their common contempt for their allies.

Crane's article never returns to the continuation of the battle but instead backtracks to review the same events in terms of Cuban nonparticipation. While the Americans "sprinkled a thousand bodies in the grass," not a single Cuban was visible. Once an "efficient body," the insurgents have now become "no more useless body of men anywhere," demoralized and emasculated by American aid (163). While the Americans fight, the Cubans are only interested in feeding their bodies with U.S. rations. Thus the end of the narrative charge up San Juan Hill for Crane is neither the conquest of Santiago nor combat with Spanish soldiers, but the appropriation of the Cuban uprising as an American popular movement and the displacement of lazy, inefficient, hungry Cuban bodies with the spectacle of aggressive American manhood.

The physical absence of Cubans from the battlefield of San Juan Hill was due to the U.S. political decision to exclude the Cuban command from military operations and consequently from deciding on their future in the peace settlement with Spain. Yet the journalistic representations of the Cubans as cowardly, undisciplined, and unsoldierly—in short, unmanly—blames them for their disappearance from the scene. Even Crane's depiction of Cubans and Americans fighting side by side in an earlier battle undermines their alliance by turning the Cubans into a backdrop or foil against which the erect "strong figures" of the Americans are composed. In contrast to the "businesslike" marines, for example, the Cubans are described as "a hard-bitten, under-sized lot, most of them Negroes, and with the stoop and gait of men who had at one time labored at the soil. They were in short peasants—harsh, tireless, uncomplaining peasants—and they viewed in utter calm these early morning preparations for battle." While these peasants show no capacity to reflect on their position, "contrary to the Cubans, the bronze faces of the Americans were not stolid at all" (135). When they fight, Crane comments on the "rock-like beautiful poise" of the marines taking aim, which "one noticed the more on account of the Cubans who used the Lee as if it were a squirt gun." In the midst of fighting, "toiling, sweating marines" stand out against "shriek jumping Cubans" (138). Finally, when a Cuban is hit, he is described as "a great hulking Negro" who "seemed in no pain; it seemed as if he were senseless before he fell." And when a fellow soldier carries him, they appear not as comrades in arms, but "the procession that moved off resembled a grotesque wheelbarrow" (138). Thus while the overt narrative trajectory of these reports pits Americans against Spaniards, the detailed representation pits American bodies against Cuban ones to disaffiliate them as allies. Whether stolid or hysterical the Cubans relinquish control to the Americans and become a passive yardstick for measuring.
American prowess. By the end of the battle for San Juan Hill, Crane sees the dependency of the Cuban on the American as a de facto abdication of his right to independence: "If he stupidly drowsily remains out of these fights, what weight is his voice to have later in the final adjustments?" The Cubans themselves are "the worst thing for the cause of an independent Cuba that could possibly exist" (164).

In a battle showcasing American masculinity, the Cubans forfeit their identity as men in the eyes of Americans: "the more our commanding officers see of the Cubans the less they appear to think of them as soldiers or as men." The pivot for this differentiation is often linked to their racial identity, as another reporter notes, "I have seen degradation in Negro slaves, but never have I seen such degradation as a Cuban exhibits in everything that means manhood." It is a short leap from their absence from the front line to their insufficiency as men, to their racial identity as "Negro" (which visually looms large for Crane), to the impossibility of their nationhood, as one correspondent concludes: "I ask where is the Cuban nation. There is no Cuba. There is no Cuban people. There are no freemen here to whom we could deliver this marvelous land." 14

We can now counterpose the climax of Crane's narrative atop San Juan Hill—the disaffiliation from the Cubans—to that of Roosevelt's—the discipline of African American troops. In both cases, the narrative shifts from conflict with an external enemy, Spain, to internal struggles with reputed allies. These breaks signal a disruption not only in political alliances but also in the links among representations of national, racial, and gendered identities. If Crane's narrative renders Cubans invisible as military political agents, in what ways might Roosevelt displace them with the heightened visibility of African American troops in need of control? Roosevelt, after all, claims that he forced the "smoked Yankees" not to run away as the Cubans did, but to stay and be men under his command. Yet if Cubans are dismissed as unmanly and incapable of nationhood partly on the basis of racial identity, how might the presence of black soldiers in blue uniforms reinforce, undermine, or further complicate this dismissal? And what does their presence mean for the constitution of American nationhood in the male body? What then is the relationship between the forced abdication of Cubans from the military and political battlefield and the field of representation and the forced placement of African American soldiers in the front line under Roosevelt's command?

To answer these questions, we must consider the fact that Roosevelt does not simply relate a tale of battle but implicitly engages in unspoken debate with counternarratives in several overlapping contexts. Though published less than a year after the war, Roosevelt's narrative was involved in a struggle over writing the history of that war, a struggle in part against an African American narrative that had gained some currency. For a brief moment after the war, black regiments were acknowledged for their heroism by the black and white press, homecoming parades, and congressional medals, all of which bolstered the case for African American commissioned officers. Accounts of several battles took on legendary stature, in which the Tenth Cavalry preceded the Rough Riders up San Juan Hill by cutting through barbed wire, rescued the Rough Riders from a Spanish ambush, and launched the charge with the shout of a black trooper. While African American newspapers repeatedly lambasted the white press for never mentioning the names of individual black soldiers and for ignoring their contributions, Roosevelt's account raised special outrage for its blatant distortions of those accomplishments which had entered the public limelight. African American soldiers and correspondents responded to Roosevelt's account and the white press coverage in general as a national conflict over the public narration of history, a conflict with as vital political consequences at home as the international war abroad; as John R. Conn underscored in the ending of his letter on the battle to The Evening Star, "the sword rested while the pen fought." 16 Presley Holliday, a member of the Tenth Cavalry on San Juan Hill, ended his detailed rebuttal of Roosevelt's account in a letter to the New York Age: "I could give many other incidents of our men's devotion to duty, of their determination to stay until death, but what's the use? Colonel Roosevelt has said they shirked, and the reading public will take the Colonel at his word." 17 Holliday thus situates Roosevelt's account in a rigged contest over public words, in which Roosevelt's narrative overrides the words with which Holliday ends his letter: "No officers, no soldiers." 18

One political stake in this struggle was the campaign for the appointment of African American commissioned soldiers, which the military successes of the black regiments were used to bolster. Roosevelt's account explicitly contributed to the argument against black officers, which he based on common stereotypes: the natural servitude of blacks, their lack of discipline, and their incapacity for self-governance. Describing his "mixed force" on the San Juan heights, including black infantrymen without white officers, Roosevelt insists at length that the troops are "peculiarly dependent on their white officers" (137); in contrast to both the white regulars and his own Rough Riders, who could fight on their own once their officers were killed, "with the colored troops," he asserted, "there should always be some of their own officers" (137). After the show-
down with the "smoked Yankees," he praises the white officers of the Ninth and Tenth, under whose leadership "the colored troops did as well as any soldiers could possibly do" (139). Roosevelt's threat to shoot those troops thus forces them into this submissive role to prove his point retrospectively, since in fact many of the white officers were either killed or lagged behind and the black soldiers did indeed fight independently. The initiative taken by white privates ahead of their officers, which Crane praised as a popular movement, Roosevelt finds threatening in black privates. They must have conjured up the specter of armed blacks out of control, of racial intermixing as political insurrection.

In establishing himself as their accepted officer, Roosevelt implicitly linked the political fate of African Americans at home to that of Cubans abroad. The same argument about the need for white officers to discipline black soldiers was made about the need for the United States government to discipline the Cubans by radically circumscribing their status as a nation through the conditions of the Platt Amendment. Furthermore, the Cubans' perceived racial identity (as Negro) bolstered the argument about their incapacity for self-government—the power to represent themselves. Filipinos were similarly portrayed as stereotypically "Negroid" in popular writing and political cartoons. This interchangeability of colonized subjects marked by homologous racial identity, however, became a contested signifier, open to conflicting political interpretations. Southern Democrats deployed their belief in the unfitness of inferior races—at home and abroad—for self-government as an argument against colonial annexation of the Philippines, so as not to include more nonwhites in the republic. Yet this negative identification of Cubans, African Americans, and Filipinos as "colored" found contradictory political interpretations among African Americans. It was used by some—both at home and in the battlefield—as an argument on behalf of the efficacy of incorporating African Americans into the imperial project because of their natural ability to mediate between the United States and its colonies. It was transformed by others into an adamant political position against American imperialism. Many editorialists in the press took the side of their "brown brothers" and decried the exportation of post-Reconstruction disfranchisement, Jim Crow laws, and the resurgence of violence and virulent racism to the new outposts of empire. Du Bois's well-known prophetic statement from The Souls of Black Folk, "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea," originally addressed this international link at the first Pan-African Conference of 1900.

Thus when Roosevelt published his account almost a year after the battle, the events on San Juan Hill were less important than their refraction through the lenses of their consequences: the postwar debates about the viability of American imperialism and the fitness of nonwhites at home and abroad for self-government. His account was published during the U.S. war waged against Filipino nationalists, who he viewed as no more capable of nationhood than were black troops capable of fighting alone. While confronting and subordinating African Americans within the national body, Roosevelt was simultaneously making a place for newly colonized subjects in the disembodied American empire. He was also inscribing a special relation between white manhood and American nationality. The use of "smoked Yankees" implicitly defines "real Yankees" as "Anglo-Saxon" and contributes to the popular understanding of that term as both a biological racial category and a political historical category, denoting the exclusive originating power and present capacity for self-government.

It would be historically inaccurate and theoretically simplistic to collapse the relations of imperial America to Filipinos, Cubans, and African Americans into a monolithic model of colonized and colonizer. Such a model not only assumes a false coherence in the identity of the colonizer, but also ignores the historical and global differences among colonized subjects. Roosevelt, for instance, was both identifying African Americans and differentiating them from the imagined unassimilable Cubans and Filipinos. If the latter could be relegated to a national limbo, denied both self-government and incorporation into the American republic, the former posed more of a problem for the Republican Roosevelt, who had to represent African Americans within the national body, a problem magnified by their presence in uniform abroad.

In its unsettling intermixture of races, the imperial battlefield may have mirrored to Roosevelt the domestic urban site he had recently left as police commissioner of New York City, and he would have brought his experience with non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants from the city to bear on the heights of San Juan Hill. In a revealing letter to Frederick Jackson Turner, Roosevelt complained of his lack of time to work on his history of the West because of his duties as police commissioner. His "duties" at that time included a controversial and ultimately unsuccessful effort to enforce the excise tax and blue laws in a struggle against Tammany Hall which would have shut down saloons on Sunday and regulated drink-
ing laws in the immigrant community—especially German and Irish. For Roosevelt these laws would have accomplished what the frontier did according to Turner: create individual Americans. Blue laws would have contributed to the Americanization of immigrants by denying their autonomous cultural practices revolving around the beer garden or the pub. In disciplining African American troops on San Juan Hill, Roosevelt was exercising the regulatory power of Americanization that eluded his grasp on the streets of New York. (Politically he would have viewed Tammany Hall as a formidable opposition and African Americans as traditional clients of the Republican Party.) Roosevelt’s narrative on San Juan Hill disciplines African American troops in a subordinated integration to deny them the autonomy and equality they sought within the army in the agitation for their own officers. They are forced into the body politic at gunpoint, Americanized by keeping their place—in the line of fire and in the color line.

In Presley Holliday’s rebuttal of Roosevelt, he explains that the African American soldiers who broke the line found racial “intermingling” threatening because it already embodied the hierarchical social order Roosevelt was trying to assert:

> It is a well know fact, that in this country most persons of color feel out of place when they are by force compelled to mingle with white persons, especially strangers. . . . [S]ome of our men (and these were all recruits with less than six months’ service) felt so much out of place that when firing lulled, often showed their desire to be with their commands. . . . White soldiers do not as a rule, share this feeling with colored soldiers. The fact that a white man knows how well he can make a place for himself among colored people need not be discussed here.21

What Holliday leaves undiscussed points to the violent effort in making this “place” for the white man by taming the threats of autonomous black agency. Roosevelt was trying to incorporate and to Americanize black soldiers in a racially “mixed lot” by forcing them to stay within the national line of defense, as he was reasserting the color line at the same time to forge the bond of national unity. According to him, only by remaining in line, under white command, could black troops achieve entry into the ranks of American nationhood.

In positioning African Americans in a nationalist hierarchy, Roosevelt was also constructing what Holliday calls the unique place of the white man among nonwhites, to protect the special connection between white manhood and American nationhood. The designation “smoked Yankees” aligns the volunteer Rough Riders, often derided in the press for their theatrical playacting, with the white regulars, professional soldiers, against the black regulars of the Tenth Cavalry, who had gained the nickname Buffalo Soldiers for their own fighting in Indian wars. The visual image of “smoked Yankees” suggests whites fighting in blackface and implicitly legitimates these professional soldiers to the role of comic actors, impersonated shells with no agency of their own. Roosevelt’s fear that the amateur Rough Riders would not be taken seriously as soldiers is projected onto the theatrical image of the grinning blackface soldiers.23

In this realignment, which makes black regulars dependent on white volunteers, Roosevelt also defends the virile image of the Rough Riders from the stories circulating about black troops rescuing them from ambush or abetting their charge. Such narratives would severely compromise the image of the Rough Riders’ autonomy—cowboys on a new frontier—as well as their role as chivalric liberators of the Cubans; in fact, they would then play the passive feminized role of the rescued to the active male role of the black troops.

The role of the chivalric rescuer, used so pervasively in imperial discourse, was indeed subject to contested meanings, for African American soldiers not only deployed the chivalric mode in writing of their military experience in relation to the Cubans, or to their fellow soldiers, but they also brought that image back home to the South. Reports from soldiers encamped in the South take a chivalric relation to local African Americans; they cut down trees where blacks had been lynched, protect local communities from white brutality, and overstep Jim Crow laws with the force of their numbers, arms, and authority of their blue uniforms. In the contest over the uses of chivalry, Roosevelt can be seen as attempting to rescue the chivalric mode itself from black counternarratives and preserve it as an exclusively Anglo-Saxon possession. In Cuba, Roosevelt may have rediscovered the Western frontier he abandoned in the city; yet the nostalgia motivating the Rough Riders to act like cowboys and seek new Indians in a Wild West abroad is realized not in confrontation with the Spanish or even the Cubans, but with African Americans in a foreign terrain that threatens to “intermix” black and white. Only after his confrontation with “smoked Yankees” does Roosevelt turn to summarizing his account of the battle, naming his individual Rough Riders and their gallant deeds as though he has rescued their subjectivity as soldiers from the threat of a kind of male miscegenation.

Roosevelt’s protection of the white male subject contributes to the purgative discourse with which this essay opens, of the Spanish-American
War as the final antidote to Reconstruction, healing the conflicts of the Civil War by bringing together blue and grey on distant shores. The Rough Riders have been understood as a unifying cultural symbol—between North and South, West and East, working class and patrician, and this unity is grounded in the notion of manliness, in the physicality of the male body that transcends or underlies social difference. In the words of a popular poem about the Rough Riders,

Let them know there in the ditches
Blood-stained by the swells in the van
And know that a chap may have riches
And still be a man.24

Common graves, common streams of blood, bodies strewn in the Cuban grasses all sanctify a democracy of manhood to which some were even willing to add African Americans, as an officer of a black regiment stated: "White regiments, black regiments, regulars and Rough Riders, representing the young manhood of the North and South, fought shoulder to shoulder, unmindful of race or color, unmindful of whether commanded by an ex-Confederate or not and mindful only of their common duty as Americans."25 Roosevelt's confrontation on San Juan Hill boldly exposes the ground of hierarchy and violence in which this national unity is embedded.

Although white and black regiments could be seen to merge in their "common duty as Americans," black and white male bodies have different symbolic resonances, a different signifying function in the political landscape. One of the rationales for organizing federal regiments of African American volunteers (when many individual states balked at organizing militias) was the Lamarckian argument that they were immune to the diseases of the tropical environment. These troops actually came to be known as the Immune Regiments, as though they were physically closer to the terrain, more like "natives" than like white Americans. This attribution allowed them to be assigned the most loathsome duties, but also positioned them ideologically. Immune, they could serve as a buffer between the white soldiers and the contagious environment and allow the spectacle of the restored white male body to emerge unscathed by the physical and political landscape. This recuperation was especially important given the pervasive presence at home of dismembered veterans of the Civil War and, more immediately, given the fact that more men died of dysentery, malaria, and food poisoning from army rations in Cuba than they did of fighting in the Spanish-American War. The presence of the black body immersed in yet invulnerable to the physical contagions of the imperial battlefield works to elevate the figure of the white male to a level of political abstraction, but makes him dependent on that same embodied presence.

The foundations for the construction of the white male body as a figure for American nationhood lie in the subjugation of black male bodies. We can trace this process in the following passage by Richard Harding Davis, from an early stage of the battle for San Juan Hill (Davis was outspoken in his support of African American soldiers and their contribution to the war effort and in his harsh criticism of the United States command in its inept conduct of the war):

I came across Lieutenant Roberts of the Tenth Cavalry, lying under the roots of a tree beside the stream with three of his colored troopers stretched around him. He was shot through the intestines, and each of the three men with him was shot in the arm or leg. They had been overlooked or forgotten, and we stumbled upon them only by the accident of losing our way. They had no knowledge as to how the battle was going or where their comrades were, or where the enemy was. At any moment, for all they knew, the Spaniards might break through the bushes about them. It was a most lonely picture, the young lieutenant, half naked, and wet with his own blood, sitting upright beside the empty stream, and his three followers crouching at his feet like three faithful watch-dogs, each wearing his red badge of courage, with his black skin tanned to a haggard gray, and with his eyes fixed patiently on the white lips of his officer. When the white soldiers with me offered to carry him back to the dressing station, the negroes resisted it stiffly. "If the Lieutenant had been able to move, we would have carried him away long ago," said the sergeant, quite overlooking the fact that his arm was shattered. "Oh, don't bother the surgeon about me," Roberts added, cheerfully. "They must be very busy. I can wait."26

On the surface, this is a tableau of national consolidation between whites and blacks, bonded by shared wounds and self-sacrifice. In fact, the bloody wounds, imaged through Crane's popular novel, bleach everyone one shade whiter. The troopers turn less black, a "haggard grey," while the lieutenant turns even whiter, with his "white lips." Yet this tableau reinscribes the racial hierarchy out of which national unity is forged, not only in the explicit racist images of the blacks as "watch-dogs" or the fact that they, in contrast to the white officer, remain unnamed, but in the way in which the heroic white body is intimitely constructed out of black bodies in several hybrid configurations. In describing immobilized bodies, Davis vividly invokes and quells the implicit sexual threat
of racial "intermingling," which Roosevelt confronts in the upheaval of the battle. From one angle, they appear as one grotesque body—white on top and black on the bottom: the upright white lieutenant wounded in the middle is the torso and the black troopers form the limbs or lower body. They are joined by their common wounds, a symbolic castration. From another angle, these figures are ambiguously sexualized and gendered, with the lieutenant an upright phalus and the black privates a separate male or female body, crouched ready to receive him. From still another perspective, the black soldiers act as chivalric knights protecting their lady as they gaze lovingly at his lips. When they resent the interference of the white soldiers, threatening to touch their officer, they "stiffen" and thereby assert their virility, forgetting their symbolic castration, not only their wounded limbs, but their social inability to touch him, their racial difference. The African American soldiers here, wounded on the periphery of their own bodies, stand at the periphery of the body politic, or at the bottom of a representational hierarchy. They pledge their allegiance to, their affiliation with their white officer, while he is capable of a higher allegiance to the cause, which he displays in his cheerful, "don't mind me." They represent their officer, their master, while he represents the whole nation, America. The upright white male body, rooted in his black counterparts, also differentiates them, as he becomes a mediator between the crouched black masses—the unnamed soldiers—and the nation, which they cannot represent directly.

Thus Davis's tableau of unity on San Juan Hill has the same violently differentiating effect as Roosevelt's more overtly violent form of post-Reconstruction politics. In fact, Davis may assume a natural serenity on the part of African Americans, while Roosevelt implicitly acknowledges the threat of their agency and claim to national representation. Davis sheds light on the debate about African American officers who threaten not only to take on leadership roles and bear weapons, but also to represent the nation directly, unmediated through their allegiance to white officers. The challenge of black officers to white authority lies in their capacity to represent more than their own blackness subsumed into a white nation, but to represent American nationhood in a foreign terrain. Just as Roosevelt and others supported the black troops as long as they were led and represented by white officers, there is a hierarchy of representation underwriting these images of unity, whereby the white male alone in the wilderness of empire on San Juan Hill comes to displace, appropriate, and incorporate the agency of nonwhites both in the empire and at home.

Black troops in blue on San Juan Hill, however, threaten to destabilize this hierarchy by occupying a range of possible positions. The specter of armed African American soldiers may threaten betrayal of the United States empire through their realignment with outside forces or may challenge the internal coherence of that empire by demanding participation and representation as equals. In both cases, many black soldiers in the aftermath of the Cuban campaign preferred to be sent to fight the war in the Philippines—and, in a few well publicized cases, switched sides—rather than face the racism circumscribing the army encampments of the South. Black in blue raises the white fear that the imperial war meant to heal the rifts of the Civil War may continue to heighten that conflict by recasting it as a global race war. The threat of black soldiers in blue uniforms, like that of the "colored" color bearer, lies in their direct representation of American nationhood in lands defined as inhabited by those unfit for self-government, those who cannot represent themselves, and who are thus in need of the discipline of the American Empire.

Notes

This essay has benefited from the responses to earlier versions by colleagues at Columbia University, Stanford University, U.C. Irvine, UCLA, and Mount Holyoke.


4 I am grateful to Robert Ferguson for pointing out this trope.

5 Each of these features can be found in accounts of the battle by Crane and Davis cited below; many more examples are brought together in Charles H. Brown, The Correspondents' War: Journalists in the Spanish American War (New York: Scribner's, 1967), chap. 15.


8 For a pictorial example see the illustration by H. L. V. Parkhurst, "The Charge at San Juan Hill," in Roosevelt, p. 132.

9 Stephen Crane, "Stephen Crane's Vivid Story of the Battle of San Juan," New York World, July 14, 1898. Reprinted in Fredson Bowers and James B. Colvert,
Teddy Bear Patriarchy

Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden.

New York City, 1908–1936

Nature teaches law and order and respect for property. If these people cannot go to the country, then the Museum must bring nature to the city.¹

I started my thoughts on the legend of Romulus and Remus who had been suckled by a wolf and founded Rome, but in the jungle I had my little Lord Greystoke suckled by an ape.²

I. The Akeley African Hall and the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in the American Museum of Natural History: Experience

In the heart of New York City stands Central Park—the urban garden designed by Frederick Law Olmsted to heal the over-wrought or decadent city dweller with a prophylactic dose of nature. Immediately across from the park the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial presides as the central building of the American Museum of Natural History, a monumental reproduction of the Garden of Eden. In the Garden, Western Man may begin again the first journey, the first birth from within the sanctuary of nature. An institution founded just after the Civil War and dedicated to popular education and scientific research, the American Museum of Natural History is the place to undertake this genesis, this regeneration. Passing through the Museum’s Roosevelt Memorial atrium into the African Hall, opened in 1936, the ordinary citizen may enter a privileged space

   18. In his *A New Negro for a New Century*, which depends heavily on the demonstration of black military heroism, Booker T. Washington not only reprints Holliday’s rebuttal of Roosevelt (pp. 54–62), but also reprints an earlier election speech of Roosevelt against himself, in which he praises the heroism of the Tenth and their harmony with the Rough Riders at a political rally in Harlem (pp. 50–52) (1900; reprint, Miami, Fl.: Mnemosyne Publishing, 1969).
   23. In *A New Negro*, Washington speculated that Roosevelt was anxious about having his Rough Riders linked with black troops by the press, who were most interested in how both the "colored" troops and Roosevelt’s flamboyant volunteers would perform under fire.