KRISTIN L. HOGANSON

Fighting for American Manhood

HOW GENDER POLITICS PROVOKED THE SPANISH-AMERICAN AND PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WARS

Introduction

Newspapers published in the United States on February 25, 1895, gave no indication that the previous day had been an exceptional one, a day that would be enshrined in history books as a starting point, a significant moment, a date. They briefly mentioned a revolt of the "natives" in the distant Philippine island of Jolo against a Spanish garrison and another in Guinea against the British. In Boston, there had been a memorial service for the abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who had died a few days earlier, and in Baltimore, Mrs. Katherine Stevenson, corresponding secretary of the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union, had declared herself a "staunch woman-suffragist." The most sensational story of the day came from Chicago. Under the headline "LAST SHOT IS FATAL," the *Chicago Tribune* reported that "Prof." Alfred Rieckhoff, known as the champion rifle shot of the world, had killed his seventeen-year-old assistant in a public demonstration of his sharpshooting prowess. At the end of his "human target" act, the professor misfired, and his assistant, whose job it was to stand on the platform with a steel target strapped to his breast, fell to the floor crying, "My God, I am shot."[1]

More than a century later, these stories open a window on the past. They reveal a nation wary of the imperial endeavors that were reshaping the globe; a nation in which leadership was passing from the venerated Civil War generation to those who had grown up in the shadow of the Civil War; a nation in which assertive "New Women" were encroaching on men's traditional prerogatives and audiences were gathering to watch men prove their courage and martial capacity in death-defying and, in some cases, deadly acts. These events afford a glimpse into late-nineteenth-century U.S. culture, but they

seem more evocative than informative—the unconnected incidents of a bygone day.

Yet however disparate, these incidents, together with a myriad other happenings, helped constitute the stuff of U.S. culture—that is, the common reference points, customary beliefs, and patterns of behavior that formed the framework from within which individuals perceived and responded to the wider world. As strands in a complicated cultural web, the stories of February 25 helped define a moment. But they still do not seem to illuminate the future. The nebulous thing we call culture might affect the way people engage the world around them, but it appears too amorphous to readily explain specific decisions and events. Even if we could grasp it in its entirety, culture might only complicate our understanding of historical causality, for it is never determinative. To the contrary, it encompasses differences and permits innovation. If the February news stories hint at the bellicose policies to come, their message is elusive, a mere whisper in the cacophony of the day's news.

On February 24, 1895, as the ill-fated assistant prepared to face the professor's fire, Cuban patriots resumed their struggle for independence from Spain. The news arrived too late to make the papers on the twenty-fifth, and when it did reach the United States, newspapers depicted the insurrection as just another of the periodic upheavals for which Cuba was famous. Seasoned editors predicted that Spain would quell the rebellion, as it had the Ten Years War of 1868–78 and subsequent uprisings. Headlines reassuringly announced, "The Trouble Thought to be Slight."[2] Yet this time the trouble in Cuba was not slight and Spain was not victorious. And this time the United States did not remain aloof. Three years after the uprising began, the United States enthusiastically entered the conflict, thereby joining European nations in the scramble for colonies, creating a new generation of veterans, deflecting public attention from women's demands, and giving American marksmen a new opportunity to test their skill. Looking back at a conflict that is not easily explained in terms of national self-interest, we cannot but wonder whether the roots of war were embedded in American culture. Seen from a later vantage point, do the scattered news stories from 1895 illuminate the events to come?

This book investigates the cultural roots of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars. It is based on the premise that the conduct of foreign policy does not occur in a vacuum, that political decision makers are shaped by their surrounding cultures. In trying to understand why the United States went to war at the turn of the century, it is tempting to overlook the cultural frameworks that shaped contemporaries' outlooks and instead to focus on precipitating incidents, political and diplomatic wranglings, closed-door meetings, and the like. But to focus exclusively on immediate causes is to skim

the surface of the past, to assume that earlier generations understood their world as we understand ours. To fully understand the descent into war, we need to understand how contemporaries viewed the precipitating incidents, what seemed to be at stake in their diplomatic and political wranglings, and what assumptions they brought to their high-level meetings—and to do that, we need to understand something of their culture.

But as we have just seen, the challenge posed by a cultural approach is connecting the amorphous stuff of culture to something as concrete as policy decisions. Recognizing this difficulty, the following chapters concentrate on political culture, that is, the assumptions and practices that shaped electoral politics and foreign policy formulation.[3] Even more specifically, they focus on the gender convictions—meaning the ideas about appropriate male and female roles—that did so much to define the contours of late-nineteenth-century U.S. political culture.

It may seem implausible that such a seemingly personal phenomenon as gender convictions would have far-reaching political implications, but by stipulating social roles for men and women, gender beliefs have significantly affected political affairs. In the nineteenth century, middle-class Americans commonly believed that men and women had very different capabilities and destinies. Men were thought to be well-suited for "public" endeavors, chief among them politics, and women for the "private" realm of family and home. This is not to say that gender beliefs were universally agreed upon or that they went unchallenged, but that most nineteenth-century Americans turned to inherited ideas about gender to order their world. Although they differed on the details of male and female natures and spheres, most nineteenth-century Americans agreed that there were important differences between men and women and that these should affect individual identities, social practices, and political organization.

Especially before 1920, the year the Nineteenth Amendment granted women equal suffrage, gender beliefs fundamentally shaped U.S. politics. Arguing that electoral politics should remain male terrain, opponents of women's suffrage frustrated efforts to win political equality for women. Besides keeping women on the sidelines of electoral politics, gendered understandings of citizenship and political leadership affected men's political standing. Because political power was associated with manhood, political leaders faced considerable pressure to appear manly in order to maintain their political legitimacy. The ideas about gender that affected the allocation of political authority also affected understandings of American democracy. Late-nineteenth-century Americans commonly believed that their political system ultimately rested on manly character, something defined in different ways but generally in reference to contrasting ideas about womanly attributes.[4] This meant that policy-

makers tried to legitimize their policies by presenting them as conducive to manhood. The political pressure to assume a manly posture and appear to espouse manly policies gave gender beliefs the power to affect political decision-making. This book investigates how they helped lead the nation into war at the turn of the century.

At first glance, the Spanish-American War does not seem to be a particularly difficult war to understand nor does it seem that gender is an integral part of the story. The initial conflict pitted Cuban revolutionaries against their Spanish rulers. In 1895, under the leadership of the poet and political organizer José Martí and the Ten Years' War veterans Máximo Gómez and Antonio Maceo, peasants, patricians, and middle-class Cubans formed a heterogeneous coalition to fight for *Cuba libre*. In response, Spain turned to Gen. Arsenio Martínez Campos, who had defeated Cuban revolutionaries almost twenty years earlier. When the moderate Campos failed to establish peace, the Spanish government replaced him with Gen. Valeriano Weyler, who soon became known as the Butcher. After arriving in Cuba in 1896, Weyler established a "reconcentration" policy that involved forcing rural Cubans into Spanish-controlled towns, where they could be monitored. Then, to hamper the guerrillas who still occupied the countryside, Spanish troops destroyed crops and other goods that might prove useful to them. This policy turned fertile fields into desolate wastelands and overcrowded towns into pestilential prisons where tens of thousands of noncombatant Cubans, many of them women and children, died of disease and starvation. Horrific though it was, the reconcentration policy failed to end the conflict. In October 1897, Spain's new Liberal government, led by Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, who had replaced the assassinated Conservative leader, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, recalled the ruthless Weyler and sent a third general, Ramón Blanco, to govern the island. But the damage had been done. Weyler's brutal tactics had driven rural fence-sitters into the revolutionary cause and hardened the revolutionaries' resolve.[5] They also had helped the beleaguered Cubans win American sympathy.

Cuba lies only ninety miles from Key West, Florida, and when the rebellion took root, it became a leading foreign policy concern in the United States. The underdog Cubans won a great deal of positive press coverage in the United States, to the immense satisfaction of expatriate Cubans who worked hard to disseminate stories favorable to the revolutionary cause. Although American filibusters smuggled arms to the Cuban patriots, and the Red Cross, under Clara Barton's guidance, distributed supplies to suffering civilians, the nation remained on the sidelines. In 1896, Congress overwhelmingly passed a joint resolution that called for the recognition of Cuban belligerency, but President Grover Cleveland refused to endorse the measure, explaining that the United States should remain neutral in a conflict involving a friendly state. Thinking it would help them in the fall election, both major parties put *Cuba libre* planks in their platforms, but the Republican presidential victor, William McKinley, continued Cleveland's neutrality policy. In 1897, Spain formulated an autonomy scheme that would grant Cubans control of their domestic affairs but preserve Spanish sovereignty over the island. McKinley endorsed this compromise measure in hopes of securing peace.[6]

As the Cuban revolutionaries continued to chip away at Spanish power and resolve, loyalist Cubans grew fearful that Spain would withdraw from the island. In January 1898, a group of Havana residents rioted against the autonomy plan and in favor of continued Spanish rule. Because McKinley had endorsed autonomy, there was an anti-American cast to these riots. Fearing for the safety of expatriate American citizens, McKinley sent the battleship *Maine* to Havana. After being moored in Havana harbor for almost a month, the *Maine* exploded and sank on February 15. Although Spanish guilt could not be proven, the U.S. press generally held Spain responsible. Public and congressional clamor for revenge continued to grow until Congress passed a war resolution on April 25. The resolution included an amendment, known as the Teller Amendment after the Colorado senator who proposed it, that denied "any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island [Cuba] except for the pacification thereof."[7]

Fighting commenced a week later. U.S. military strategists opted not to raid the Spanish coastline or take the Canary Islands (earlier plans had called for such steps in the event of a war with Spain), but they did decide to attack the Spanish fleet in the Philippines in order to weaken their opponent. On May 1, the Asiatic Squadron, commanded by Commodore George Dewey, destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Meanwhile, back in the United States, hastily mobilized troops prepared to embark for Cuba. On June 22, U.S. soldiers landed at the village of Daiquirí, near Santiago de Cuba. Two days later, U.S. forces defeated the Spaniards in a skirmish at Las Guásimas, and on July 1 they fought again at El Caney, San Juan Hill, and Kettle Hill, which lay between the American forces and Santiago.

After advancing to a position overlooking Santiago, Gen. William R. Shafter, the gout-suffering Civil War veteran who commanded the U.S. land forces, contemplated withdrawing. His poorly provisioned troops were exhausted from lack of food and wet, sleepless nights. On July 3, however, the North Atlantic Squadron's victory over the Spanish fleet outside of Santiago changed Shafter's mind. He realized that the Spaniards' defeat at sea had made their defeat on land just a matter of time, for their troops could not be reinforced or resupplied. Shafter demanded surrender. Recognizing the hopelessness of their situation, the Spanish forces capitulated on July 16. The following

day, U.S. troops occupied the city. Shafter did not include his allies, the Cuban patriots, in the negotiations or the occupation; indeed, he forbade them from entering Santiago. Although the United States had entered the war proclaiming its intention to liberate Cuba, the U.S. military virtually ignored the Cuban forces.

As the United States and Spain negotiated an armistice to end the war, Gen. Nelson A. Miles took the island of Puerto Rico. On August 13, the day after the armistice took effect, U.S. soldiers, unaware of the peace settlement, captured the city of Manila. (Dewey had lacked the troops necessary to occupy Manila after his naval victory on May 1 and had just held the harbor until reinforcements arrived.)[8] The war against Spain lasted sixteen weeks. In its aftermath, Secretary of War Russell A. Alger reported 345 combat-related deaths among the U.S. forces and 2,565 deaths from disease. In spite of the fatalities, numerous Americans agreed with John Hay, the U.S. ambassador to England and later the secretary of state, that it had been a "splendid little war." It was, indeed, a fairly popular one. More men tried to volunteer than the armed forces could accept; contemporary observers exulted that the war had "brought us a higher manhood" and "compelled admiration for American valor on land and on sea."[9]

Following the armistice, Spain and the United States sent delegates to Paris to negotiate a peace treaty. The final draft stipulated that Spain would relinquish sovereignty over Cuba and cede Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States. Because of the Philippine provision, the Treaty of Paris elicited keen debate when it came to the Senate for ratification in January 1899. Republicans supported the treaty—their fellow Republican President McKinley had appointed the negotiating team—but did not have the necessary two-thirds votes to ratify it. Democrats were divided on the issue and tilted in favor of the treaty only after party leader William Jennings Bryan endorsed it. Bryan argued that Democrats should ratify the treaty to end the war and then vote to give the Philippines independence. The treaty passed 57 to 27, one vote above the required two-thirds mark, but then, to Bryan's dismay, the Senate narrowly voted against Philippine independence.[10]

The end of the Spanish-American War did not mean a return to the prewar status quo. Neither did it mean peace. In addition to taking the territories ceded by the peace treaty, the United States occupied Cuba from 1898 to 1902. A measure introduced in Congress in 1901 by the Connecticut senator Orville H. Platt spelled out the terms for U.S. withdrawal. The so-called Platt Amendment stipulated that the United States could intervene to preserve Cuban independence or maintain a stable government. Realizing that acceptance of the amendment was a precondition for self-government, Cuban leaders included its provisions in their constitution, thereby leaving their nation vulnerable to future interventions, the first of which came in 1906.[11]

In the United States, a much more contentious issue than Cuba's fate was that of the Philippines. In February 1899, a skirmish between U.S. troops and Filipino soldiers on the outskirts of Manila sparked the Philippine-American War. Filipino nationalists, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, tried conventional warfare and, when that failed, guerrilla tactics to dislodge the American soldiers who had replaced their Spanish rulers. From 1899 to 1902, 126,468 American soldiers landed in the Philippines; 4,234 died. Filipino casualties were much higher: an estimated sixteen to twenty thousand Filipino soldiers and two hundred thousand Filipino civilians died in the war. After U.S. troops captured Aguinaldo in March 1901, the revolutionary effort fragmented. McKinley's successor, President Theodore Roosevelt, declared an end to the fighting on July 4, 1902, but the Moros, or Muslims, in the southern Philippine islands resisted American troops for more than a decade after that.[12]

The irony is hard to miss. After entering the Spanish-Cuban War with loud proclamations of its humanitarian and democratic objectives, the United States refused to cooperate with the Cuban revolutionaries and ended up fighting another war halfway around the world to deny independence to Filipino nationalists. One can imagine the Midwestern farm boys who found themselves creeping through tropical jungles and the Filipino villagers who found themselves relocated by American troops—much as Cubans had been forced into camps under the Weyler regime—wondering what historical forces had brought them face to face.[13] The question has also puzzled historians, who, in spite of their familiarity with the sequence of events that preceded the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars, still argue over the motives behind U.S. policy.

Why did the United States go to war in 1898? The number of explanations offered by historians can boggle even the intrepid reader—economic ambitions, annexationist aspirations, strategic concerns, partisan posturing, humanitarian sympathy for the Cubans, a desire to avenge the *Maine*, a psychic crisis, and Darwinian anxieties all have been cited as causes of the Spanish-American War. Historians have added late-nineteenth-century racial convictions to this mix of motivations to explain the nature of American policies in 1898 and during the subsequent Philippine "pacification" efforts.[14] At first glance, these theories appear to offer a convincing rationale for war. Indeed, they seem to explain the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars four or five times over.

Yet the very abundance of explanations raises questions as to how they fit together. Assuming that each of these explanations reflects the motivations of

at least some of those who supported war, why did so many reasons for war converge at once? The multiplicity of reasons for wanting war makes us wonder whether advocates of bellicose policies had any common ambitions, expectations, or presuppositions. A cultural approach that looks for links between various motives can answer this question. Such an approach has the potential to show how seemingly rational economic, political, and strategic justifications for war were related to each other and to more emotional appeals.

If, at first, the various explanations for the Spanish-American War are unsatisfying because they do not seem to cohere, once one delves into the historical documents they become even more unsatisfying, for they do not fully explain why a diverse array of American men, labeled jingoes by their contemporaries, clamored for war in the late nineteenth century. These men did not form a coherent group in the sense that all had similar class, regional, or party backgrounds. Neither did they belong to a common organization or agree on every aspect of U.S. foreign policy. But they did agree that war had redeeming social implications, chief among them that it would bolster American manhood. What brought jingoes together was a shared enthusiasm for war, predicated on common gender assumptions.[15] Why, then, were jingoes so obsessed with manhood? Why did they look to war as a solution for their gender angst? Once again, a cultural approach seems in order.

Besides failing to account for the jingoist desire for war, existing explanations fail to explain the pervasiveness of gendered rhetoric in debates over war and empire. If national self-interest, political ambitions, and the other motives currently cited by historians were sufficient to lead the United States into war, why did bellicose congressmen, political commentators, and other late-nineteenth-century political activists feel compelled to assert that manhood was at stake in the Cuban and Philippine issues and that aggressive international policies would build character in American men? To understand why jingoes drew on gendered arguments to make their case, we must examine their assertions in light of U.S. political culture and, more specifically, the gender politics of the 1890s.

The questions raised above—How did gender affect the jingoist clamor for war? Why did jingoes draw on gendered arguments to make their case?—are intriguing in themselves. But they merit particular attention because considering gender can help connect existing explanations for the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars. On the one hand, gender served as a cultural motive that easily lent itself to economic, strategic, and other justifications for war. On the other, gender served as a coalition-building political method, one that helped jingoes forge their disparate arguments for war into a simpler, more visceral rationale that had a broad appeal. As both motive and method, gender helped men from different regions, parties, and walks of life to come together to form a powerful political movement. The chapters that follow elaborate on the ways that gender worked as a motivating ideology and a political posture in debates over war and empire.

In so doing, the book raises yet another question: What difference did jingoes' gendered motives and arguments make? Causal questions are never easy to answer, and this one is especially difficult because gendered motives and arguments were so often intertwined with other motives and arguments for war. Jingoes did not hesitate to phrase economic, political, and other arguments in gendered terms. As a result, it is not always clear what lay behind their bellicosity. The promise of markets? The impending elections? Or the seeming imperatives of manhood? Neither is it clear which strands of their arguments were most persuasive. The statistics? The strategic calculations? Or the appeals to manly honor? Given that gendered arguments often intersected with other lines of thought, one way to assess how gender beliefs affected U.S. policies is to reconsider the existing framework for understanding the Spanish-American War with gender in mind. How does adding gender to the picture enrich or clarify older explanations?

To start with the economic and annexationist arguments, jingoes often claimed that the nation needed overseas markets and territories in order to provide an outlet for men's robust energies. In addition to promising material gains, expanded markets and colonial holdings seemed attractive as a means of preventing American men from falling into idleness and dissipation and enabling them to meet the basic male obligation of providing for their families, something that many men found themselves unable to do during the depression of 1893–1897. Economic and annexationist arguments reflected convictions about what it meant to be manly; their persuasiveness relied on a commitment to fostering manhood in the United States. Some advocates of assertive politics undoubtedly regarded Cuba primarily as an opportunity for markets or as a choice piece of real estate, but those who held that a war—any war—would be good for American men also saw it as an opportunity to build manhood. To these jingoes, the prospect of combat enhanced Cuba's allure.

Besides providing a richer cultural context for economic and annexationist arguments, adding gender to the picture can help explain why, rather than regarding the United States as a beacon for the world, as earlier generations of American foreign policy theorists had done, late-nineteenth-century strategists advocated a more active and aggressive role for the nation. Their writings reveal a fascination with power, something often understood in gendered terms. The most prominent naval theorist of the time, Capt. Alfred Thayer Mahan, called for a "manly resolve" rather than "weakly sentiment" in U.S.

policy. Force must be met with force, he argued, for "conflict is the condition of all life." In such a strife-ridden world, the nation must strengthen its navy, "the arm of offensive power, which alone enables a country to extend its influence outward." Mahan insisted that war, once declared, "must be waged offensively, aggressively. The enemy must not be fended off, but smitten down." Mahan's statements about hard-hitting offensive maneuvers suggest that strategic theorists had other issues on their minds besides defending the nation's borders.[16] In an age when even tiny Belgium had overseas colonies, it appears that a kind of empire envy underlay calls to join the rough and tumble ranks of the great powers, that strategic arguments rationalized a desire to join the fray. Mahan's call for the nation to follow a manly course of action suggests that gender concerns infused geostrategic thinking.

If we shift from economic, annexationist, and strategic arguments (that is, from what appear to be national self-interest arguments) to political explanations, gender appears even more germane. The late-nineteenth-century belief that "manly" character was a prerequisite for full citizenship and political leadership can explain why support for bellicose policies seemed politically astute at the turn of the century and why jingoes triumphed in political debate. The links between manhood, military service, and political authority led a number of political leaders to think that they would enhance their political standing if they supported martial policies. Those who did not jump on the jingoist bandwagon after the *Maine* disaster felt the power of the militant manhood / political authority nexus: jingoes derided men who hesitated to support bellicose policies, foremost among them President McKinley, for lacking manly character. Confronted by admonitions to act like men, McKinley and peaceable members of Congress realized that they would lose political credibility if they did not adopt a more militant posture.

Although gendered arguments for war often served partisan purposes, beneath the partisan posturing lay uneasiness about the American political system. In the late nineteenth century, men from across the political spectrum generally agreed that democratic government rested on the manly character and fraternal spirit of male citizens and political leaders. Because American men commonly associated the civic virtue necessary for democracy with the manly character exemplified by soldiers, the dwindling tally of Civil War veterans led a wide range of men to fear that unless the nation forged a new generation of soldier-heroes through war, U.S. politics would be marked by divisiveness, corruption, and weakness. Women's encroachments into electoral politics also created unease. Not only were women winning voting rights in a number of states (mostly the right to school board and local suffrage), but they also were active in reform movements and political parties. Women's political activism led traditionalists to worry that politics was becoming feminized and

to dourly conclude that when manhood was no longer valued as a basis for full citizenship and political leadership, the nation would succumb to exterior threats or crumble from within. Fearing for the future of the nation, jingoes regarded war as an opportunity to shore up the manly character of American politics. War, they believed, would return the nation to a political order in which strong men governed and homebound women proved their patriotism by raising heroic sons. Echoing British imperialists' claims that empire built character, jingoes promoted their martial ideas by arguing that war would forge a new generation of manly, civic-minded veterans who would serve as the pillars of American democracy.

A look at the press coverage of the Cuban revolution suggests that gender also can illuminate the substantial humanitarian sympathy for the mixed-race Cubans, a surprising development given the racist sentiments common among white Americans in the late nineteenth century. In accounts of the Cuban revolution published in the United States, positive gender convictions often counterbalanced negative racial ones, thereby fostering sympathy for the Cuban cause. American correspondents frequently depicted Cuban women as pure and virtuous victims of Spanish lust and Cuban men as chivalric fighters who had proven their manly character and hence capacity for self-government in combat. Such accounts portrayed Spanish soldiers as effeminate aristocrats, best embodied by their queen regent or boy king, or as savage rapists who lacked the moral sensibilities and self-restraint of civilized men. The Spaniards' apparent lack of manhood seemed to indicate that they were ill-suited to govern. Taking advantage of these popular images, jingoes urged the United States to assume the role of the heroic rescuer to the Cuban damsel or loyal brother to the Cuban knights. A failure to intervene, they argued, would reveal a lack of chivalry in American men.[17]

Besides contributing to the political pressure to intervene on the Cubans' behalf, gender beliefs contributed to the jingoist clamor for war in the aftermath of the *Maine* disaster. Jingoes' insistence that the disaster was an insult to American manhood made war seem an acceptable response to the incident, if not an imperative one. Employing a men and nations analogy, jingoes maintained that just as an honorable man would fight if insulted, so should the nation. Such assertions helped persuade less militant men, including irresolute congressmen, to favor war, because it appeared that a failure to do so would signal a lack of manhood.

Gender seems equally relevant to the psychological and cultural explanations for the Spanish-American War. Significantly, all the causes that Richard Hofstadter cited for the "psychic crisis" of the 1890s (which, he argued, caused the nation to go to war) had a gender component. To begin with, the depression of 1893 exacerbated anxieties about manhood, for unemployment result-

ing from the depression led to fears of male dependency. Rather than providing for their families, as men were expected to do, thousands failed to fulfill this basic male responsibility. In response, some men turned to social protest. These included the Populists, who depicted their struggle as a battle between money and manhood. Wealthier men had their own apprehensions. Those who feared social convulsion feared it all the more because men of their class seemed to lack the vitality necessary to keep vigorous working-class men in line. The rich were not the only ones to fear that civilized comforts were undermining manly fiber—middle-class men who held "soft" white-collar jobs also worried about a loss of vigor, and those who worked in large, bureaucratized corporations felt they lacked the autonomy their fathers had enjoyed. Thus the rise of big business had important ramifications for nineteenth-century gender roles. So did Hofstadter's final explanation, the closing of the frontier, that mythical space in which earlier generations of American men supposedly had developed their manly fiber. It appears that the psychic crisis was, in many respects, a crisis of manhood.[18]

But why did the gender anxieties of the late nineteenth century lead to an unusually bellicose spirit? The Darwinian corollary to the psychic crisis addresses this issue. According to the Darwinian explanation, jingoes' tendency to regard international affairs as an area of intensifying struggle led them to conclude that Americans needed to become tougher in order to compete. They viewed war as an opportunity to build the fighting virtues that allegedly were being undermined by industrial comforts. Historians who have investigated how Darwinian apprehensions proved conducive to war have highlighted the racial and national elements of this thought. But Darwinian anxieties also had a significant gender component. Those who spoke of national struggle and national survival generally believed that these depended on powerful men who did not shirk arduous challenges and domestic women who dedicated themselves to raising the next generation of vigorous heroes. To Darwinian theorists, new gender arrangements prompted fears about Americans' evolutionary fitness. As muckraking newspapers started reporting on metropolitan vice establishments and homosexual practices, members of the middle class began to worry that male immorality indicated an advanced stage of degeneracy. When bicycle-riding, bloomer-wearing, college-educated, job-holding New Women refused to serve as foils to traditional masculinity, conservative men began to fret about the future of the "American race" and, beyond that, about their place in it. Disturbed by these changes and influenced by the popular notion that the Civil War had developed the mettle of the men who fought it, jingoes began to advocate bellicose international policies.[19] Once again, adding gender to the picture can flesh out an older explanation.

Historians have attributed the Philippine War that followed on the heels

of the Spanish-American War primarily to economic and strategic motives. Put simply, after becoming involved in the Philippines as part of its war effort against Spain, the United States stayed there because of a desire to have bases close to the potentially lucrative China market. Adding racial convictions to these explanations, historians also have stressed the belief that the Filipinos were incapable of self-government and that the United States had an obligation to civilize and Christianize them.[20] These explanations provide a strong rationale for American policies in the Philippines, but they still leave questions. Why did the nation forsake its democratic precepts to fight a war of conquest thousands of miles away? How were imperialists able to enact their policies over the impassioned protests of anti-imperialists?

Given that the Philippine-American War followed close upon the Spanish-American War, one might expect that the anxieties about gender that proved so conducive to the war against Spain also contributed to the allure of the Philippines and that the assumptions about manly character and political authority that benefited jingoes in 1898 later benefited imperialists. A closer look at the Philippine debate bears out these suspicions. Thrilled with the challenge posed by the war with Spain, ardent imperialists did, indeed, look to the Philippines to furnish a long-term remedy for the apparent problem of degeneracy in American men. When confronted with stiff anti-imperialist protests, they effectively manipulated martial ideals of citizenship and political leadership (which had, to their delight, been strengthened by the Spanish-American War) to enhance their political standing and undercut that of the anti-imperialists.

Rather than making our understanding of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars more diffuse, reassessing the existing explanations for these conflicts with gender in mind reveals common cultural assumptions among jingoist businessmen, annexationists, strategists, politicians, *Cuba libre* supporters, psychic crisis sufferers, and Darwinian theorists. Because jingoes had anxieties about gender they thought war would address and because gender beliefs served as a powerful political tool, it comes as no surprise that they drew on gender convictions in their efforts to convince less martial Americans to support the prospect of war. In sum, adding gender to the existing framework buttresses a variety of current explanations and offers some thematic unity for the whole mélange. It does not, however, fundamentally change our understanding of the conflicts. Using gender merely to embellish existing explanations may mean treating a potential cornerstone as if it were mortar.

This leads to a second way of assessing the significance of gendered motives and methods in turn-of-the-century foreign policy debates. Rather than starting with the existing framework for understanding these conflicts and

using gender to fill the gaps, what happens if we start from the beginning and reconstruct the narrative with gender as a basic building block? What happens if we start by grounding foreign policy decisions in their wider cultural context and, more specifically, in the gender politics of the turn-of-the-century United States, thus leaving economic, strategic, political, and other theories the task of filling in the gaps? This is the project undertaken in the following chapters.

These chapters show that gender deserves serious attention in its own right. They show that a cultural phenomenon—the renegotiation of male and female roles in the late nineteenth century—helped push the nation into war by fostering a desire for martial challenges. They also show that gendered assumptions about citizenship and political leadership affected first jingoes' and then imperialists' abilities to implement their martial policies. By retelling the story of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars so that gender is an essential part of the picture, these chapters challenge us to rethink the cultural roots of American foreign policy at the turn of the century and beyond that, the cultural roots of international relations more generally.

A note on method is in order. This book takes rhetoric seriously, treating it as something that illuminates motivations, convictions, and calculations of what is politically efficacious. It approaches its source materials—primarily political speeches, correspondence, tracts, and reportage—both thematically and topically. On the thematic side, it examines how gender convictions affected political leaders' views about themselves, their political system, and the wider world. On the topical side, it considers how gender convictions (particularly gendered understandings of citizenship and political leadership) affected several broadly conceived foreign policy debates. Given that political leaders drew on such themes as honor and degeneracy in a number of specific policy disputes, combining thematic and topical approaches prevents the book from becoming too repetitive; given that political leaders did not reveal their full range of convictions each time they engaged in debate, combining related policy disputes into broader topics provides for a thematically richer account.

Finally, this book is based on the premise that categories like gender, political, cultural, and international relations history break the past into tidy plots that may not follow the unruly contours of the historical landscape. Because this book crosses some of the boundaries that historians have erected to subdivide their field, it has implications that extend beyond its central topic—the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars—to several neighboring plots. As it traces the cultural concerns that lay behind these conflicts, this book also shows how international relations affected ideas about gender, how gendered ideas about political authority affected American democracy in an imperial era, and how high politics served as a vibrant locus of cultural struggle.

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The Manly Ideal of Politics and the Jingoist Desire for War

TOWARD THE CLOSE of the nineteenth century, many Americans believed that a new era of peace was dawning. The nation had not fought a major war since the Civil War, a generation earlier. Increased commerce appeared to presage an era of greater international cooperation. Perhaps the greatest harbinger of peace was the arbitration treaty signed by U.S. Secretary of State Richard Olney and British Ambassador Sir Julian Pauncefote on January 11, 1897. The treaty committed the United States and Great Britain to arbitrate all their disputes for the next five years. Supporters of the treaty heralded the protocol as the "crowning glory of this wonderous age." They hoped that it was the first of many such treaties, that arbitration would end the rule of force in international affairs.[1] Their dreams were soon shattered, however—first by the Senate's rejection of the treaty and then, slightly more than a year later, by war.

The arbitrationists who imagined that lasting peace was at hand underestimated the growing jingoist spirit of the 1890s. Jingoes argued that war would be beneficial to the nation. They came from different regions, classes, and parties. Some were Civil War veterans, others had come of age after the war. The most vocal tended to be politicians, strategic thinkers, and members of the press. What united this diverse group of belligerent men—most prominent jingoes were, indeed, men—was a commitment to martial political ideals. Whereas the arbitrationists, many of whom were women, advocated a genteel style of politics based on intelligence, morality, and self-restraint, jingoes championed a more robust style of politics that placed relatively greater emphasis on physical power. Jingoes maintained that war would strengthen