

THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS ANNEXATION DEBATE

**A re-creation of the nation's dilemma,
debating whether or not to end its isolationist era**

THOMAS R. BROCK, now deceased, wrote THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS ANNEXATION DEBATE. Tom graduated from Lakeland College in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and earned his M.A. in Contemporary American Studies from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. For Interact Tom also wrote three other debate re-creations as well as individual learning projects—TELEVISION and AUTOMOBILE. He taught social studies at Baraboo High School, Baraboo, Wisconsin, where he coached varsity football and track and field.

Copyright ©1992, 1980

Interact

10200 Jefferson Boulevard

P.O. Box 802

Culver City, CA 90232

ISBN 978-1-57336-152-1

All rights reserved. Only those pages of this simulation intended for student use as hand-outs may be reproduced by the teacher who has purchased this teaching unit from **Interact**. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording—without prior written permission from the publisher.

What foreign policy issues of today parallel foreign policy issues of 1898?

This re-creation of an 1898 debate over the annexation of the Philippine Islands will permit your students to experience vicariously an important moment in American history. The issues that were in conflict—imperialism, a nation’s selfish or humanitarian motives, and American status as a world power—loom as large today as they did nearly 100 years ago. Specifically, your students will experience the following:

Knowledge

1. Late 19th-century assumptions and beliefs about America’s status as a world power
2. The many foreign policy questions debated across America during the 1890s: *What is our country’s duty and destiny? Does might make right? Will expansionism mean prosperity? Are there legal and moral limits to imperialism? Does military necessity require American expansion into the Far East?*

Attitudes

1. Understanding that sincere, learned persons can disagree significantly on foreign policy issues because of differing personal value perspectives
2. Appreciating the importance of our country developing foreign policy positions today just as America did during the 1890s

Skills

1. Intertwining role identity information with an argument spoken or with a question asked or answered
2. Assuming an identity, standing up, and speaking before a whole class
3. Listening carefully enough to be able to take specific detail notes under generalized headings

OVERVIEW



*Interact's re-creations
take only a few hours
of class time.*

Four class periods—or days—are needed for this re-creation.

Day 1

After an interest catcher that makes students aware that they do have assumptions about America's role as an imperialist nation, students read the Student Guide's Background Essay on the issue of whether or not to annex the Philippine Islands. Then they are grouped into three factions: 1) eight imperialist speakers; 2) eight anti-imperialist speakers; 3) uncommitted individuals who will ask questions of the debaters. The three groups get separate handouts, which individuals study in order to contribute to the next day's debate.

Days 2-3

The room is changed into a special debate arrangement. Eight pairs of speakers debate the annexation question at an imaginary meeting in Kansas City in 1898: eight debaters speak for annexing the Philippine Islands; eight speak against; the remaining uncommitted persons ask specific questions of specific speakers. Regular votes are taken as the paired debaters present formal arguments and answer specific questions. Eventually one side is declared the winner.

Day 4

Either in study pairs or activity groups students debrief what happened during the previous days' debate. They emphasize late 19th-century thoughts and beliefs about the goals and desires of the United States, the impact of imperialism, and its advantages and disadvantages. They then discuss imperialism in current affairs and what our country's position should be. As a result, students not only understand the historical context of imperialism, they also assess the United States' place among the world community of nations today.

SETUP DIRECTIONS



Certain roles are so important that only you should determine who plays them.



Note: *You will not need to duplicate the bulleted items the first time you use this re-creation, for Interact has given you different colored handouts for those students playing roles. All other necessary items are in the Student Guide.*

1. **Assigning roles** Decide in advance how you wish to divide your students into the three groups. Since no student has a larger responsibility than making a two-minute speech and a one-minute answer to a question, you may wish to have students pull numbered slips to determine who is to be in which group if your group is roughly homogeneous in ability. However, if not, you may wish to assign students to roles to assure that all three groups have a fair number of “vocal” persons; that is, individuals either capable of or desirous of speaking on their feet. *Note:* After duplicating a ROLE ASSIGNMENTS: PHILIPPINE ANNEXATION DEBATE sheet, fill in its spaces with students’ names so that you will always know the debate’s sequence. (You may also want to give each student a copy.)
2. **Handouts** See note at left the first time you use this re-creation. For subsequent classes, duplicate the number in parentheses, using the masters in this Teacher Guide.
 - IMPERIALISTS PRO ARGUMENTS (eight: one page per speaker)
 - ANTI-IMPERIALISTS CON ARGUMENTS (eight: one page per speaker)
 - UNCOMMITTED QUESTIONS (eight, cut pages in half vertically, one per questioner)

Optional:

 - * ROLE ASSIGNMENTS: PHILIPPINES ANNEXATION DEBATE (one copy for your use)
3. **Poster materials** If you wish to encourage your students to make posters with slogans on them to hang in your classroom walls during the debate, obtain some plain cardboard, butcher paper, appropriate paint, and felt pens.

4. **Follow-up reading** Since some of your students will be stimulated by the quality of the debate, encourage them to check books out of the library on the Age of Imperialism. See Bibliography on page 4.



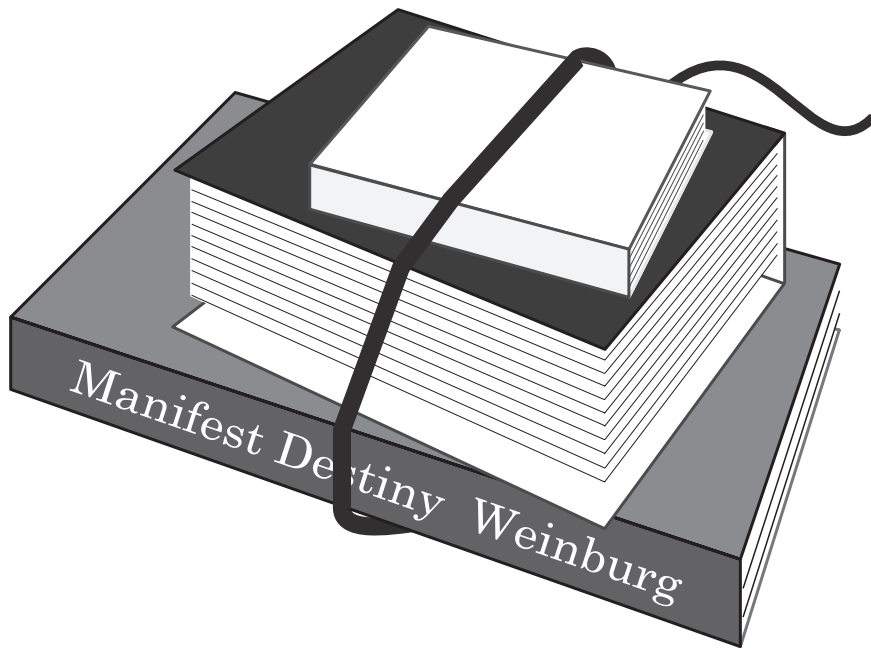
God wants us to
“take up the white
man's burden...”

An example of a poster your imperialist speakers might create for the debate

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Faulkner, Harold U., *Politics, Reform, and Expansion: 1890-1900*, Harper and Row, New York, 1963.
- Feder, Bernard, "The American Experiment in Imperialism: How and Why?" *Viewpoints U.S.A.*, American Book Company, New York, 1967.
- Greene, Theodore P., *American Imperialism in 1898*, D.C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1967.
- Pratt, Julius W., *Expansionists of 1898*, Baltimore, 1936.
- Weinburg, Albert, *Manifest Destiny*, Baltimore, 1935.
- Weinburg, Albert, "Populism, Imperialism, and Reform," *The Annals of America: 1885-1904*, Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, 1961.
- Weinburg, Albert, *The U.S. Overseas*, Time-Life, Inc., New York, 1969.

Consider asking your friendly school librarian to set up an **Age of Imperialism** reserve shelf in the school library for student use. On this shelf have him/her place books on this list which you can encourage students to read before or after the debate.



DAILY TEACHING DIRECTIONS - 1



Also assign your students to read the chapter in their textbook covering America's imperialist adventures in the 1890s and early 20th century. Have students pay particular attention to the maps and illustrations.

Before Day 1

(Could be one or more days in advance of Day 1)

1. Consider showing any film or filmstrip that will introduce either late 19th-century social/political roles or contemporary conflicts regarding imperialist/expansionist policies.
2. Point out how the audio-visual you have shown relates to the upcoming re-creation of the Philippine Islands Annexation Debate.
3. Encourage your students to read in the books you and your librarian have gathered on a reserve shelf labeled Age of Imperialism.

Day 1

(Some of the following teaching directions are rather brief since the instructional sequence is written out in considerable detail under Procedure in the Student Guide.)

1. If you have shown no film or filmstrip and want to awaken students to what is going to happen, consider using one of the following two optional motivators:

Option 1: Have your students take a pre-debate attitudes survey. Without any prior instructions, announce to your students that they are going to take a short survey in order to find out some of their attitudes about the United States and its policies/relationships to other countries. Request that they take the survey alone and turn it over upon completion. (Either duplicate all or some of the following 12 items or merely read them aloud.) Have your students write down an **SA, A, NO, D,** or **SD** for Strongly Agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

- a. The victorious country in a war should get the spoils of war (i.e., the defeated country's resources).
- b. Manifest Destiny (the belief that a country is destined by God to expand its territory) is a just cause for expansionism.
- c. Democratic ideals should be passed on to people who have never been exposed to them.
- d. What is best for the economic prosperity of my nation should always come before any other consideration.
- e. A nation with a high standard of living has a moral obligation to aid any country/territory with an extremely low standard of living (i.e., one with a high death or illiteracy rate, low food supply, high infant mortality rate).

DAILY TEACHING DIRECTIONS - 2

- f. If placing military bases in a foreign country means security for my country, such a practice is acceptable.
- g. My past experience and my knowledge have taught me that imperialism has a negative meaning.
- h. If another country friendly with my country is in danger of being overthrown, my country has a duty to come to its assistance.
- i. A truer symbol of a country's greatness is not its acquisition of new territory, but its relinquishing of formerly held territory.
- j. I would like to see my country pursue a policy of isolationism.
- k. Imperialism is a necessary and natural outgrowth of an industrialized, capitalist society.
- l. I am proud of the United States' record of assistance to other countries over the past 85 years.

You may decide to hold a short discussion after the survey is completed. Encourage students to share their thinking with one another. Another possibility would be to have your students write their names on their surveys and turn them in. Later you could redistribute them, as part of the debriefing that follows the debate.

Option 2. Have your students take a word association test. Before you hand out the list to your students (or show the list that's written on the chalkboard), explain that a word association test only works well if persons react as quickly as possible to the word or phrase that they see. Also, point out that they may "draw a blank" on several of the choices—but not to dwell on these.

- Imperialism
- Peace Corps
- Third-world people
- Missionary work
- Multinational corporation
- American presence in Vietnam
- Economic aid to underdeveloped countries
- Colonization
- Manifest destiny
- Monroe Doctrine
- NATO, SEATO, and ANZUS
- Spanish-American War
- Military aid to allies
- White supremacy over inferior races



You might also like to consider readministering the above test after the re-creation to see if the experience has changed any students' attitudes.

DAILY TEACHING DIRECTIONS - 3

- Open Door Policy
- Might makes right
- U.S. relinquishes Panama Canal
- Yankee go home
- U.S. supports shah of Iran
- U.S. annexes Philippine Islands

After allowing no more than three minutes to complete the exercise, either collect unsigned papers and redistribute them throughout the class, or have students keep their own papers. Explain that these terms, in a direct or indirect manner, relate to concepts, attitudes, policies, and the history of American imperialism/expansionism. Ask students to contribute responses from their own or their classmate's paper. Discuss the associations in such a fashion as to probe any prior knowledge your students may possess about imperialism in general and American imperialism in particular. Of course, you will get diverse responses, many of which will not relate to the re-creation. However, a key purpose is to weigh generally negative responses with those that were positive. As a conclusion, you might introduce the Philippine Islands Annexation Debate with words such as these: "In 1898 many Americans held similar discussions about the positive and negative effects of acquiring the Philippine Islands..."

2. Hand out the Student Guide and have students read the introductory and Purpose paragraphs.
3. Generally explain what's going to happen during the next three days.
4. Have students read on in the Student Guide through The 8 Argument Pairs.
5. Now turn to the Procedure section in the Student Guide and cover numbers 1-7 under Day 1.
6. Of course, you have the option of giving the students an extra day to prepare. Day 2 in such a case might consist of the following:
 - a. In separate classroom areas students get together and make posters packed with 1898 imperialism and anti-imperialist slogans.
 - b. In separate conference rooms students in the same groups could try out their speeches on one another.
 - c. Students could read articles or book chapters on the Age of Imperialism.

The amount of time your students need to prepare for this re-creation will depend upon their age, ability, and experience.

DAILY TEACHING DIRECTIONS - 4

- d. Using part of the chalkboard or a bulletin board, you could illustrate or tack up a map of the Philippine Islands and their surrounding area. In this way you could draw attention to the impact of what the United States stood to gain or lose in 1898.

Days 2-3

1. Follow numbers 1-7 under Days 2-3 in the Student Guide's Procedure section.
2. Before the debate begins, you might like to deliver a brief lecture in which you give some additional information about the Philippine Islands Annexation decision.
 - a. When first appraised of the situation in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, President William McKinley, who made the fateful decision to authorize annexation, was so unfamiliar with them that he was forced to look up the islands in a high school textbook.
 - b. During the uprising of Filipino guerrillas against American forces in the Philippines, anti-annexationists accused the American press of censoring news from the islands. The accusations did hold much truth, since most major news publications supported U.S. acquisition of the Philippines.
 - c. In the settlement at Paris, the price America paid to Spain for the Philippines was a mere \$20 million dollars.
 - d. By 1901 the Filipino rebels finally surrendered when their leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, was captured—but not until both sides had lost hundreds of lives.



If you are using this re-creation with more than one class, you might like to vary such follow-up activities so that different classes work on different activities and then present their conclusions to other classes via videotape.



Day 4

1. See numbers 1-2 under the Student Guide's Procedure section.
2. When you organize your study pairs or activity groups for debriefing, be sure you mix imperialists and anti-imperialists together. Don't have any study pair or activity group be only one foreign policy position.
3. Have each member of a study pair or an activity group write down his/her reactions during the two debriefing activities.
4. Using an option below or one of your own, pull together study pairs' or activity groups' thinking by having a general discussion. Here are two alternatives:

Option 1: Select one representative from each activity group to sit on a "hot seat" along with other activity groups' representatives. Conduct a general discussion of the two debriefing activities.