

## Analyzing Imperialism through Cartoons

As historians, primary sources are some of our best tools for understanding the way people thought in the past. In this activity, you will be looking at American imperialism through primary sources that were produced at that time. Keep in mind that these were produced over 100 years ago. Many of these sources contain racist and outdated beliefs that are no longer acceptable in our society. Nonetheless, it's important for us to use these sources to understand the rationale behind imperialism and America's expansion into new territories. They are also an invaluable insight into the ways that many Americans thought about the world around them. They also reflect their views on people that many Americans viewed as inferior.

America's debate over imperialism was played out in congress, on battlefields, and most importantly, in the court of public opinion. At the time, newspapers were the most important outlet to inform readers about a subject. Naturally, imperialists and anti-imperialists utilized the newspapers and political cartoons to get their arguments across. As you read through this document, carefully consider the message being portrayed in each cartoon and whether it is showing imperialism in a negative or positive light. Make sure to also examine the symbols being used and the way that various figures or groups are being portrayed. Are some being portrayed negatively or being ridiculed?

By the end of this reading, you should have a good idea of the reasons why some Americans supported imperialism and expansion into the Philippines, Guam, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Likewise, you should see why many Americans opposed it. Think about what you learned about Anglo-Saxonism and the motives behind imperialism as you view them as well. Is there evidence of racially biased thinking contained in these images? What can these images tell us about American society at this time?



PUCK.



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SCHOOL BEGINS.

UNCLE SAM (to his new class in Civilization).—Now, children, you've got to learn these lessons whether you want to or not! But just take a look at the class ahead of you, and remember that, in a little while, you will feel as glad to be here as they are!

JOTTMAN LITH CO. PUCK BLDG. N.Y.





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PUCK BUILDING, New York, April 6th, 1901.  
Copyright, 1901, by Keppler & Schwarzmann.

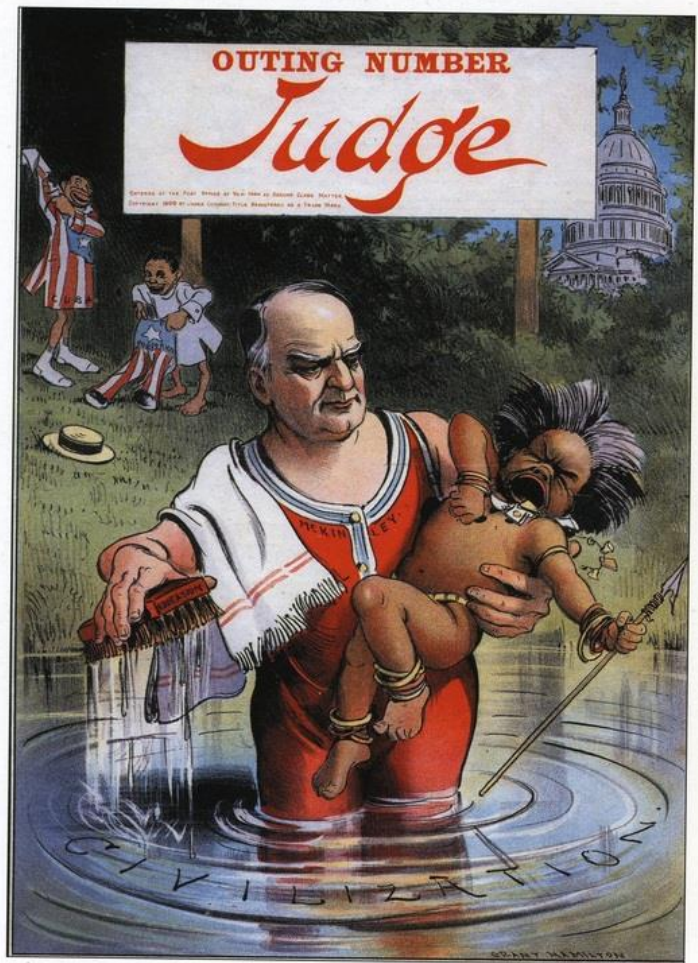
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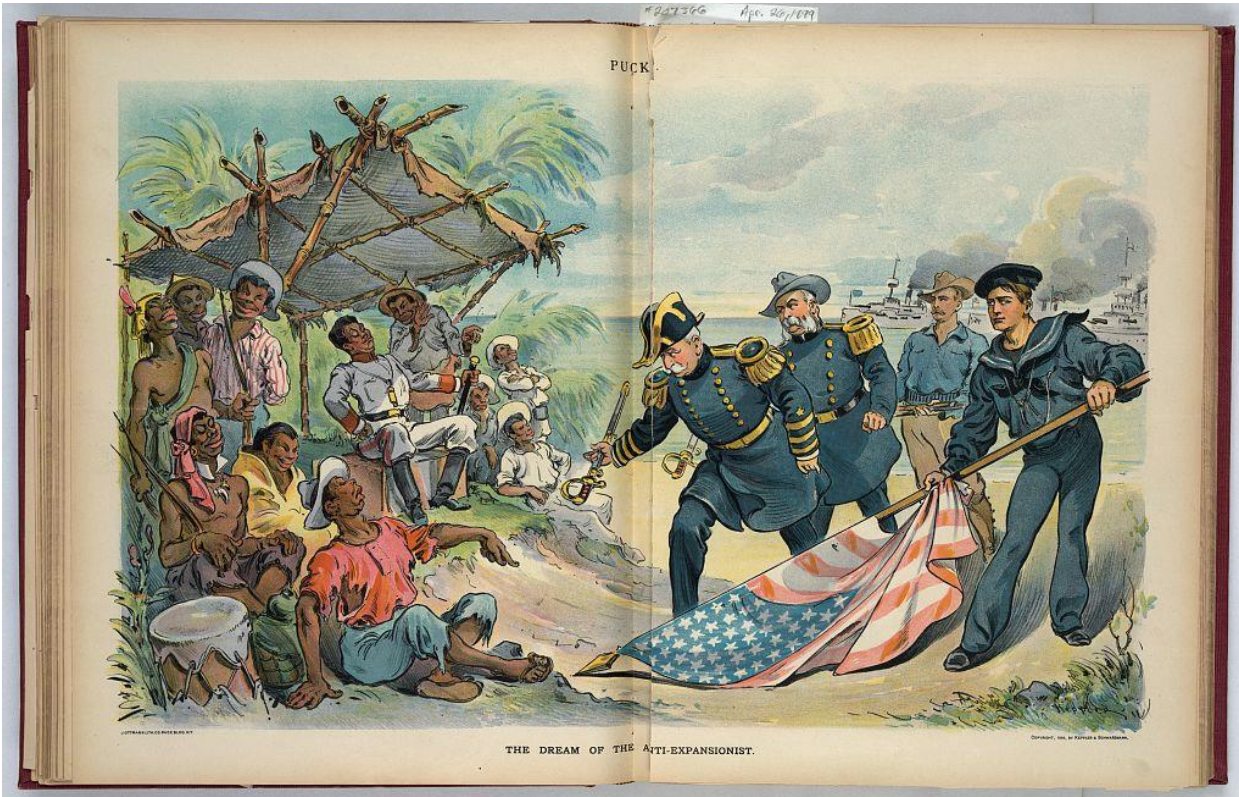
COLUMBIA'S EASTER BONNET.

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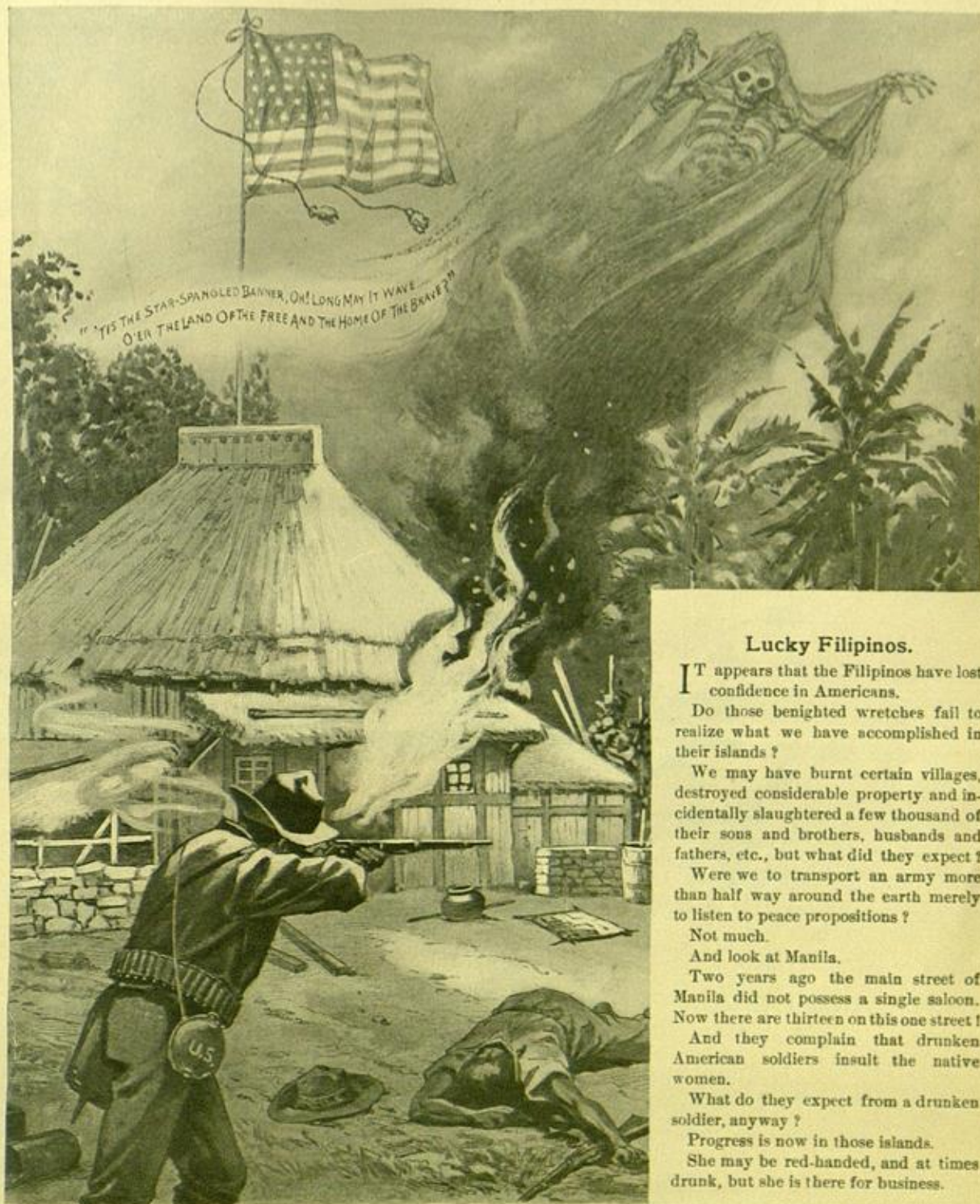




"THE FILIPINO'S FIRST BATH."  
"McKinley—'Oh, you dirty boy!'"  
Judge, Judge Company, New York, June 10, 1899 [artist: Grant Hamilton]







### Lucky Filipinos.

IT appears that the Filipinos have lost confidence in Americans.

Do those benighted wretches fail to realize what we have accomplished in their islands?

We may have burnt certain villages, destroyed considerable property and incidentally slaughtered a few thousand of their sons and brothers, husbands and fathers, etc., but what did they expect?

Were we to transport an army more than half way around the earth merely to listen to peace propositions?

Not much.

And look at Manila.

Two years ago the main street of Manila did not possess a single saloon. Now there are thirteen on this one street!

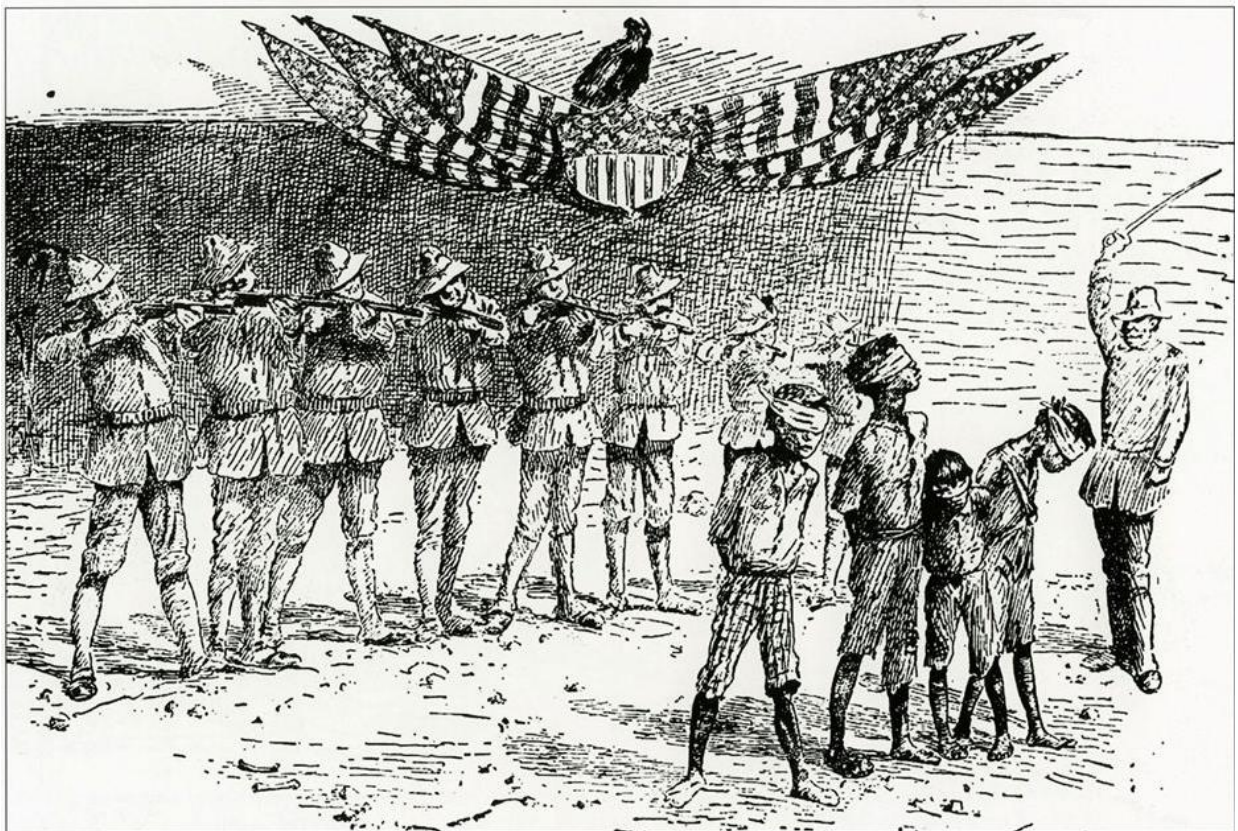
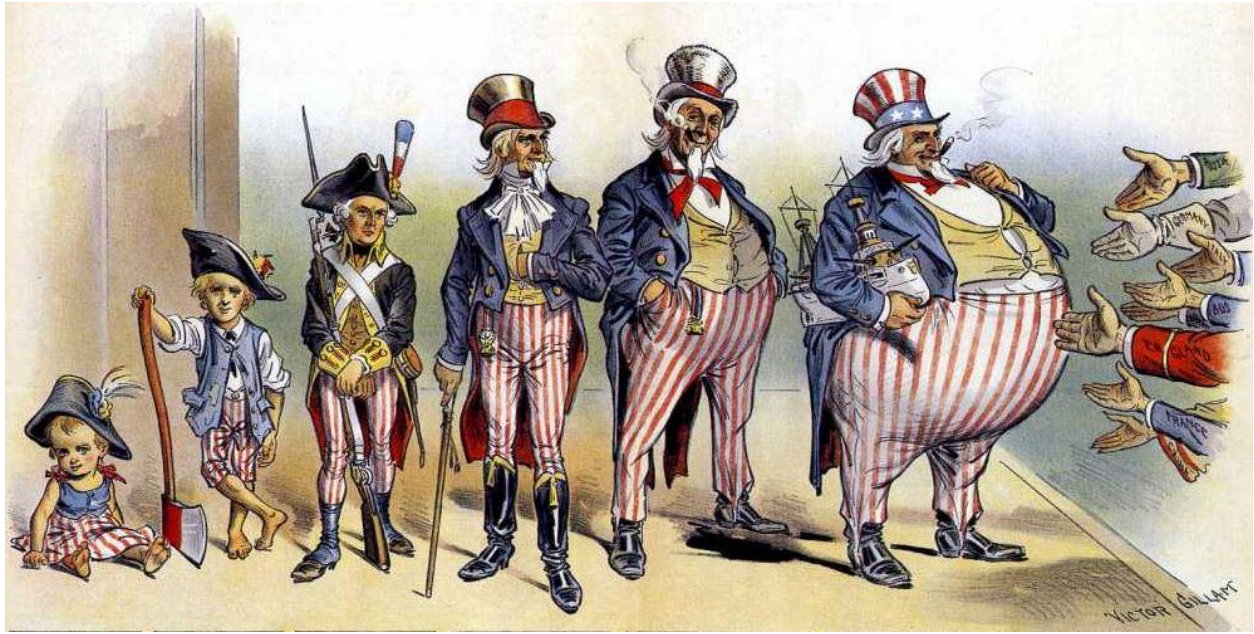
And they complain that drunken American soldiers insult the native women.

What do they expect from a drunken soldier, anyway?

Progress is now in those islands.

She may be red-handed, and at times drunk, but she is there for business.





"KILL EVERYONE OVER TEN."

"Criminals because they were born ten years before we took the Philippines."<sup>7</sup>

*The New York Evening Journal*, also published in *The Literary Digest*, Vol. XXIV, No. 20, May 17, 1902, p. 667 [artist: Homer Davenport]





ON GLOBE-SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1898.



WELL, I HARDLY KNOW WHICH TO TAKE FIRST!



