

Glad Adventures, Tragedies, Silences: Remembering and Forgetting Wars for Empire in Canada and the United States

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Article abstract

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Abstract

This article surveys a century of U.S. writing on the War of 1898, and Canadian writing on the South African War, in order to contrast national attitudes toward international conflict. While Canadians tend to view their American neighbours as more fond of military exploits, a comparison of the historical representation of these remarkably similar fin de siècle conflicts finds a greater willingness among American popular and scholarly analysts to impugn their nation's motivations in the War of 1898, and to call attention to aspects of the battle that reflect poorly on their nation's self-image. Canadians, for their part, have tended to steer clear of controversial aspects of the South African War, or to ignore it altogether – over the course of a century that has otherwise witnessed an ongoing fascination with Canada's participation in foreign conflicts. I suggest that this diffidence has roots in English Canada's historical affections for imperialism, faith in government, and ethnic and cultural homogeneity, the latter of which has seen much of the military history of Canada recounted by individuals of similar identities and points of view.

Résumé

L'auteur a passé en revue un siècle de documents écrits aux États-Unis sur la guerre de 1898 et au Canada, sur la guerre d'Afrique du Sud. Il voulait comparer les attitudes des Américains et des Canadiens face au conflit international. Les Canadiens ont tendance à penser que leurs voisins américains se passionnent plus qu'eux pour les exploits militaires. Cependant, en comparant les représentations historiques de ces deux conflits fin de siècle remarquablement semblables, on constate que les observateurs américains, populaires et savants, ont été plus enclins à remettre en question les motivations de leur pays dans la guerre de 1898 et à attirer l'attention sur les éléments susceptibles de ternir l'image qu'il avait de lui-même. Au contraire, les Canadiens ont eu tendance à éviter les aspects controversés de la guerre d'Afrique du Sud, ou à l'ignorer totalement, sur une période d'un siècle, qui a été par ailleurs celui d'une fascination continue pour la participation du Canada aux conflits internationaux. Selon l'auteur, cette répugnance s'expliquerait par les sympathies anciennes du Canada anglais pour l'impérialisme, sa confiance envers le gouvernement et son homogénéité ethnique et culturelle, homogénéité attestée par le fait que l'histoire militaire canadienne a été, pour l'essentiel, racontée par des observateurs aux identités et aux points de vue similaires.

An emerging narrative in Canadian public discourse concerns the nation's supposedly new affections and reverence for its military exploits. The sources of this shift, so the argument goes, include participation in the Afghanistan campaign, as well as a coordinated, top-down governmental initiative aimed at idolizing Canada's armed forces. Immigration guidebooks have been rewritten to accentuate Canada's military history, war opponents in Parliament are cast as Taliban sympathizers, and the Governor General makes public appearances in military fatigues. "My country seems to be slipping away in front of my very eyes," laments former NDP campaign coordinator Gerald Kaplan in taking stock of the new "martial spirit" seizing the nation.

The alleged novelty of these affections, however, is quite simply overstated. In truth there has long existed, particularly within English Canada, a reverence for the nation's military and a reluctance to appraise past conflicts critically—even when contrasted to attitudes to war among our "more belligerent" American neighbours. The sources of these national discrepancies are varied, and include Canadians' greater measures of ethnic and cultural homogeneity, deference to authority, and comfort with notions of empire—an idea pivotal to the origins and understandings of the major international conflicts of the first half of the twentieth century. While each of these factors mediating the Canadian response to war has attenuated in recent years in the face of growing diversity and the emergence of a more distinctive national identity, I suggest that their impact on our understandings of war has proven more durable.

A survey of popular and scholarly responses to the War of 1898 and the South African War serves as a useful starting point through which to illustrate some of these national disparities, as these conflicts proved foundational to Canadian and American attitudes toward warfare and international responsibilities throughout the course of the twentieth century. The U.S. challenge to the Spanish empire in Cuba led to the acquisition of America's first overseas territories and the beginnings of a truly global foreign policy; cultural historian Virginia Bouvier goes so far as to assert that the years surrounding the conflict "were perhaps most critical to the shaping of American identities and U.S. foreign policies in the twentieth century" (1). Canada's contribution to the South African War marked the nation's first official dispatch of troops to a foreign military confrontation, and in the words of Canadian historian Carman Miller, "served as a dress-rehearsal for the First World War" (*Painting* xi).

Despite their significance, the imperial character of these conflicts, along with the brutality that marked each war's prosecution, has rendered them less useful to the cause of nation building than many other wars. U.S. officials and public institutions, rarely accused of introversion when it comes to commemorating victories in battle, remained silent at the centenary of the War of 1898 (Bouvier 5). The Canadian government, meanwhile, sponsored what the CBC called a "solemn ceremony" to mark the centennial of the

“Boer War,” though the broadcaster conceded that this was a conflict “many Canadians know little about”—before providing a primer on the most rudimentary aspects of the war (CBC). Popular culture, too, has steered clear of these confrontations, in marked contrast to the treatment afforded other wars. However, for those whose ostensible goal is simply to comprehend and represent the past, rather than buttress any official national objectives, the wars would appear a productive site of inquiry, one that would provide criteria and caveats for potential involvement in future conflicts. U.S. analysts have taken up this task with enthusiasm, producing a considerable breadth of literature on the War of 1898 that interrogates official rhetoric regarding the origins, goals, and prosecution of the conflict. Canadians have appeared more than a little reticent in comparison, generating little scholarly or public debate regarding the South African War—in a century that has otherwise displayed an ongoing fascination with Canada’s participation in foreign conflicts. Though this silence certainly owes something to the relatively small Canadian contingent sent to bolster British claims to the region, it is also the case that the war does not accommodate itself neatly into the discourses of heroism, righteousness, nation building, and uncomplicated notions of victory that characterize national understandings of other, more celebrated wars.

To be sure, important aspects of these conflicts differ. Though the United States utilized local insurgents in their war with Spain, the American conflict was essentially a unilateral action conducted without official international alliances; Canada, along with Australia and New Zealand, fought as a junior partner in South Africa. The United States mustered more than 300,000 troops for their fight, while just over 7,000 Canadians volunteered for service in the Transvaal. Yet pairing the wars for the sake of comparison makes sense for a number of reasons. In addition to their imperial nature, the conflicts were virtually coterminous, and both can be said to mark these nations’ entry into world affairs.² Combat deaths—just over 3,000 American and nearly 300 Canadian—represent roughly equal percentages of the total population. Moreover, the conflicts emerged during what might be considered the zenith of a broad predisposition among Anglo-Saxon elites to view foreign policy along racial and linguistic lines. As Edward Kohn’s study of turn-of-the-century Canada–U.S. relations reveals, challenges to the international status quo from Germany, Japan, and Russia, along with the increasing currency of social Darwinism, led influential figures in English-speaking nations to advance the notion that Anglo-Saxon peoples should unite to fulfill a purportedly global manifest destiny. Under his reasoning, “[t]he wars with the Spanish, Filipinos, and the Boers were not unconnected, but constituted parts of a larger, highly significant picture that drew the English-speaking peoples of the world inexorably closer together” (Kohn 150). National representations of these wars, however, display rather striking divergences.

One of the more conspicuous features of U.S. popular and academic accounts of the War of 1898 is the sheer volume of the scholarship; as Joseph Fry noted, the conflict remains one of the most hotly debated and dynamic themes in U.S. foreign relations scholarship (278). To many Americans, the territorial acquisition that followed the war marked an unambiguous betrayal of the ideal essential to their very existence as a nation: that a people held an inalienable right to govern themselves. In June 1898, indignation over the proposed annexation of the Philippines inspired the formation of the Anti-Imperialist League, an organization that by 1899 counted over 50,000 members and included such noted and disparate figures as Grover Cleveland, Jane Addams, Mark Twain, Andrew Carnegie, W. E. B. Du Bois, Samuel Gompers, John Dewey, and Henry James (Zwick 174). Yet many of the earliest accounts of the war, written in an era still awash in the jingoistic euphoria that marked U.S. participation and victory, and one still beholden to Social Darwinist theorizing which could invoke “the white man’s burden” without irony or ignominy, lauded the U.S. intervention and ensuing triumph. In 1900 for instance, Josiah Strong, the Protestant clergyman whose previous book, *Our Country* (1885) had done much to convince Anglo-Saxon Americans that both heaven and humanity craved U.S. global leadership, published *Expansion under New World Conditions*. Redeploying the racial theorizing that had animated his earlier justification for America’s civilizing mission, Strong insisted that true freedom could only be achieved under the rule of law, a juridical condition both alien to non-white peoples and perfected under the U.S. governmental system. This happy coincidence of American supply and foreign demand necessitated a protracted period of U.S. guidance, rather than immediate independence, for areas delivered from Spanish rule in 1898 (LaFeber 72–80). And for Strong, this extension of U.S. hegemony was only the beginning; in fact, only two potential obstacles lay between Anglo-Saxons and their global destiny. “Is there any doubt that this race,” he queried, “unless devitalized by alcohol and tobacco, is destined to dispossess many weaker races, assimilate others, and mold the remainder until, in a very true and important sense, it has Anglo-Saxonized mankind” (qtd. in Pratt 6)?

This avowal of the righteousness of U.S. actions has been reprised repeatedly in the century since the conflict, endorsing U.S. diplomat and future Secretary of State John Hay’s declaration that this had been “a splendid little war.” Paul L. Haworth, writing in 1920 on the heels of a later war that traumatized his nation and the globe, found solace in the earlier U.S. action in Cuba, calling it “one of the most admirable chapters in human annals” (qtd. in Perez 38). Similarly, Randolph Greenfield Adams’ 1933 history of U.S. international relations identified the deliverance of the Cubans as “one of the most creditable pages in American foreign policy” (qtd. in Perez 37). Such views faced increasingly potent challenges in the latter half of the twentieth century, but they have proved durable nonetheless. Writing in 1993, military historian

James Bradford held that the United States did not enter the war to forward any goals besides restoring regional order and “maintain[ing] the principle of self determination,” marking the first time the nation had taken up arms “out of a sense of moral obligation” and anticipating the core values embodied in Wilson’s Fourteen Points (xiii–xiv). This line of thinking taps into a long tradition of American exceptionalism, chosen-ness, and destiny; such themes were made explicit in journalist and future Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg’s 1926 contention that war with Spain confirmed the United States “is prepared to serve human-kind in its own way and on its own initiative with a purity of dedication unmatched in any other government on earth” (qtd. in Perez 42).

Canada’s earliest considerations of the South African War drew on similar assumptions of mission, altruism, and Anglo-Saxon supremacy. The first self-described “history” of the conflict produced in Canada, T. G. Marquis’s *Canada’s Sons on Kopje and Veldt*, was in fact a contemporaneous account written before the operation was a year old. Marquis employed official reports and correspondence from Canadian soldiers in an unabashed hagiography to his nation’s contribution. The soldiers were “heroically fighting the Empire’s battles,” while the letters they wrote demonstrate a virility, singleness of purpose, and courage that characterized romantic, Victorian notions of honour. “Manly letters these!” Marquis exclaimed. “No boasting; all showing that the soldiers realized the awfulness of war but with no thought of leaving the field till the work they had volunteered to do was accomplished” (iii–iv). Presbyterian minister and Queen’s University Principal George Munro Grant provided an introduction to the work, one which made plain his commitment to Empire, race, and “muscular Christianity”—the Victorian-age belief that male athletic endeavour fostered Christian morality, and furnished young men with the vigour required to defend the Empire (Coleman 129–30). Though Grant conceded that the war did not imperil Canada any more than if it “had broken out in Saturn,” nonetheless, “[a]n electric current flashed across the Continent, from Halifax to Victoria, thrilling all English-speaking hearts at any rate, and a cry went up that the war was Canada’s as well as England’s” (1–2, 4). While the response demonstrated Canada’s commitment to “the Empire ... freedom, [and] equality for all white men,” it proved also that “[w]e are henceforth a nation... one that will require military build-up in order to defend itself” (5–6).

Grant’s reference to the rapture experienced by “English-speaking hearts” hints at the linguistic divisions exposed by the decision of the Laurier Liberals to commit troops to the conflict, a theme underdeveloped in Marquis’s subsequent handling of the story. The omission of domestic politics was rectified to a degree in W. Sanford Evans’ *The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism* (1901). Evans, an educator and journalist, founded the Canadian Club, an organization established to promote Canadian nationalism, and the largest of many clubs dedicated to the same goal around the turn of the century (Henry). He lauded Canada’s participation in South African War as an act of a maturing

nation, though one that remained British in character and allegiance. For this reason, and like Grant, Evans saw no contradiction between loyalty to Canada and the Empire; the British traditions, wrote the latter, "are the only common national traditions" (2). From the outset, then, the war could be employed to advance decidedly partisan ends: that Britishness constituted Canada's sole and rightful identity; that loyal Canadians supported involvement in South Africa; that francophones were on the losing side of both the participation debate and history itself.

While Americans such as Josiah Strong eulogized the War of 1898 with comparable reverence, a preponderance of U.S. analysts of that war have also, *from the beginning*, found roughly the opposite of "purity" in the motives for U.S. intervention. Some contemporaneous appraisals emphasized the blundering and duplicity of the McKinley administration's prewar diplomacy with Spain; others depicted an effete federal government capitulating to public demands for a war of retribution after the explosion that sank the *USS Maine* in Havana Harbor, a public incited by the "yellow journalism" purveyed by the Hearst and Pulitzer newspaper empires (Combs 79; Wilkinson; Wisan). Later writers operating from "realist" theoretical paradigms viewed the decision to intervene as a spasm of illogic, one that placed misguided idealism above the national interest. George Kennan's *American Diplomacy*, for instance, depicted the late-nineteenth-century dalliance with imperialism as "a momentary psychological lapse" of little consequence to the broader arc of U.S. history (Amy Kaplan 14). Still others praised the intervention and lamented the ensuing imperial acquisitions by depicting a noble mission gone sour. Spurred to righteous action by Spanish depredations against the Cuban people, U.S. officials then fell prey to the seductions of territorial gain, betraying Spain's erstwhile colonial subjects, the American people, and their nation's core principles (Offner ix–x). Clearly, many of these interpretations share an underlying desire to cast the episode as unrepresentative of an "authentic" and more honourable America. Still, aberrations, accidents, fits of madness, sudden shifts in policy, and other mechanisms summoned to salvage an ostensibly broader and nobler national trajectory still serve to brand *this* war, which resulted in the deaths of thousands of Americans, a mistake.³ In a strictly nationalist vein, then, this is tantamount to claiming that these soldiers died in error, and in futility. Whether such interpretations can withstand the weight of evidence is a rather different question than whether analysts of the war are willing to impugn their nation's wartime conduct and, by extension, affix varying degrees of senselessness to the sacrifice of U.S. service personnel (to say nothing of civilians or enemy combatants).

Moreover, a host of Americans have taken a much tougher line, emphasizing the centrality of premeditated imperial acquisition and self-interest to the U.S. intervention. The Anti-Imperialist League's denunciations of McKinley's policies were echoed by prominent federal politicians and, though he was in the

employ of war advocate Hearst, renowned journalist Ambrose Bierce (Berkove 22–26).⁴ Likeminded academics soon entered the fray. In 1906, Johns Hopkins political scientist Horace Flack published a lengthy journal article assessing the legality of the U.S. intervention, weighing the justifications provided by the McKinley administration against international and U.S. law, the Constitution, and the evidence. In careful, dispassionate prose, Flack concluded that the war could not be defended under any criteria, and that the objective of *Cuba libre* could have been obtained through diplomatic means rather than force of arms. Just as importantly, altruistic sentiment, the bane of the realists and the justification of the idealists, took a back seat in this account; rather, economic and strategic interests drove America's Cuba policy, generating a sequence of events that contradicted the nation's anti-colonial principles.

Such hand wringing over the stigma of empire was wholly absent from the earliest Canadian depictions of the South African campaign. For authors like Marquis and Evans, "empire" was a concept that invoked honour rather than discomfort. As Carl Berger first argued, the era's English Canadians viewed a commitment to empire as a form of Canadian nationalism, and believed participation in war would enhance Canada's standing as a partner rather than a subordinate in the Empire (*The Sense of Power*). Moreover, English Canada was caught up in an empire-wide reinvigoration of militant imperialism, one cultivated by such factors as increased colonial competition, a social-Darwinist-inspired veneration for all things Anglo-Saxon, and the muscular Christianity personified by Grant (Miller, *Painting* 6; Desmond Morton, "The Cadet Movement" 56–67). The earliest tales of valour in the Transvaal thus spoke to a renewed commitment to militarism and the crown among the era's English Canadians. Indeed, the war would spawn a pro-imperialist, rather than anti-imperialist, league: the Federation of the Daughters of the Empire (later the Imperial Order Daughters of Empire), established in 1900 midst the patriotic zeal that seized much of English Canada because of participation in the conflict. As Katie Pickles explained, to this organization, "Canada was to become a nation through conformity to a grand narrative, the contents of which were to be based upon British democracy and constitutional monarchy [and] the Christian myths and saintly symbols of the British Isles..." (3).

Little more than a decade later, English Canada's commitment to militarism and empire would see Canada entering the First World War with what Tim Cook called "an orgy of military pageantry" (21). In the United States, that same conflict only heightened distaste for an international order administered by imperial powers (Mayers 247). Consequently, America's own imperial war with Spain received new and particularly rough reviews. In 1926, Moorfield Storey and Marcial Lichauco produced a scathing indictment of U.S. conduct, one whose venom owed a great deal to the authors' identities and experiences. Storey, born in 1845 to Massachusetts abolitionists, first worked as private secretary to firebrand Radical Republican Senator Charles Sumner before

serving long tenures as president of both the NAACP and the Anti-Imperialist League (Hixson 332). Co-author Lichauco was the first Filipino to graduate from Harvard Law School; following Philippine independence from U.S. rule in 1946, he would serve as his nation's ambassador to a succession of European nations (De Wolfe Howe 354). Their carefully documented monograph based its condemnation of U.S. actions on the betrayal of core elements of national ideals. Here, the American people are not the vengeful catalysts for war, but honourable guardians of their nation's values who have been betrayed by elite interests: The "conquest and retention" of the Philippines, the authors wrote, "were due to the influence of a comparatively few men who, caring nothing for American principles or the interests either of the Filipinos or their own countrymen, have sought to make money for themselves at the expense of both" (vii). An entire chapter is dedicated to the cruelty and treachery of U.S. forces on the Philippine islands, with unflinching depictions of scorched-earth campaigns, concentration camps, torture, the killing of civilians, the mutilation of the dead, and the press censorship that concealed these crimes from the American public (126–54). The authors' primary motive was to remove this veil of suppression and cant; if the people knew the full story of the war, they maintained, this assault against national principals and humanity would not be tolerated (97).

This faith in the ultimate rationality and goodness of the people (in contrast to the poisonous influence of elite interests) taps into an American tradition of radical democracy that has antecedents in Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, and the Populist movement, to name but a few. The appeal to reason in the face of an intolerable wrong situates the narrative in the tradition of American Revolutionary pamphleteers—most famously Thomas Paine—as well as similar publications produced by ex-slaves and other abolitionists, suffragettes, and progressive-era muckraking journalists, while the call for the nation to live up to its idealistic creed enjoys a similar lineage. Storey's personal involvement with previous, morally driven domestic crusades against slavery and segregation provided direct experience with the techniques of effective campaigns to redress social ills, while the comparatively liberal immigration policies that characterized the United States at the turn-of-the-century account for the presence of foreign nationals like Lichauco who possessed direct connections to the colonized world. In short, a decidedly American constellation of influences turned out a decidedly American product.

It is also worth noting that Storey's tenure at the head of both the NAACP and the Anti-Imperialist League meant that he enjoyed a relatively high national profile. Other opponents of America's involvement in the War of 1898 were similarly well positioned. One of the most widely known and influential military historians of the twentieth century, *New York Herald-Tribune* writer and editor Walter Millis, turned his attention to the war with Spain in 1931 (Weigley 501). Like *The Conquest of the Philippines*, Millis's *The Martial*

Spirit is something of a jeremiad calling his nation to rediscover their true and better selves, to assert the primacy of democracy over special interests. Where Storey and Lichauco employed outrage and invective to move their audience, Millis applied irony, understatement, and black humour to the same end, revealing a military campaign marked by farce rather than heroism. Outlining a century-long history of U.S. covetousness toward Cuba, Millis found that while the American people wanted *Cuba libre*, U.S. officials simply wanted Cuba. Once the decision to intervene was made, policymakers experienced conspicuous difficulties reigning in their appetites: “But if we were after all setting out to conquer the Philippines,” wrote Millis, “what about Porto Rico, which was so much more easily available? And if the Filipino insurgents were to be gently steam-rolled, might not even the Cubans, in spite of all of our hopes, turn out to be unprepared for self-government” (226)?

Millis wrote popular histories whose scholarly credentials made them influential in academic circles as well. Similarly, the most prominent U.S. historians from the academy during this era enjoyed a standing beyond the university grounds that would be entirely alien to today’s cohort, wielding considerable influence over public debates and policymaking.⁵ In the first half of the twentieth century, none working in the field could claim a higher profile than the progressive historians, a group that included Frederick Jackson Turner, Charles Beard, and V. L. Parrington, among others. These authors expressed differing views on a variety of subjects, including the rectitude of U.S. expansion; Turner’s 1893 “frontier thesis” famously viewed expansion as the source of American distinctiveness and success, while subsequent progressives tended toward strong disavowals of empire. Yet the school was unified, noted Richard Hofstadter, in seeing “economic and political conflict” as history’s central trope, an approach that borrowed heavily from the social sciences and served as a radical departure from more conservative, consensual, and statist models of history (437).

For Parrington, war constituted the greatest threat to the democratic ideal, as it furnished governmental and business interests with the optimal conditions in which to magnify their authority at the expense of the commonality. The War of 1898, which he considered a vehicle for economic imperialism, thus provided two-pronged assault on American liberalism, redoubling “aristocratic” control at home while denying self-government abroad (Howlett 53). Beard held a similar view. *The Rise of American Civilization* (1927), the highly regarded, bestselling survey co-authored with his wife and prominent feminist Mary Ritter Beard, depicted 1898 not as a deviation in the American narrative, but a continuation of an imperial trajectory begun prior to the Civil War under the mantras of the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny (482). While America’s imperialist inclinations provided the focus of just one chapter in the Beards’ sweeping chronicle of the nation’s history, other, lesser-known progressives of the 1920s would produce monographs on U.S.–Latin American affairs that

likewise portrayed the relationship as a matter of unvarnished imperialism (Nearing and Freeman; Jenks). In short, a significant body of work that condemned U.S. involvement, that highlighted self-interest rather than idealism as the primary incentive for war, has from the beginning tainted the legacy of the “splendid little war.”

In Canada, the interwar years witnessed no new studies of the South African campaign. In fact, the contemporaneous (and decidedly upbeat) accounts penned by Marquis and Evans, completed before the war’s unexpected duration and barbarity challenged simplistic notions of the pre-eminence of the empire and the cause, remained the only Canadian monographs dedicated to the conflict. A handful of soldiers’ memoirs and regimental histories appeared in the ensuing decades, but those waiting for the conclusion to the story begun in 1901 by Evans—specifically a comprehensive analysis of the *entire* war’s military, social, and political implications for Canada—would grow very old indeed. The next book-length study, and the first to chronicle the war to its distinctly bitter conclusion, would appear more than nine decades after *The Canadian Contingents. Painting the Map Red* (1993), Carman Miller’s lifeline to those holding their breath for the sequel, puzzled over the contradiction marking the silence regarding the war. He wrote:

Most historians agree that the South African War had a profound impact upon Canadian life and politics. According to them, the war weakened imperial ties, strengthened English Canadian nationalism, “split open the cleft between” English and French Canadians, launched the twentieth-century French-Canadian nationalist movement, broke Laurier’s “power” in Quebec, stimulated militia reform, and served as a dress rehearsal for the First World War. But despite its admitted importance, more than ninety years after Canadian troops first landed in Cape Town, there is still no comprehensive study of Canada’s participation in the war. (xi)

With so few monographs dedicated to Canada’s experience in South Africa, those interested in broadening their understanding of the episode prior to 1993 were required to mine general historical surveys. The effort could hardly be considered satiating, however, as these accounts of the conflict are marked by narrowness, insularity, and above all, remarkable brevity. Even in early-century works, the South African campaign barely registers. George Wrong’s hefty 1938 chronicle of the Canadian people devotes precisely one paragraph to the episode (and an entire chapter to the Great War) (391). Most general surveys dedicate two or three paragraphs to the conflict, a pattern that is difficult to square with the war’s precedent, stakes, and impact on Canadian development. For much of the twentieth century, in fact, English-Canadian historians held fast to the bearing afforded the war by Stephen Leacock. “That tragic struggle,”

he wrote in his 1941 history of Canada, “needs no extended record here for its terrible reality lay far away and outside the path of our history” (198).

Marked, too, is the narrow range of issues typically addressed. Most summaries draw attention to constitutional questions raised by Britain’s request that Canada provide troops, to wider questions of Canadian sovereignty and identity, and to the parliamentary debates which served to fracture the nation along regional and linguistic lines. Did Governor General Minto possess the authority, wondered Wrong, to summon a Canadian military force without consulting parliament? (391). “[W]ill this proposal,” asked Arthur Lower “take us closer to (or further from) Britain?—The States?” (442). According to Norman Penlington, Laurier’s underlying motivation for providing troops lay in the hope that participation would purchase a renewed commitment on the part of Britain to Canada’s defence and territorial claims (40–41). Hopes would be dashed just four years later, when Britain sided with the United States in a dispute over the placement of the Alaskan border. “The break in national unity was serious enough,” argued Tory Donald Creighton in assessing the war’s key lesson, “and the gradual realization that it had been incurred without any compensating national benefit was almost equally disturbing” (*The Story of Canada* 198). Questions surrounding the origins of the conflict, and the wider imperial and international interests involved, remained unaddressed.

In fact, most narratives of the war commence only when the conflict reaches Canadian shores—that is, once Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain expressed his expectation that Canada would furnish troops for the battle. Wrong’s story of the conflict simply began, “When in July, 1899, war in South Africa was imminent, Chamberlain asked definitely whether Canada would offer troops to serve with the British forces”; no explanation is provided of the war’s causes, issues, or even principal combatants (391). “The South African War broke out in 1899,” stated J. M. S. Careless in his 1959 survey, “and Canada had to decide what its policy would be toward this empire struggle” (317). Donald Creighton’s 600-page exposition of the Canadian experience, *Dominion of the North* (1944), contextualized the South African clash in precisely ten words (“that ominous explosion of trouble with which the century closed”) before proceeding directly to Chamberlain’s appeal to Canada and the ensuing parliamentary wrangling (399). *Our History* (1970), a slim volume from the Secretary of State’s “Canadian Citizenship Series,” identified only one victim in the conflict: “The outbreak of the war between Britain and the Boers of South Africa in 1899,” it began, “placed the Laurier government in a difficult position.” The domestic troop debate was the only skirmish worth mentioning in the sole paragraph on the war that followed, a passage that ended with a reminder that Laurier “was compelled to bear the brunt of attack from both sides of the controversy” (63). That the work was produced under the auspices of a subsequent Liberal government may go far in explaining this rather pointed empathy for the prime minister’s predicament.

A few writers furnished a primer on the origins of the Anglo–Boer quarrel, with Carl Wittke going so far as to acknowledge, in his *History of Canada* (1928), that Britain’s “investments and aggressive enterprise” and the “ruthless imperialis[m]” of Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain rankled the Boers; it is worth noting that Wittke, one of the few historians of Canada to invoke economic causation or to impugn Britain, was in fact an American progressive (247). Among Canadians, W. L. Morton’s account stands out for making at least passing mention of growing imperial rivalries as a source of British pressure for military support from Canada (397). Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook’s *Canada 1896–1921* (1974) provided one of the more sustained analyses of the war before the publication of Miller’s 1993 volume, but these authors’ discussion of the war’s origins remained modest: a cryptic reference to “Cecil Rhodes’ interests” and the denial of the mostly British Uitlanders’ political rights provided the only clues as to why Britain found itself at war in 1899 (38). Desmond Morton’s inventory of the war’s origins presented the British as the victims and the Boers as the aggressors, with the fanaticism and backwardness of the latter providing the sole impetus for the carnage that would follow. Morton wrote, “Two tiny Boer republics had concluded that preservation of their Old Testament lifestyle compelled them to drive the British into the sea” (*A Short History* 125).

In addition to appearing ahistorical, this disavowal of context is notable for at least two reasons. First, failure to exhume the myriad sources of the conflict and the broader stakes and implications involved does not permit an informed discussion of whether Canadian participation was justified. Laurier may have found it politically expedient, both domestically and with respect to imperial relations, to send troops, and participation may (or may not, depending on the writer) have spurred Canadian sovereignty and an emergent nationalism, but these factors alone do not appear sufficient as *casus belli* or *casus foederis*, as the case may be.

Second, beyond Canadian borders, the South African War has generated more scholarly and popular writing than any other aspect of that region’s history, while the war’s origins have proven the most controversial issue in South African historiography (Smith 23; Lowry, “Introduction” 4). Bitter contests over the motivations behind the resort to arms emerged even before the battle began (Nash). In 1900, J. A. Hobson wrote a forceful and widely read critique of the economic interests that impelled the British to resort to arms that emerged during the war, one that—aside from the author’s regrettable forays into the role of “Jewish” capital in fomenting war—continues to inform contemporary analyses of root causes (Jeeves 235). Before the 1993 publication of Miller’s volume, however, readers confined to Canadian renderings of the war would have little idea that the hostilities emerged after nearly a century of tension between Britain and the Boers; that the British were generally understood to have provoked the war (Smith 38); that British society itself was deeply divided

over the propriety of the conflict; that British mining interests had a decided interest in pressing the issue and manipulated the news coverage presented to empire readers (Jeeves 235); that beyond the empire there existed a “near-universal public sympathy” for the Boers; that Cecil Rhodes’ unauthorized Jameson Raid of 1895–96, intended to spark a broad revolt against the Kruger government, received worldwide condemnation; or that the importation of cheap Chinese labour to work the mines in the immediate aftermath of the British victory undermined Britain’s already-tenuous claim to be fighting for ideals rather than profit (Lowry, “The Boers Were” 204–5).

Robert Page provided a corrective to the dearth of international perspective in Canadian representations of the conflict in two slender volumes, *Imperialism and Canada* (1972), and *The Boer War and Canadian Imperialism* (1987). June Callwood likewise provided more context on the war in two short (and unarguable) sentences than most of the surveys that predated her 1981 popular history combined, reporting that the decision to go to war “divided Britain itself” into pro-imperial and pro-Boer factions, and that Cecil Rhodes’ appetite for diamonds had served to inflame the region (229). Feminist author and politician Nellie McClung’s 1945 memoir *The Stream Runs Fast* recalled that she and her Manitoba neighbours wondered whether gold and diamonds “had kindled all the flame of conquest” in 1899, as “there seemed to be no good reason for fighting the Boers” (350–51). Outside these accounts, such themes rarely found their way into Canadian assessments for much of the twentieth century.

If the lead-in to the conflict is generally underdeveloped in Canadian histories, the summary of the conflict itself and its eventual resolution is doubly so. In volume after volume, the discussion of the episode ends once the decision is made to send troops—an extraordinarily curious posture for any story of war. A few general surveys mentioned the number of volunteers sent to South Africa (about 7,300), while none counted the dead (nearly 300) or wounded (about the same) (Page, *The Boer War* 13). George Wrong stated simply that the troops “did good service,” without revealing who won the war or under what circumstances (391). Desmond Morton likewise noted only that the men “performed well” (*A Short History* 125) while Stephen Leacock claimed that the soldiers found “a glad adventure” in the Transvaal (198). Again only Page concedes, in a brief paragraph, that imperial forces came to adopt a scorched-earth policy and herded women and children into “poorly run” refugee camps, tactics which “led to extensive criticism of the war by 1902” (*The Boer War* 15). In non-Canadian accounts, this aspect of the war received scrutiny from the outset; for instance, British journalist and future Liberal Member of Parliament J. M. Robertson’s muckraking reports from the field—collected in a 1901 publication bearing the unambiguous title *Wrecking the Empire*—made it plain that imperial forces employed merciless tactics in their efforts to bring the Boers to heel (Lowry, “Introduction” 10).

British women who travelled to the war zone, meanwhile, were instrumental in exposing the dreadful conditions in the camps, where disease killed nearly 30,000 mostly women and children (more than double the number of all those killed in battle on both sides) (Lowry, "The Boers Were" 211; Grundlingh 19).

At times, American authors, too, found reason to avoid some of the more troubling aspects of the War of 1898. The earliest years of the Cold War standoff contributed to the rise of the "consensus school" of historians, who embraced notions of the "exceptional" and essentially harmonious character of American society (Kaye 44–45). Not surprisingly, censure of the war with Spain—an interpretation which could provide fodder for those who questioned the integrity of U.S. global leadership—fell out of favour in the 1940s and 1950s; the only American monograph on the war produced in those years bore the title *The Splendid Little War*, a phrase the author employed without irony in an attempt to reclaim it from war critics (Freidel; Golay x). Over the next decades, however, the Civil Rights struggle, the Vietnam War, and later the politics of identity undermined the notions of national harmony promulgated by the consensus school and re-established conflict as a central theme in U.S. history. A new generation of scholars with such leanings began to emerge in the late 1950s, reprising many of the themes of the progressives, and targeting 1898 as a watershed in the contest over the nature of American internationalism.

None of this generation of historians was as influential as William Appleman Williams. While disagreeing with Turner's proposition that America's economic and democratic vitality required an ever-expanding frontier, Williams argued in 1955 that *belief* in this fallacy assumed canonical status by the end of the nineteenth century. Thus transformed from "an idea into an ideology," the thesis impelled the territorial acquisitions of 1898 and a wider "Open Door" policy in areas outside America's traditional sphere of influence (Williams, "The Frontier Thesis" 96). Williams' landmark study *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959) extended these themes, depicting a nation that, since the 1890s, had pursued an aggressive imperialistic foreign policy in an effort to ward off domestic conflict and economic disaster. That Williams found the policy unnecessary for economic security, harmful to the American character and the wider world, and a repudiation of the ideal of self-determination rendered the history of U.S. foreign affairs "tragic."

It is difficult to identify a single more influential work on U.S. international affairs. *Tragedy* became a bestseller, resulting in two reprints in which the author refined his views and responded to critics. He quickly attracted a multitude of disciples, and more than any other figure, established the legitimacy of New Left history in the United States. In the mid-1970s, following a war in Vietnam that seemed to confirm the centrality of imperialism to U.S. foreign policymaking, Howard Schonberger commented on the "increasing domination of the historiography of American foreign policy" by acolytes of *Tragedy* (249).

In subsequent decades, scholars inspired by postmodernism, social constructivism, feminism, and the so-called “cultural turn,” further broadened the source of the imperialist drive from a narrow focus on politics and economics toward cultural and ideological factors. The significance of race to American expansionism was one of the more consistent themes. Thomas Paterson, Williams’ student, outlined some of the effects of the social Darwinist discourse so prevalent among the era’s elites at the time of the War of 1898: “First, those who presume to be superior do not negotiate with those they deem inferior; diplomacy is thus downgraded, whereas war is elevated as an instrument of policy. Second, superiors expect to win wars against inferiors; so war becomes an attractive method to gain foreign policy objectives and to civilize a retrograde world” (354).

Recent decades have also witnessed a rise in the number of women contributing to the history of U.S. foreign relations, with appreciable effects on the way the field has been conceptualized. Kristin Hoganson, for example, outlined the centrality of chivalric ideas of manhood in American debates surrounding the decision to declare war on Spain. War advocates appealed to American manhood after the sinking of the Maine “not only because of their desire to redeem American honor vis-à-vis Spain, but also because they believed that American men *needed* a war—that their manly fiber was in doubt” (129, emphasis in original). Such appeals served to silence female voices in debates over the conflict, and to cast male war opponents as effeminate and childish. Subsequent work has shed further light on the relationship of women to the imperial project, including their work as missionaries, nurses, educators, and proponents or opponents of U.S. expansionism.⁶

Recent scholarship has also paid greater attention to non-U.S. actors, sources, and internationalist interpretive frameworks, including dependency and world systems theories; the effect has been to account fully for not only the domestic context of U.S. policymaking, but also the impacts of policy on those outside U.S. borders (Fry). What’s more, the identities of many of those currently analyzing America’s interactions with the outside world are themselves linked to the broader globe; often, the result is a widening angle of vision on events heretofore explained by those operating in a rather closed world of shared cultural and epistemological assumptions.⁷ The sources of this increasing diversification of the field include the growing percentages, over the course of the twentieth century, of non-white American residents, as well as measures taken since the Civil Rights era to make the workplace—including the academy—more representative of this demographic fact. Of equal importance is the sheer global reach of the United States: an unprecedented percentage of the world’s peoples has encountered U.S. power, and must come to terms with this fact in the telling of their own stories. As such, the recounting of the American narrative has itself become internationalized; it cannot be contained within national boundaries. In all, the critique of 1898 has grown in power and

sophistication over time, to include analysis of the ways in which factors such as gender, discursive regimes, and imperial rivalries in a complex system of racially ordered global competition drove U.S. policy. None of these extensions of the story salve the national self-concept, as each adds density and nuance to the idea of an expansionist, predatory foreign policy.

When placed alongside these readings, the bulk of Canadian representations of the South African War appear positively Panglossian. Yet many Canadian historians chose to single out at least one contentious aspect of the conflict: as was the case with the Sanford Evans' 1901 synopsis of the war's implications for Canada, subsequent writers employed the war to expound upon—and in some cases, exacerbate—the division between the nation's "two solitudes." The South African confrontation proved doubly yielding to such efforts, as the rift between the British and the Boers contained elements easily recognizable to English Canadians: in South Africa, so the narrative went, the British confronted a simple, pastoral people of alien speech who were seemingly unwilling or unable to surrender to the inevitability of industrial progress. English-Canadian condemnations of the Boers' alleged backwardness could thus carry supplementary and rather undisguised implications. W. G. Hardy voiced analogous sentiments in describing Canadian francophones' response to the crisis in the Transvaal: "French Canada," he wrote, "shrugged its shoulders and turned back to its farms and its church bells" (427). J. Castell Hopkins simply attributed Francophone opposition to ignorance. "The people of Quebec," he averred in 1901, "had not yet been educated up to the point of participation in British wars and Imperial defence" (549). More than one English-Canadian historian framed francophone war opponents, and their spokesperson Henri Bourassa, in tones that suggested fanaticism. Hopkins himself could not bring himself to name the "rash young Member of Parliament who resigned his seat as a protest," and lauded both federal parties for supposedly treating "the matter as of no importance" (550). To Wrong, Bourassa was "a man of fiery eloquence and extreme views" (391), while war opponents were still cast as "extremists" in Granatstein et al.'s 1983 publication, *Twentieth Century Canada* (53).

Arthur Lower seemed poised to bring empathy to his explication of Francophone opposition, beginning his 1946 discussion of the troop debate with a sardonic (and rather Freudian) discussion of Canadian imperialists' "pent-up urges" for foreign imperial adventures, and the "jingoistic rejoicing" that followed the sating of said urges. Yet Lower, writing at the conclusion of a global war that once again had threatened the unity of his nation, saved his harshest words for francophones, juxtaposing English Canada's supposed internationalism and cosmopolitan worldview with that of French Canadians. The latter, he maintained, "had little memory of anything but a parochial existence on the banks of the St. Lawrence which was its entire world, possessed almost no interests outside of its own parishes and was possessed by the complete absorption in itself that characterizes the French race." Thusly (and

perplexingly) upbraiding war supporters and opponents alike, Lower moved directly to a meditation on the difficulties faced by Laurier in “bringing harmony between the two races”—a mission that may well have been advanced by banning the translation of Lower’s own volume into French... (444).

Again, American progressive Carl Wittke provided some early and well-reasoned perspectives on the source of Canada’s French–English frictions, citing “a great tradition of pacifism” rather than mere parochialism or ignorance as sources of francophone resistance, and suggesting their Canada-first orientation buttressed Quebecers’ claim as “the real Canadian nation” (247). Particularly after 1960, similar views began to infiltrate English-Canadian accounts, a process inspired in part by divergent nationalisms: an Anglo-Canadian variety that sought to carve out an identity outside of both British and American influences, and a Quebecois strain that drew attention to the damage done to national unity by past Anglophone chauvinism. In W. L. Morton’s 1963 account, Bourassa was no longer parochial or irrational, but something approaching the quintessential Canadian; he spoke against the war as “a patriot and a citizen of all Canada,” thus providing momentum toward “complete independence” for the nation (398–99).

Likewise, later-century analysts proved less reductionist in their delineations of pro- and anti-war constituencies. In truth, francophones did not constitute the sum total of those opposing Canada’s troop commitments, an acknowledgement that served to abrade the view that language determined politics, and that these linguistically derived positions were habitually at variance. Again, W. L. Morton was among the first to broach such a suggestion, conceding that “imperialist sentiment ... was not general in the country, even outside French Canada” (398). Robert Craig Brown’s 1962 essay on Canadian journalist Goldwin Smith demonstrated the vehemence with which Smith and other like-minded anti-imperialists on both sides of the 49th parallel objected to the South African and Spanish–American campaigns. A fuller accounting of war resistance would wait until Miller’s 1974 essay on English-Canadian opponents, a subject revisited in his book on the conflict; here, war critics were revealed among farm and labour groups, in traditionally pacifist churches, in dissenting clergy and congregants from mainline Protestant churches, among citizens of German and Irish descent, and in the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Moreover, a “large amorphous body of English-Canada opinion, almost entirely ignored by historians of the war ... adopted a more tentative position” than either war supporters or foes (Miller, *Painting* 22–23). When added to the views of French Canadians—whose arguments against war were in fact, notes Miller, “not parochial, but drawn from the British, French, Irish, German, and American press”—an accounting of the various strains of opposition and apathy among English Canadians reveals linkages, rather than merely ruptures, between Quebec and the proverbial “rest of Canada” (Miller, *Painting* 29). French Canadian opinion, too, proved less homogenous than suggested

in earlier interpretations, as the protection offered by the imperial connection, along with ultramontanist support for efforts to spread Christian civilization, led some francophones to endorse British imperial pursuits (Meisel, Rocher, and Silver 98). Berger's 1971 publication of *The Sense of Power*, meanwhile, inspired a renewed examination and critique of *fin-de-siècle* Canadian imperialism (Cole, "Canada's 'Nationalistic' Imperialists"; Cole, "The Problem of 'Nationalism'"; Carr). Still, the most tangible expression of that era's imperial fidelities—participation in the South African campaign—remained tangential in these responses to Berger, when it was mentioned at all.

Indeed, with so little written about Canada's South African War experience, and with the existing literature defined by homogeneity and a rather narrow focus, Miller would have much to say; accordingly, his 1993 monograph on just one nation's rather modest contribution to a three-year campaign weighs in at 541 pages. Miller's exhaustive description of the soldiers' experience, something virtually ignored outside of the regimental histories of the conflict, reveals that the troops were plagued by "weak and ineffectual leadership," ordered into ill-advised offensives with disastrous results, and sickened by the brutality and mayhem that surrounded them (and in which they took part) (151). No surprise, then, that drunkenness, insubordination, and looting were rampant, and that when British commanders asked the first contingent of Canadians to extend their service voluntarily, nearly all opted to return home—an episode which "shattered [the battalion's] shallow facade of solidarity and soured personal and professional relations for many years to come" (Miller 141).

Miller offers a range of explanations for the "historiographical neglect" surrounding Canada's South African War, among them discomfort over Canada's contribution to Kitchener's scorched-earth policy, the desire for reconciliation within the empire following the conflict, anxieties over the English–French divisions spawned by Canadian participation, and embarrassment regarding the sycophantic posture implied by a war for the British Empire (xii). Many of these views have merit. The Canadian "militia myth" is not well served by a war that witnessed episodes of indiscipline and "un-gentlemanly" conduct, and careful attention to the roots of the war complicates a simple narrative of fighting for a righteous cause. Tories in particular, like Wrong and Creighton, had little incentive to draw undue attention to a conflict that brought condemnation to British entrepreneurs, policymakers, and soldiers. Lower and other liberal nationalists viewed Canadian participation as a deviation from the enlightened advance toward self-government that otherwise marked the arc of Canadian history, and as a deliberate check on similar aspirations held by the Boers; this Whiggish, statist inclination also contributes to the superabundance of attention paid to constitutional questions surrounding the war (Tennyson 695).

Miller's contention that historians feared reopening old wounds between French and English is less convincing. As suggested above, many Anglo-Canadian historians demonstrated roughly the opposite of these aversions. Further, underscoring the more distasteful aspects of the South African campaign could be read as a tacit admission that French-Canadian hesitations proved prescient; the inclination exhibited by many writers in English to stress the disunity "precipitated" by francophone resistance, while disregarding the ensuing battle and messy outcome, may reflect a reluctance to hand the ultimate victory on this matter to francophone critics. Further, English-Canadian historians have shown little aversion to dealing frankly with the linguistic divisions precipitated by both world wars.

The factors cited by Miller contributing to "the neglect" tell only part of the story; broader trends that mark both English Canadian historiography and society also warrant attention. As noted above, when compared to contemporaneous work produced in the United States and Great Britain, to name just two examples, the collective analysis of the past turned out by Canadian historians displays inclinations toward consensus and conservatism rather than a multiplicity of viewpoints. This is partly an outcome of scale, a testament to the limited number of practitioners and graduate programs in the dominion in the early and mid-twentieth century. Thus it is not surprising that some of the most influential contributors to the twentieth-century construction of the Canadian past studied under the same professors and travelled remarkably similar career paths.⁸ Gender, regional origin, and ethno-religious identity also served to link many of the twentieth century's most prominent English-Canadian historians. This collective similitude stands in contrast to the diversity of voices—including those from outside the United States—that helped craft the American narrative.

For these reasons, the commonalities in outlook should not raise eyebrows. Nor, by extension, should the collective inattention to a war whose legacy challenged the propriety of nation and empire, as well as the faith in a rather positivistic approach to Canada's national development. "The iconoclastic temper," wrote Berger of his nation's historiography in the interwar period, "expressed itself in Canada in a more tepid and limited fashion" than that witnessed in the United States or Europe, a claim that could be extended well into the postwar period as well (*The Writing* 219).

Clearly, the writing of Canadian history has been broadened and transformed in recent decades through such factors as the rise of social, cultural, and gender history. But Canada's South African campaign, obscured by a legacy of neglect, has been overlooked by those employing these new theoretical and methodological tools. Gordon Heath's 2009 study of the motivations behind Canadian Protestant churches' strong support for the war provides one of the few sustained cultural studies of a conflict, and an era, that begs for additional

analysis along these lines. For instance, if “muscular Christians” like Grant proved instrumental in calling their nation to arms, a wider investigation into the deployment of gendered discourse among war supporters and opponents would appear productive. Miller’s disclosure that the WCTU constituted the only official organization in English Canada to oppose the war provides further evidence that gender-focused analyses would broaden our understanding of domestic debates surrounding the conflict. The experiences and attitudes of Canadian nurses volunteering for service in South Africa also requires further study (bearing in mind, for instance, that British women who witnessed the conflict and the concentration camps firsthand became some of the most outspoken critics of the war).⁹ Finally, the fact that the conflict took place on a continent populated principally by non-whites, and that thousands of indigenous Africans participated in the conflict, suffered in concentration camps, and saw their future altered substantially by the war and its settlement has not found its way into Canadian renderings. To what extent did these considerations influence Canadian attitudes and policies? How did the nation’s soldiers, raised in an overwhelmingly white society, interact with South Africa’s blacks? Did Canadian participation influence subsequent relations with African nations or Third World peoples in general? This list of possible research topics is far from exhaustive, and is simply offered as evidence that important aspects of the story of Canada’s participation in the South African War remain to be told.

Among the many outcomes of this narrow representation of Canada’s wartime past, two are of particular significance. First, the neglect serves to protect something of a false binary that continues to be upheld by many English Canadians, one that separates nations that go to war for noble reasons, and that always fight with bravery and honour, from those that do not. Second, disregard for the causes, stakes, and outcomes of this battle for empire meant that the Canadian populace was not as equipped as it might have been to evaluate the rectitude and national interests and obligations surrounding future international conflicts. For, despite Laurier’s assurances that Canadian participation in the Transvaal should not be construed as setting a precedent, far-flung military engagements would form a staple of twentieth-century Canadian international relations.

Although the above survey is not exhaustive, it does reveal discernible trends. First, the “altruism defence” of U.S. intervention in Cuba is as old as the intervention itself, and has been reiterated, with modifications, to the present. The same can be said of interpretations that cite accident or irrationality as first causes. However, even many studies that reject a premeditated imperial stimulus mediate their justifications with acknowledgments that the optics of the war served to discredit the nation’s ideals and international standing; the War of 1898, for all but the most naive or jingoistic, would appear a conflict to be explained away rather than celebrated. Second, when the humanitarian impulse was revealed as something more variegated, when acquisition supplanted

liberation as a war aim, sustained condemnation arose. This denunciation is based on the perceived betrayal of national purpose, on the racial, cultural, and gender chauvinism that motivated the project, on the callousness of their military's conduct, and on U.S. officials' abjurations of self-interest. This wide-ranging repudiation of 1898 has counted among its claimants some of the most widely known, respected, and influential members of political and civil society, popular and scholarly historians among them. These sentiments have contributed to a greater range of opinion regarding the legacy of imperial war than exists in Canada. Here, the historic links between militarism and empire continue to be emphasized in the service of nation building, although the conflict with the Boers is rarely included in wider reflections on Canada's martial past.

Notes

1. I would like to express my thanks to Carl Benn and the anonymous readers of the *International Journal of Canadian Studies* for providing valuable commentary on an earlier draft of this article.
2. While several hundred Canadians served in a British military expedition in the Sudan in 1884–85, these men were recruited, funded, and commanded by Great Britain (Benn 24).
3. When figures from the Philippine–American War are included, roughly 7,000 U.S. soldiers died because of these conflicts (Dyal 67).
4. Massachusetts Senator George Frisbie Hoar's widely reprinted May 1902 Senate speech castigating U.S. policy in the Philippines proved one of the more damning indictments of McKinley's foreign policy.
5. Taking into account the passage of the Neutrality Acts of the 1930s, which prohibited U.S. economic interactions with belligerent powers, Jerald Combs observed: "Perhaps at no other time has American historiography had so direct an impact on American politics" (152).
6. For recent examples of contributions along these lines, see McCoy and Scarano. To further the argument I make here, fifteen of the forty-seven contributors to this volume are women. While clearly well short of parity, this percentage of female contributors to a collection on international relations is noteworthy.
7. For an excellent discussion of the internationalization of War of 1898 scholarship, see Healy. As Carl Berger noted, many of Canada's most influential twentieth-century historians were drawn from the University of Toronto and/or Oxford (Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* 10). The experience of one Canadian nurse is given a brief overview in Mann (35–51).
8. As Carl Berger noted, many of Canada's most influential twentieth-century historians were drawn from the University of Toronto and/or Oxford (Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* 10).
9. The experience of one Canadian nurse is given a brief overview in Mann (35–51).

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