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Democracy For Whom?: The Spanish-American War, The Philippine-American War, World War I, And The NAACP

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DEMOCRACY FOR WHOM?:

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR,

WORLD WAR I, AND THE NAACP

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ABSTRACT

The following dissertation discusses race, identity, and white violence in relation to African American military service during the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I. It examines the conditions at the turn of the century that African Americans faced, including military service as well as discrimination, racism, violence, and legal problems common among African American military personnel throughout this time period. More specifically, it argues that the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 created a catalyst for increased activism on behalf of black soldiers serving in the American military. The NAACP became such an prominent organization by the time World War I began that African American military personnel utilized its influence to their advantage when advocating for increasing the number of African American officers, the end of discrimination and segregation in the military, the end of lynching civilians and soldiers, and legal justice in civilian and military courts. I argue that an important shift occurs for African American military personnel in 1909, particularly due to the pressure the NAACP placed upon the United States War Department to end discrimination in the military and its activism on behalf of black soldiers and veterans. As noted throughout the dissertation, African American military activism existed for many years prior to World War I to resist white violence and Jim Crow, but the formation of the NAACP created a catalyst for improved activism both by and on behalf of African American soldiers in subsequent decades. Some of the issues undertaken by the NAACP on behalf of African American military personnel included challenging discriminatory treatment on military bases, combat versus labor assignments, promotions during their careers in the

military, lynchings that targeted black soldiers and veterans throughout the American South, and petitions for retrials by men accused of participation in the Houston riot of 1917.

Utilizing soldiers' personal letters, newspaper publications throughout the United States, NAACP archival material, and various newspaper and magazine publications and regimental histories authored by veterans have yielded the most extensive and comprehensive history of the NAACP's influence in regard to African American military service in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century. Prior to the NAACP's interest and impact upon African American military service during the First World War, African American military personnel lacked the financial, legal, and moral support from a national organization to aid in challenging the United States military's discriminatory policies and mistreatment of American soldiers. This work, then, traces the history of African American military personnel from the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I and discusses the vital role the NAACP performed in advocating for equal treatment for African American soldiers and veterans. It highlights the activism undertaken by African American soldiers in all three conflicts, and how the NAACP became a catalyst for activism on behalf of black military personnel.

This dissertation enhances the current scholarship on African American military personnel at the turn of the twentieth century by illustrating the connections between African American military service in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I, a correlation overlooked by scholars focusing solely upon World War I as the catalyst for activism within the African American community. Instead, this work enhances the connections and similarities experienced by black military personnel at the turn of the twentieth

century, highlighting the importance of a national organization's influence and political power in advocating for the favorable treatment of African American soldiers and veterans.

To my family,
whose support and
encouragement never wavered
while I pursued my love of history

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INTRODUCTION

Since the American Revolution, African Americans have repeatedly fought in volunteer and regular army regiments of what would eventually become the United States Armed Forces. Until the Korean War, African American military personnel found themselves placed in all-black regiments, save the majority of the high command, who remained white. Despite discriminatory treatment, segregation, and degradation at the hands of the United States Armed Forces and various white officers, African Americans enlisted to aid the country in its various struggles both at home and abroad.

African Americans joined the United States Armed Forces for numerous reasons, including a shared belief with other Americans in democracy, freedom from tyranny and slavery, an expression of and claim to manhood, and their civic duty as American citizens. Since 1776, these motivations, among others, influenced African American men to enlist in military service. Most black volunteers interpreted the ideals of the American Revolution as universal, believing that their involvement in the conflict might lead to citizenship, equality, and freedom regardless of race or previous enslavement. Others, though, enlisted for more pragmatic reasons, like free papers in return for military service. Only one all-black regiment, the First Rhode Island, existed in the American Revolution as part of the Continental Army. Other African American soldiers, typically free blacks, participated in local militias. These soldiers, like their white counterparts, believed it was their duty, as men and as Americans, to fight the British. Many also hoped that their aid in the struggle against British tyranny would result in the end of American slavery,

especially because of the ideals laid forth by the Declaration of Independence, and later the United States Constitution.

After the American Revolution, African Americans saw little change in their situation and the enslavement of their brethren throughout the country until the American Civil War, yet many still remained motivated to enlist in the United States military, often for the same reasons African Americans did in the Revolution. African American participation in the Civil War included free blacks from the North forming all-black regiments, combined with enslaved men joining the Union Army after fleeing plantations across the American South. These men went forth as a liberating force, intending to free their brethren enslaved throughout the South. These soldiers also hoped that their service and exertion of manhood would ensure that after the Civil War, African Americans would gain the equality and citizenship rights they felt the U.S. Constitution guaranteed them.

By the end of the Civil War, African American participation in the United States military remained an important part of the black freedom struggle. Once the war ended, four all-black regiments remained as a permanent part of the United States military: the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries, and the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry Regiments. These regiments gained military experience in the Indian Wars throughout the western part of the United States. Only a few of these soldiers witnessed some success with officers' promotions. One of the few who earned one of the highest ranks achievable by African American soldiers at this time was Charles Young, who eventually rose to the rank of colonel before retirement. The United States military rarely promoted African American soldiers to higher officers' ranks because some among the military brass feared black officers might one day command white soldiers, a situation that white supremacy could not permit. African American soldiers, however, desired more black officers

commanding their regiments instead of white officers, some of whom exhibited contempt and discrimination during interactions with soldiers assigned to them. African American soldiers also faced violence and intimidation aside from combat, particularly in the form of lynchings and racially motivated violence. Some black soldiers vehemently vocalized their opposition to such treatment, particularly during the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War, implying that manhood, military service as a route to becoming a race man, knowledge of self-defense methods, and the freedom struggle all factored into enlistment and success in the military as well as resistance to racial violence.

These sentiments were also common during World War I; therefore, we cannot continue to examine World War I and its participants as isolated from previous military conflicts as historians have done thus far. Instead, we must examine the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and the First World War collectively. During all three conflicts, African American soldiers advocated the end of discriminatory and segregationist policies within the United States military, opposed white Americans treating them as second-class citizens and soldiers, resisted racial violence and protested lynchings, and supported equality in the military and American society.

These wars differed, though, in the effectiveness of African American soldiers' advocacy for at least two reasons. First, during the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, the upper class portion of African American society tended to perceive soldiers as debased beings, immoral, and flawed.[1] This perception made soldiers, at least in some African Americans' eyes, seem unfit to become race leaders or aid the community in racial and social uplift. Therefore, the few national African American organizations in existence rarely became

[1] See W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994) and Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., ed., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1987), 30.

invested in advocating military service or possessed enough influence to aid black soldiers in their struggle. Instead, these organizations focused almost solely on racial uplift and anti-lynching campaigns.

Secondly, African American soldiers' struggle against discrimination, segregation, and violence changed significantly with the creation of the NAACP in 1909. The organization, formed from the remnants of the Niagara Movement and led by W. E. B. Du Bois, undertook the same issues that previous national organizations did. In addition to the anti-lynching campaign and racial uplift, the NAACP focused on the treatment of African American soldiers when the First World War began. The NAACP's increasing influence throughout America between 1909 and the end of World War I significantly contributed to African American soldiers' advocacy and activism during the war years. African American military personnel turned to the NAACP more than any other organization in existence with discrimination and inequities experienced while in service. Black soldiers also found that the NAACP provided legal assistance and held far more pull with the federal government than any previous organization focused on racial uplift. African American servicemen increasingly communicated with the NAACP concerning discriminatory incidents, and the organization increasingly supported and advocated integrating the military, ending violence and degradation, and providing more support for African American soldiers than any previous organization. The organization also investigated numerous lynchings of African American soldiers and veterans in the immediate aftermath of World War I. With the NAACP's aid, African American soldiers participating in the freedom struggle found new avenues for challenging the United States military's segregationist and discriminatory practices as well as the racial violence so prevalent within American society at the turn of the twentieth century.

African Americans at the Start of the Twentieth Century

A thorough examination of interpretations concerning democracy, manhood, military service, and race throughout the United States provides the context necessary to understand the black freedom struggle African American soldiers pursued between 1898 and 1920. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* originally published in 1983,[2] provides a beneficial framework for understanding the African American community at the turn of the century, the black freedom struggle, and interpretations of various concepts that affected African American military personnel daily. Anderson postulates that nationalism, nation-ness, and nationality, regardless of terminology, emerged as a cultural artifact in the late eighteenth century. Once it emerged, nationalism across various borders evolved and experienced increased influence over time, to "merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations."[3]

A nation, then, develops as an imagined political community since most members of the nation will never interact with their fellow members, yet they share certain commonalities that tie them together. The nation will connect individuals across space and time, creating shared experiences, history, and culture. Nations, however imagined, remain limited. Anderson argues that nations, as imagined, remain finite due to sharing boundaries with other nations, and citizens of the largest nations throughout the world rarely, if ever, imagine themselves combining all of humanity as one nation. Nations are also imagined as sovereign since the concept of "nation" emerged during the Enlightenment and Revolutionary Eras. These eras effectively destroyed the legitimacy associated with divinely-ordained monarchies, and in turn, espoused direct freedom.

[2] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).
[3] Ibid, 1-4.

This freedom, whether divinely inspired or secular, creates the sovereign state, tying people together through their desire for direct freedom, or democracy. Lastly, a nation also represents an imagined community since each nation is conceived as a shared experience, or camaraderie. Regardless of inequalities and potential exploitation that might occur within the nation, that camaraderie ensures that millions of people throughout the world remain loyal to their nation, and in some cases, willing to die for it.[4]

Of particular relevance to this research are Anderson's chapters entitled Cultural Roots and Patriotism and Racism. Anderson begins Cultural Roots with a discussion of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a phenomenon associated with the religious and cultural beginnings of nationalism. He argues that religion, or religious thought, attempts to explain fatalities and imitations of morality, i.e. casualties of war and monuments erected in their memory found in every nation. This shift in cultural perception coincided with Enlightenment thought as a way to provide continuity and meaning as religious belief gave way to rationality associated with the eighteenth century. The concept of a nation arose after three fundamental notions lost their influence among the populace: specific languages, like Latin, no longer remained the perceived gateway to knowledge, the increased distrust of divine rule and monarchies, and adherence to a new timeline of history and the world that encouraged connections over time and space.[5] Examining the cultural roots of nationalism is vital to the research presented in this dissertation. Nationalism and citizenship are inherently intertwined. The imagined community that creates nationalism will, at times, exclude certain people from that community, considering them unworthy of citizenship or membership within the nation. The various intricacies that create nationalism and opposition to certain people as part of that nation directly inform my research

[4] Ibid, 5-7.
[5] Ibid, 9-36.

because African Americans have historically been excluded by white Americans from citizenship and as members of the nation.

Anderson's chapter on patriotism and racism will aid in understanding the exclusion of African Americans from American nationalism and citizenship. Anderson argues that the impetus behind patriotism, or the willingness to die for a nation and its cause, lay with common language among the nation, particularly items like the national anthem. Language allows members of the same nation to connect with one another over time and space, as well as connecting members to others who have preceded them in death for the country. Certain words or phrases regarding death effectively provide a particularly reminiscent or ghostly allusion among the living, providing a link between those who perished in service to their nation to their contemporaries. Language, while affording ties to nation-members past and present, also provides the means for those members to create epithets intending to insult and reduce people to physical characteristics. Efforts to do so comprise racist intent and racism, an eternal contamination of which people, by birth, cannot overcome, even if they may belong to the same nation as another race. Anderson's subsequent discussion of colonial racism and its pseudo-aristocratic origins[6] proves highly reminiscent of the attempts by white Democrats and Redeemers throughout the South convincing poor whites to support them politically. Poor white support for Democrats and Redeemers was against the poor's best interests. Influential Southern politicians succeeded by dividing the poor population by reminding poor whites that while both they and African Americans were impoverished, their whiteness provided them status, placing them above their non-white peers. This attitude encouraged whites throughout the United States, not just the South, to view African Americans as the "other" rather than a part of the nationhood already in existence.

[6] Ibid, 141-154.

The classification of "other" also led some white Americans to include race as a crucial factor in defining masculinity and femininity, meaning that factor determined whether or not a person met the criteria of a "man" or "woman." In response, African Americans throughout the United States engaged in efforts to redefine masculinity and femininity rather than accept white social definitions of manhood and womanhood. One of the most complete discussions of African American masculinity and femininity at the turn of the century can be found in Glenda Gilmore's *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1809-1920*. According to Gilmore, African American concepts of masculinity at the turn of the century transformed to reflect white perceptions of manhood, or the "Best Man." The white "Best Man" held office, exhibited benevolence, was fair-minded, and refined. Since this definition automatically excluded blacks, particularly in the South, African American men created the theory of the "Black Best Man." The "Black Best Man" held some of the same responsibilities as the white "Best Man." The former policed interracial relations, sought economic success, adhered to white ideals of manhood, fought in wars, and provided for their families among countless other duties.[7] The notion of the "Best Man" remained important to many men, regardless of race, through the first two decades of the twentieth century. African American men argued that if they could sufficiently prove their masculinity though exhibiting characteristics associated with the "Black Best Man," then they would experience equality in American society.

While an important part of white manhood was political participation, African American men found themselves almost wholly shut out of politics throughout the United States at the turn

[7] Glenda E. Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 61-90. Gilmore discusses many of the components of manhood as listed above in great detail, but also names a number of other definitions of manhood and how men could achieve sufficient manhood based on public perception. Martin Summers' work *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930*, however, disagrees with Gilmore's conclusion that manhood and military participation are tied. He instead believes that other forms of physical activity are more important than military fighting to blacks at this time. Throughout other works based on this time period, however, manhood is tied either literally or figuratively to physical activity or military service.

of the century. The "Black Best Man" ideology included political participation, but the implementation of Jim Crow segregation after Reconstruction left African American men with no active role in Southern politics. Once that exclusion occurred, African American women, mostly from the middle class, stepped into the political arena despite the limitations that existed to keep women out of politics. Gilmore posits that black women used social reform to effectively influence politics. Black men encouraged this activity since it was the only political influence African American communities could exert throughout the South. While exclusion from politics could be interpreted as a limitation on masculinity, African American men found other ways to assert their masculinity through activism, protecting their families, and protecting the African American community. Black men also influenced the women who participated in social reform movements. Black middle class women imagined themselves as examples for the lower classes, proponents of the race, and the only ones who could speak to or for uneducated black women.[8] Because of this attitude, many middle and upper class African American women became social activists after disenfranchisement that targeted African American men. These men realized that women's involvement in politics would be the only method for improvements after mass disenfranchisement.[9] Racial uplift, then, focused not only on increasing the education and economic status among African Americans throughout the United States, but also upon white perceptions of those actions and characteristics, which would result in democracy and racial equality.

At the same time, some African Americans saw service in the United States military as a route to racial uplift as well as claims to masculinity. Unlike Gilmore, historian Martin Summers rejects the notion that African Americans included military service in their definition of

[8] Ibid, 101-02.
[9] Ibid, 119-46. Gilmore addresses these groups throughout the fifth chapter of her work, detailing their motivations and goals for activism, including racial uplift and equality.

masculinity, or manhood. In *Manliness and Its Discontents*, Summers argues that physical prowess was part of middle class African American definitions of manhood, but he fails to include a discussion on military service.[10] Without a proper discussion of masculinity during the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, one cannot fully understand the exact influences leading men to enlist in the military at this time, regardless of ethnicity. The varying definitions of masculinity and manhood among African Americans at the turn of the twentieth century exemplifies the conflict within the African American community between lower, or working, class and middle and upper class blacks. The divergent definitions that remained in flux throughout the time period lent credence to the possibility that the latter perceived soldiers as debased and immoral beings rather than potential leaders of the race.

A discussion of race men, then, is inherently tied to various descriptions and characteristics of black masculinity. *Race Men: The W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures*, by Hazel V. Carby, examines the emergence of the concept of race men and its ties to masculinity, citizenship, and racial uplift.[11] Carby utilizes arguments from St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton presented in *Black Metropolis* in 1945 in her examination of the terms race men and race leaders. Drake and Cayton insist that "black people have had to prove, actively and consistently, that they were not the inferior beings that their status as second-class citizens declared them to be." These factors led to what could only be described as "an aggressive demonstration of their superiority in some field of achievement, either individually or collectively, [to ascertain] race pride." Success for the individual, then, became understood as an achievement for the African American

[10] Martin Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1-15.
[11] Hazel V. Carby, *Race Men: The W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

community as a whole. For Drake and Cayton, this resulted in specific social types, among them the Race Man.[12]

In her examination, Carby includes a gendered interpretation of race men and race leaders, as the terms themselves refer to only men. Carby argues that W. E. B. Du Bois's discussion of race men in *The Souls of Black Folk* remained highly gendered, including his assertions that black women served as the primary reason for black male subjugation, and intellectual men who overcame challenges and obstacles associated with racism became the pinnacle of masculinity. Black women, then, were excluded from the sphere of intellectual equality, considered a non-viable symbol of hope as well as the political, social, and intellectual future of the African American community, and the primary reason for black men's patriarchal subordination in the United States.[13] The elite African American community's focus on intellectualism, then, explained the reluctance to encourage educated black men to serve in the military as an avenue for racial advancement.

Simultaneously, the African American community remained conflicted when defining masculinity. Du Bois tied it to intellectual achievement, challenging and overcoming racial incidents, controlling black female sexuality, and throwing off patriarchal subordination that racism attempts to hold black men in. In other words, Du Bois relied upon what he deemed the Talented Tenth. Accordingly, Du Bois questioned Booker T. Washington's manhood because Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address exemplified what Du Bois considered as a betrayal of black men, one who surrendered "to the lust of white men" economically, and promoted national reconciliation rather than insisting upon equal rights for black men. In Du Bois's middle-class view, only he and men like him represented true black manhood, whereas men like Washington

[12] Ibid, 4.
[13] Ibid, 5-41.

and lower class black men had not fully achieved black manhood.[14] Carby's examination of race men and race leaders is highly illuminating, particularly due to the limitations within the concepts and how black men viewed manhood, whether as part of the intellectual race leaders or those among the masses in the African American community. The underlying conflicts over defining manhood Carby highlights throughout her manuscript play out at the turn of the twentieth century within the United States military. African American soldiers called upon Du Bois's Talented Tenth to enlist and become commissioned officers, arguing a commission was a viable path to become a race man. This dissertation attempts to combine the definitions of masculinity presented by Carby, Gilmore, and Summers, highlighting the conflicts that arose through defining masculinity, the constant flux of perceptions concerning manhood, and how that change over time led to an expanded description of what it meant to become a race man.

Historiography of African American Participation in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War

Few manuscripts and articles discuss African American participation in the Spanish-American War. One of the earliest was Marvin Fletcher's 1974 manuscript, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891-1917*.[15] Fletcher's argument centered on the excellent service of African American military personnel during the time period indicated and the way American attitudes concerning race seeped into the United States military through various discriminatory practices.[16] His treatment of the Spanish-American War was highly limited, focusing almost entirely on combat while ignoring potentially informative material

[14] Ibid.
[15] Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891-1917* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1974).
[16] Ibid, 21-31.

concerning black soldiers' experiences both prior to and after Cuba.[17] Fletcher's discussion of the Philippine-American War mirrors that of the Spanish-American War, choosing instead to spend much more time discussing the Brownsville Affair than anything else. He also failed to link the increased success of black soldiers' activism with the rise of the NAACP, which was integral in encouraging the War Department to promote more African American officers and limit discriminatory practices within the United States military.

Willard B. Gatewood, Jr.'s *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903*,[18] published in 1975, moves the historiography forward from Fletcher's work by examining how "conflict between the desire to promote their [African Americans'] self-interest and their sympathy for the aspirations of their colored cousins overseas resulted in a potpourri of ambivalent, often contradictory, attitudes."[19] His nuanced approach to African American perspectives during the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War provided a much-needed interpretation of what many historians had deemed a unanimous perspective within the African American community. Gatewood also discussed the frustrations and complications associated with discrimination and segregation in the United States military as well as proposed emigration of African Americans to Cuba and the Philippines. Gatewood's limited approach, though, left a void in the historiography as he failed to connect African American experiences with the two conflicts at the turn of the twentieth century with other conflicts, namely World War I, as well as the importance of a national organization to petition on behalf of black military personnel.

[17] Ibid, 32-47.
[18] Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975).
[19] Ibid, x.

Brian McAllister Linn's *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*[20] provides a thorough investigation of the military operations that took place in the Philippines during what he chooses to refer to as the Philippine War. Linn uses this terminology because "Philippine War is the most neutral and has the added advantage of being used by both contemporary and current authors. It avoids both the diminution of Filipino resistance as 'insurrection' and the implication that the conflict was a conventional war between nation-states."[21] Linn's approach focuses almost entirely upon the United States military effort and attempts to include the variations of the war itself, the mix between conventional and non-conventional war tactics, and the varying Filipino interpretations of the conflict itself. He also emphasizes "campaigns that have been largely overlooked" in traditional scholarship concerning the conflict.[22] More than anything, Linn's monograph represents traditional military history, specializing in examinations of battles, strategies, and foreign policy decisions that eventually led to an American victory. As such, Linn mentions African American soldiers by regiment only, overlooking interactions with native peoples and how that might affect the soldiers themselves or their willingness to fight to suppress the Filipino people. Linn's work is crucial to the historiography of the Philippine-American War but his particular focus leaves questions unanswered, including why this war differed for participants themselves from both the Spanish-American War and World War I.

Differing from Linn's exhaustive military study, H. W. Brands's monograph *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines*[23] examines the interactions between the two countries during and after colonization from 1891 to 1991. Brands posits that the United States' participation in empire remained fraught with contradiction. The United States and its leaders

[20] Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000).
[21] Ibid, x.
[22] Ibid, ix-x.
[23] H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

sought to extend self-determination and democracy throughout the world yet other American experiences including westward expansion and wars with Britain and Mexico contradicted that anti-imperialist rhetoric. Brands also links the arguments inherent in manifest destiny to those that eventually came from Social Darwinists, which contributed to the American imperialist endeavor. Finally, Brands claims that imperialism in the Philippines relied almost entirely on the participation of the Filipino elite as well as military, economic, and social ventures intended to improve the livelihood of all Filipinos.[24] For the purposes of this dissertation, the first four chapters of Brands' manuscript are the most relevant. The first chapter chronicles the time period prior to the Spanish-American War and how various perceptions and ideologies within the United States affected support for imperialism and war at the turn of the twentieth century.[25] Brands then focuses on the policy decisions that led to American involvement in Cuba, the Philippines, war, and the debates over annexation rather than military participation by American soldiers. While Brands includes a discussion of race and racial turmoil at the turn of the twentieth century, his emphasis on governmental policy excludes a thorough examination of participants on the ground, how their interactions with native peoples altered their perceptions, or how participation in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War compared to that of World War I. Brands affords African American soldiers or civilians little to no coverage due to his scope, yet these citizens were highly important to the imperialist cause.

Aside from a few monographs, the majority of other historiography focuses on particular regiments, volunteers, or aspects of the time period, but not necessarily African American participation in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War. The existing historiography seems to be separated by about twenty years, with Gatewood and Fletcher in the

[24] Ibid, v-x.
[25] Ibid, 3-19.

1970s and picking back up again in the late 1990s to early 2000s with historians like Roger D. Cunningham, Ann Field Alexander, and Russell K. Brown contributing to the study of black volunteers at the turn of the twentieth century. These regimental studies are vital to the field but the larger picture is also important. Linking the African American participation in the Spanish-American War to that of the Philippine-American War and World War I alters interpretations of the time period, and lays bare the similarities experienced throughout the time period regardless of fighting for empire or the spread of democracy abroad.

Historiography of the NAACP

Minnie Finch and Patricia Sullivan provide the most extensive and informative examinations of the NAACP's history, from the organization's inception through the climax of the Civil Rights Movement. Finch's *The NAACP: Its Fight for Justice*[26] provides an overview of the NAACP's history through sources including the organization's annual reports, board minutes, *The Crisis,* court decisions, and interviews with members, among others. She examines multiple topics, including how the organization spread throughout the United States in the 1910s, with members actively traveling and speaking to large groups, encouraging more and more local branches to materialize.[27]

The most relevant chapters to this project include the efforts in World War I and immediately after to integrate the military and to campaign against lynching. Finch succinctly investigates the NAACP's involvement in the campaign to ensure black officers in the United States military, as well as its activities in support of the men arrested and sentenced for the Houston riot. She also chronicles the frustration Du Bois expressed upon the end of the war, the

[26] Minnie Finch, *The NAACP: Its Fight for Justice* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1981).
[27] Ibid, 20-27.

frustration shared by many returning soldiers over racial tensions and conditions in the United States after the war.[28] Finch's next chapter focuses on the lynching, violence, and race riots occurring throughout the 1910s. She chronicles the struggle the organization faced to introduce anti-lynching legislation and decrease racial tensions to avoid race riots. Finch briefly examines the NAACP's role in researching these incidents and their attempts to bring charges upon some citizens for their participation in the destruction and death associated with the incidents.[29] To be sure, Finch's study provides insight into the NAACP's actions at this time, but her analysis falls short because her focus is instead on a glancing history of the organization and their role in fighting segregation and lynching in the World War I era. She also fails to do more than simply mention the African American soldiers who wrote to the NAACP for assistance and ignores the roughly 19 black veterans and soldiers who were lynched immediately after the war. This study aims to fill in these gaps with greater detail and analysis.

Patricia Sullivan's *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement*[30] provides a more complex study of the NAACP as an organization and its influence throughout the many years of its existence. Sullivan's manuscript was "not an institutional history . . . but one that captured the pulse and life of the association."[31] Sullivan's exhaustive work chronicles the initial beginnings of the NAACP through the first few years of the traditional Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Just like Finch's manuscript, only a few chapters of *Lift Every Voice* provide historiographical basis for examining the NAACP and their efforts during World War I to support African American soldiers protesting discrimination, Jim Crow, and subjugation within the United States military. Sullivan's examination of the

[28] Ibid, 37-44.
[29] Ibid, 45-57.
[30] Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009).
[31] Ibid, ix.

tumultuous creation of the NAACP underscores just how tumultuous race relations in the United States were at the beginning of the twentieth century. Distrust, conflict over ideology, strong personalities, and little financial aid almost led to the collapse of the organization before it even began. Moreover, the conflict in ideology between Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and William Monroe Trotter threatened to end the venture swiftly, as Du Bois became a prominent influence on the organization with Washington and Trotter criticizing the organization and its efforts at social agitation and activism.[32]

As World War I approached, the NAACP continued to strengthen, particularly when it came to political influence in Washington, D.C. The political connections that members like Oswald Garrison Villard, famed abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison's grandson, ensured members of Congress and even President Woodrow Wilson could not avoid the NAACP and its advocacy for securing citizenship rights to all Americans regardless of ethnicity. Within a few years of its inception, the NAACP created an impressive network to protest potential legislation designed to discriminate. The nation's capital "became a strategic outpost in the NAACP's fight against a tide of segregationist legislation. Small groups from the D.C. branch were prepared to lobby Congress and organize opposition to hostile legislation," even if the organization did not win every battle with Congress concerning discriminatory legislation. As the war drew near in Europe, Du Bois and Joel Spingarn, chairman of the NAACP, traveled the country to foster an increase in membership and encourage self-defense against white violence.[33]

After a campaign to end the distribution of D. W. Griffith's racist epic *The Birth of a Nation*, the NAACP shifted slightly to concentrate on the thousands of African American men and women volunteering for service in the United States military as well as those already in

[32] Ibid, 1-24.
[33] Ibid, 25-41.

uniform before American entry into World War I. Their service "further advanced claims to full citizenship rights, while exposing how America's racial caste system undermined that nation's most fundamental values."[34] Even before the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, Spingarn and the NAACP proposed a separate training camp for black officers, arguing that the United States military was entirely segregated and a separate camp might be the only way to ensure more black officers within the military. While the NAACP remained devoted to other issues during World War I like lynchings and the East St. Louis race riot, their advocacy of African American soldiers, those involved in the Houston riot as well as other draftees and volunteers, continued unabated. The organization also became concerned when these soldiers returned home to a hostile climate, particularly with "the revival of the Ku Klux Klan as but one indication of how white southerners planned to meet the return of Negro soldiers."[35]

Sullivan's examination of the NAACP's role in aiding African American soldiers during World War I was certainly more thorough than Finch's. Even so, Sullivan's research provides a detailed sketch of a time period far more significant for African American soldiers due to the NAACP's work on their behalf. The organization's advocacy and influence created in the years just prior to the war allowed the NAACP to aid African American soldiers in their individual and collective resistance to Jim Crow, subjugation, and discrimination in the United States military. Sullivan hints at the importance of this advocacy when discussing World War I, but since her project focused solely on the constant growth and innovation of the organization, she has little time to spend on exploring just how vital the NAACP was to black military personnel's resistance to institutionalized racism and subjugation.

[34] Ibid, 48-50 and 61-62.
[35] Ibid, 64-84.

Historiography of African American Participation in World War I

The historiography associated with African American military participation in World War I has become fairly extensive in recent years. In *The Hellfighters of Harlem,* Bill Harris argues that African American soldiers in the 369th Infantry Regiment of the American Expeditionary Forces proved their bravery through battle, demonstrating their competence and potential for military success, contrary to consistent stereotypes of African Americans as child-like and incompetent. Their combat training and knowledge abroad led these men to experience more hardship, racism, and fear upon returning to the United States after the First World War. Partially influenced by their time overseas and the violence of lynching at home, African American veterans became more militant in regards to ending inequality within the United States.[36] Harris's interest resides solely with black soldiers, but recognizes the possibility of outside influence on soldiers' decisions and actions even if he neglects to examine it fully.

The history of the 369th lasted long after World War I, but Harris argues that as these men returned home from battle in France, they faced more adversity because of racism and fear. This was especially due to their combat training and other African Americans fleeing the South for better job opportunities in Northern factories.[37] Harris then examines the social issues that the United States experienced with the Great Migration and the consequences for both the North and the South because of the movement. The emergence of violence in the postwar era, resulting in the lynching of numerous veterans in the South, brought African Americans to a more militant position concerning changing attitudes and racism in the United States, realizing that if changes would occur, they would have to be made by African Americans rather than whites.[38] African

[36] Bill Harris, *The Hellfighters of Harlem: African-American Soldiers Who Fought for the Right to Fight for Their Country* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2002), x and 89-92.
[37] Ibid, 89-90.
[38] Ibid, 91-92.

Americans' lack of patience with social changes displayed some of the issues that came up during the war, including segregation and inequality within the military, that became sparks for what became known as the Double V Campaign during World War II: victory at home and abroad in favor of freedom and democracy.

Stephen L. Harris also studies regiments of the First World War. Harris writes his work on the 369th Infantry as well, which is much more of a narrative history than Bill Harris'. Stephen L. Harris begins with an anecdote about how the 369th formed in the few years prior to World War I after a benefit concert at Carnegie Hall in New York City.[39] The story describes how the formation of this regiment affected the African American community to such a great extent in the prewar years, especially considering the importance of a benefit concert held in their honor. Harris mentions that the men who would compose this unit watched the concert that evening, and rose at the last song to recognize the unity and strength that the final song symbolized to them and the formation of the 369th.[40] Despite the narrative of the regiment's history as compared to Bill Harris' argument, Stephen L. Harris concludes his discussion of the 369th with the end of World War I rather than continuing into the interwar years.

Harris details the regiment's formation prior to the war, their training, military experience in Mexico prior to the First World War, the racism and segregation they experienced throughout their time in the military, battle experiences in France, and their return to the United States after the war. One incident Harris chronicled showed change in the initial postwar period in terms of American reception toward African American soldiers. Prior to deployment, the regiment that the 369th participated in, known as the Rainbow Regiment, paraded through the New York City streets. The Rainbow Regiment excluded the 369th from the march because the unit consisted of

[39] Stephen L. Harris, *Harlem's Hell Fighters: The African American 369th Infantry in World War I* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2003), 1-8.
[40] Ibid.

African Americans. After the war, though, the 369th participated in the victory parade through the city streets, seen as heroes if only for a short time by the citizens of New York.[41] Harris's work concludes that in some cases racial relations improved, at least for a time, in some areas of the United States. Harris's conclusions, though, apply to a small portion of African American soldiers rather than a broad application to the many men serving in the Regular Army and the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I.

Frank E. Roberts expands upon these focused studies by chronicling a narrative of the 93d Division, which included the 369th Infantry, and how this part of the Foreign Legion displayed "courage and heroism…both black and white" in *The American Foreign Legion: Black Soldiers of the 93d in World War I.*[42] Roberts also displays the changing attitudes toward the division in France but animosity by General John J. Pershing to using these soldiers in battle.[43] While this history includes the 369th Infantry that other historians discuss, Roberts instead chronicles a wider view of African American soldiers within World War I, and particularly the changes that came within the military as well as the restrictions after the war. Roberts first discusses the formation of the units that made up the 93d Division, the problems they faced, and the training they received. In doing so, Roberts covers information such as the Houston riot and how this affected other encampments, including whites in the area and their actions toward African American soldiers.[44] Roberts also discusses transport to France as well as other units in the United States that continued to train prior to joining the 93d Division overseas. One such regiment was the 370th Infantry Regiment. The 370th trained in France in 1918, waiting to be incorporated into combat divisions. This seemed odd, since most training took place prior to the

[41] Ibid, 81-98 and 261-64.
[42] Frank E. Roberts, *The American Foreign Legion: Black Soldiers of the 93d in World War I* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004), 1-2.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid, 14-15.

war, but incorporating the terrain and environment of a foreign country became important to their success.[45] This look at multiple regiments creates a more complete view of the 93d as well as the soldiers themselves, providing a different look at the war than some of the previous historians. Roberts concentrates on events on the battlefield more than social aspects, but both are a component of the work. His work exemplifies a more global perspective in regards to African American military service during World War I than previous works, but fails to connect the wartime experience with other military conflict of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which greatly influenced service and attitudes during World War I.

The majority of studies of African American soldiers in World War I concern the soldiers and officers who participated in the war. While some recount regimental histories, others focus on African American soldiers' participation in the war as a whole. Some of the first authors in the latter part of the twentieth century who write about African American soldiers include Arthur E. Barbeau and Florette Henri. Barbeau and Henri argue that African American soldiers were the "unknown soldiers" and the history of their participation in World War I must be told to fully understand the war itself and dispel misconceptions about said war, especially concerning military and United States government policy.[46] Some of these misconceptions involve African American participation on the battlefield, competence as soldiers, and racial issues within the United States military. Barbeau and Henri's narrative history paves the way for other historians writing about African American soldiers in World War I, showing the importance of these soldiers and chronicling the racism and stereotypes they experienced while attempting to fight in the United States military. Barbeau and Henri state at one point that the war ended differently for both black and white soldiers: while white soldiers substituted excess pleasure for hope and faith,

[45] Ibid, 70-77.
[46] Arthur E. Barbeau and Florette Henri, *The Unknown Soldiers: Black American Troops in World War I* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), xv-xvii.

African American soldiers substituted self-reliance for faith in whites.[47] Their argument and subsequent conclusions concerning African American soldiers essentially set the stage for other historians to continue investigating African American soldiers and their experiences during the First World War. Barbeau and Henri's work became a springboard for subsequent study and interpretation.

Gerald W. Patton's history of military officers entitled *War and Race: The Black Officer in the American Military, 1915-1941* makes a case for the importance of officer training camps to the African American community and their roles within the military. Patton examines the social aspects of the military, particularly the training of African American officers and how the military tried to ensure the officers' failure.[48] While the work emphasizes a larger time period than just the First World War, Patton studies African American officers, their training schools, and their roles in combat overseas. When discussing African American officers overseas, Patton argues that the American government and military set these officers up for failure based on "innate racial characteristics" such as laziness and lack of intelligence.[49] Some African American leaders disagreed, stating the African American community sent its "finest representatives" as officers. They disapproved of the military attempting to take credit away from these officers, arguing that this represented yet another form of discrimination. The American military's rejection of African American achievement caused hopes of racial progress to decrease greatly.[50] Patton's argument provides a chronological look at the military events, combining the social and military aspects of history in a simple but detailed method. The structure proves problematic based on the rough transitions and lack of citations for evidence. Histories written about African

[47] Ibid, 188-89.
[48] Gerald W. Patton, *War and Race: The Black Officer in the American Military, 1915-1941* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981), 10.
[49] Ibid, 96-97.
[50] Ibid.

American soldiers in these years remain scant, so Patton's work in the early 1980s becomes an important stepping-stone for other historians to investigate these events and interactions further.

As some historians focus on African American soldiers on the battlefield, others analyze social interactions of soldiers. Jennifer D. Keene in particular argues that American society changed because of the First World War. World War I provided a pivotal experience in American history because of how it shaped the modern military and produced social changes such as the GI Bill. Therefore, the soldiers who participated played a crucial role changing ideas about conscription and mass military service.[51] On the surface, Keene's arguments appear to concern only white soldiers, since the military and the United States government prevented most African American veterans from receiving the benefits of the GI Bill. African Americans faced great discrimination with minimal change in the postwar era.

Keene devotes one chapter to the racial tensions and problems faced by the military as well as the soldiers in World War I, though, providing a study of racial relations within the military. She discusses the issue of the military adhering and bending to the whim of Southern Jim Crow and racism, leading to some units' and commanders' transfers to appease a select few.[52] Keene argues that the government and military wanted African American soldiers to ignore racial equality for the time being and put all their energy into supporting the war effort and battle.[53] This position differs greatly from earlier historians, who posited adherence to segregation and social constructs when associated with African American soldiers in the military and race relations. Her conclusion states that the racial issues faced in the First World War

[51] Jennifer D. Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), x.
[52] Ibid, 82-83.
[53] Ibid.

continued in World War II.[54] This leaves room for unanswered and contradictory statements. Keene argues that all soldiers aided in the change that came about during and after World War I, but she fails to link African American soldiers to this social change. Instead, she points out that their issues remain stagnant. Did African Americans have a part in this change after the war? If they did, Keene ignores this possibility and focuses instead on the social changes created by white soldiers.

Nancy K. Bristow, like Keene, focuses on African Americans' interactions others, particularly military groups like the Commission on Training Camp Activities (CTCA). In *Making Men Moral: Social Engineering During the Great War*, Bristow argues that the CTCA attempted to create a more moral atmosphere in the training camps within the United States that would spread the morality of the white middle class through the military and potentially to the surrounding neighborhoods, primarily concerning venereal diseases. Bristow explains that this program aims to provide a moral education to minorities and the poor rather than allow these people to corrupt the upstanding soldiers from different social classes.[55]

Bristow's attention to African Americans and how the CTCA affected them provides a distinct look at part of the African American military experience during World War I. She explains that African American soldiers experienced different activities and events than white soldiers, mainly to appease the South and maintain segregation. Soon racial segregation led to inequalities in services and activities for the soldiers on training bases, displaying the military's adherence to social norms rather than making sure all soldiers received equal treatment.[56] Segregation and stereotypes affected the actions of the Progressives and CTCA so much so that

[54] Ibid, 206.
[55] Nancy K. Bristow, *Making Men Moral: Social Engineering During the Great War* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), xvii-xx.
[56] Ibid, 137-39.

their policies and actions reflected these stereotypes, including the belief that policy makers and reformers "emphasized repression and control rather than the positive remaking of men and women in their work with the African American community."[57] Because of these actions by the CTCA, African Americans found the group and the military adherence to similar policies offensive and resisted the implications of the policies as much as possible, especially due to its belief that African American women possessed an immorality that suffused African American men. Progressives and CTCA argued that this caused a ripple effect, making other men in the military immoral through influence. This issue of morality continued to puzzle and annoy policy makers through the interwar years as well as spur activism against the CTCA.[58] Bristow's extensive study displays the consistent battle between the poor or working class and the middle to upper classes, particularly when addressing the politics of respectability and morality. That disconnect between the classes existed prior to World War I, especially in regard to military service within the African American community.

Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I, by Adriane Lentz-Smith, is one of the most recent works investigating the link between African American soldiers in World War I and the larger black freedom struggle throughout the United States in the twentieth century.[59] Lentz-Smith posits that the African American experience during World War I altered the struggle for civil rights through people, strategies, and structures. Simultaneously, African Americans faced the solidification, or perfection, of Jim Crow as a means of segregation and oppression as Southern whites intended to export the system throughout the United States and abroad. Lentz-Smith also argues that World War I ensured that "soldiers became emblems and

[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid, 158-78.
[59] Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

agents" in the civil rights struggle for their families, church groups, newspaper editors, and organizations like the NAACP.[60]

Lentz-Smith presents World War I and African American experiences throughout the wartime as unique, yet World War I experiences reflected those of African American soldiers and civilians during recent conflicts at the turn of the twentieth century. There is scant discussion of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, their implications for African Americans in the United States and as military personnel, and their role in the surge for empire at the turn of the twentieth century. For Lentz-Smith, World War I led white Americans and the United States military to export Jim Crow with soldiers' deployment for the first time, yet Jim Crow existed as part of the wartime experience for black soldiers in the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars, shaping their encounters and struggles against segregation and subjugation.[61] Additionally, Lentz-Smith asserts that while middle and upper class African Americans' "most dignified self-assertions contained a plea for white folks' recognition," black members of the Regular Army "pled for nothing." These men held a sense of entitlement in some sense, regarding themselves as part of the elite, and thereby their actions were without reproach. As such, their actions already ensured white recognition for their prodigious skill and ability within the military, and that recognition would lead to more equitable treatment within the United States military. Lentz-Smith's assertion, though, that these men's action in the West meant "they wanted their due as men and as citizens" invalidates her contention that black military personnel in the Regular Army "pled for nothing."[62] Despite African American soldiers' belief in their elite status as part of the Regular Army, they still sought full citizenship and

[60] Ibid, 2-4.
[61] Ibid, 18-34.
[62] Ibid, 51-59.

equality, challenging institutionalized Jim Crow in the military and in transit during deployment both at home and abroad.

The following will fill these gaps, providing the historiography with a more complete understanding of African American military service at the turn of the twentieth century. Up to this point, the existing historiography is incomplete in regards to linking African American military service in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I through servicemen's active resistance to Jim Crow segregation, their constant crusade to gain equality within the United States military, and opposition to racial violence. The historiography also neglects to associate the creation of the NAACP with how African American soldiers' activism became more public, better organized within a broad strategy, and in some ways more successful. This work demonstrates the association between the three conflicts at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries as well as the creation and influence of the NAACP in the organization's advocacy for African American soldiers during the early years of Jim Crow. African American soldiers throughout all three conflicts strove to end segregation and inequality within the United States military, end racial violence and lynching, and see their gains mirrored throughout American civilian life. During the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, black soldiers remained without much aid from national organizations with major political influence, so their advocacy and struggle against segregation and racial violence remained, for the most part, disregarded by the United States military. After the creation of the NAACP, though, African American soldiers received a groundswell of support from the organization through activism, publications like *The Crisis*, and legal defense. By examining the connections between black soldiers in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War,

and World War I as well as the NAACP's influence and support for these soldiers, this study will go further than basic studies on African American soldiers in these individual conflicts and the NAACP itself that currently exist. Its importance as a study is to connect these people and organizations, providing a greater understanding of the turn of the twentieth century in America, as well as the conflicts regarding masculinity, racism, Jim Crow, racial violence, and citizenship.

CHAPTER 1: 'FREEMAN AND YET A SLAVE': RACE, IDENTITY, AND THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

On May 16, 1898, members of the Tenth Cavalry stationed in Lakeland, Florida opted to enter town after completing their duties at camp. These soldiers headed to a local drug store for refreshments, but the store owner refused to sell to these soldiers and told them ". . . to go where they sold black drinks."[63] The soldiers then expressed their frustration with the drug store owner. A white barber named Abe Collins, who, according to John E. Lewis of the Tenth Cavalry consistently created problems for African Americans in Lakeland, came upon the discussion between members of the Tenth and the drug store owner. Collins entered the drug store and stated, "'You d—— niggers better get out of here and that d—— quick or I will kick you B—— S—— B—— out.'"[64] The enraged barber exited the drugstore for his adjoining shop to retrieve his pistols and returned once again to the drug store. The soldiers witnessing Collins' actions were prepared: "There were five shots fired and each shot took effect."[65] Collins lay dead, and information about the incident became twisted, creating an even more turbulent atmosphere in Lakeland. Rumors spread via local newspapers that a white officer refused to allow a black soldier to go to town, so the black soldier in question became violent and killed the white officer. Because of these misconceptions, ". . . the white soldiers of the first cavalry were so incented

[63] Williard B. Gatewood, Jr., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1987), 32. Gatewood's collection of letters provides one of the most complete collections of African American soldiers' experiences in the Spanish-American War from a variety of young men who wrote to hometown newspapers, discussing the war, race relations in the military, and discrimination.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

[sic] at the Negro soldier for shooting at an officer that they threatened to shoot any Negro soldier who was found upon the streets."[66]

Misinformation during the Collins incident encouraged white soldiers also stationed in Lakeland to reinforce white supremacy and the Southern social structure rather than allow African American soldiers either the benefit of the doubt or the chance to defend themselves against a violent aggressor. Many white American soldiers did not consider African American soldiers their brothers in arms or afford them the same respect they gave to fellow white soldiers, so emphasis on the color line and maintaining it within the military remained. Divisions within the military and the United States itself remained despite high hopes that the Spanish-American War united the country nearly forty years after the Civil War's end.[67] Elite white Southerners considered black soldiers as outsiders who intended to stir up trouble by encouraging African Americans to resist Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, and violence in the South. These elite Southern whites feared any resistance to segregation, discrimination, and violence since that challenge to the social, economic, and political structure threatened their control over the majority of the Southern population. When the Collins incident occurred in May 1898, members of the Tenth Cavalry challenged Jim Crow, discrimination, and racial hatred simultaneously when they chose to defend their lives against Collins rather than allow him to intimidate and attack them. Their assertion of self-defense angered white soldiers, who chose to threaten any African American solider they encountered on the streets of Lakeland even if he was not involved in the initial incident. Intimidation and violence were primary tools used to maintain the status quo and discourage African American soldiers and civilians from trying to challenge the Southern social order.

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[66] Ibid.
[67] See David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001).

Intimidation and the threat of violence aimed at members of the Tenth Cavalry were not the last event related to Collins's death. The Tenth Cavalry's John E. Lewis wrote a letter the next month to the *Illinois Record*, an African American newspaper from Springfield, Illinois, about the aftermath of the Collins shooting. Lewis recalled how the racial climate in Lakeland changed after Collins's death. He stated, ". . . there has been a marked change in the disposition of the people, and many believe that it was through the providence of God that he was killed. People who were known to refuse to sell colored people what they wished now ask you to their place of business and intimate that they are glad to have you call on every occasion."[68] Despite this change in disposition, the Tenth Cavalry ". . . were virtually disarmed, our side arms having been turned in . . . after the trouble and killing of Abe Collins."[69] The repercussions for African American soldiers after the Collins incident were highly complex and contradictory. White business owners stopped turning away African American military personnel, which those soldiers viewed as a victory against segregation. After Collins's death, black soldiers and civilians could patronize any business they desired, and business owners encouraged their patronage at local stores rather than reinforcing Jim Crow segregation by refusing service. Local business owners most likely experienced a different reaction to Collins' death, though. Seeing what happened to Collins and knowing the dispute arose over keeping blacks out of their businesses, local store owners started allowing African American soldiers and civilians into their establishments if only to avoid another such confrontation. In some sense, these whites feared the fact that African American soldiers not only knew how to utilize weaponry, but also that they would violently defend themselves in the case of a potential attack rather than placidly accept such treatment.

[68] Ibid, 36.
[69] Ibid, 86.

White fears of armed black soldiers heightened racial tensions more than eased them, as elite whites sought new ways to retaliate for this breakdown of the established social order in Lakeland, Florida. The heightened tension and fear influenced the military's disarmament of the Tenth Cavalry after the incident. To at least one unknown member of the Tenth Cavalry, disarmament seemed too harsh a punishment because, "If the black regiment is to be disarmed for their side arms, then let the white regiment be treated likewise. . . . the whites [soldiers] have caused more trouble and killed more men in disgraceful and uncalled for fights than the members of the 10th."[70] To African American soldiers, for the military to treat white and black soldiers differently for the same sort of behavior was not only hypocritical but was also unnecessary. Subsequently, the variations in treatment left black soldiers nearly defenseless in the case of an attack. When the military held one set of rules for white soldiers and another for black soldiers, the hierarchy created left African American soldiers without many avenues for advancement or even assistance in correcting this mistreatment. African American soldiers in Lewis's regiment desired equal treatment, but also equal punishment for actions taken by soldiers when interacting with civilian populations near military bases. The threat of violent retaliation for any perceived slight worried African American soldiers due to varying perceptions of white and black soldiers by white Southerners residing close to military bases. Possible violent retaliation for resistance to Jim Crow and discrimination did not keep African American soldiers from consistently challenging these methods of subjugation and oppression.

The Collins incident reinforced the varying definitions of citizenship, masculinity, white violence, and self-defense for African Americans and white Americans as well as limitations

[70] Ibid.

associated with these ideals.[71] African American civilians and military personnel at the turn of the twentieth century faced numerous obstacles, from discrimination and the racism of white citizens in various localities to discrimination and paternalism inherent within the military system and society that intended to limit their economic, social, and political mobility. African American military personnel challenged the restrictions placed upon their lives daily, yet the struggle continued unabated since the United States military did not change its tactics and an influential national organization specifically created to aid African Americans did not exist. Scant records exist for the Spanish-American War and the subsequent Philippine-American War. It is for this reason that I rely heavily in this chapter and the next on the exhaustive and comprehensive collection of letters published by Willard Gatewood, Jr. in *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902*. Gatewood scoured primarily African American newspapers at the turn of the century to create this collection of letters written by soldiers to publications and family at home concerning their treatment and military life. His compilation provides a wealth of sources for examining African American soldiers' interpretations of the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War as well as race relations at the turn of the century. For African American soldiers, citizenship, masculinity, white violence, and self-defense affected their lives daily. Disputes with both whites and military leaders over commissions and African American officers in control of all-black regiments, interactions with white business owners and white citizens near bases, and violent encounters both on the battlefield and off combined to influence African American soldiers during the

[71] See Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), Crystal N. Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), Glenda E. Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), Marlon B. Ross, *Manning the Race: Reforming Black Men in the Jim Crow Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), and C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

Spanish-American War,[72] and represented the larger conflicts and struggles African Americans faced in the United States. While these soldiers resisted discrimination, subjugation, and violence any way they could, the absence of a national organization intent upon resisting these influences on African American military and civilian life minimized, however slightly, their effectiveness in enacting change within the United States military and American society.

Once the United States entered war with Spain over Cuba in late April 1898, the United States military and government called on the country's standing army to serve, including the country's four segregated units, the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiments, and the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, comprised of African American soldiers and mostly white officers. Since the United States only maintained a small standing army after the Civil War, the military sought volunteers to supplement the existing regiments. Volunteers came from all over the country, including various African American communities. The large number of African American volunteers eventually formed multiple segregated volunteer regiments who started training in preparation for Cuba. After asking numerous young men to volunteer, military leaders sought to avoid placing too many volunteer units in combat situations. Military leaders justified their actions by arguing that volunteer units were not as highly trained and disciplined as regular army regiments. Due to these reservations, as well as others concerning African American volunteers and their capabilities, few segregated volunteer regiments, including the Ninth

[72] See Raymond B. Ansel, *From Segregation to Desegregation: Blacks in the U.S. Army 1703-1954* (Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1990), Kate Dossett, *Bridging Race Divides: Black Nationalism, Feminism, and Integration in the United States, 1896-1935* (Miami: University Press of Florida, 2008), Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891-1917* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1974), Williard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), and Bruce A. Glasrud, ed., *Brothers to the Buffalo Soldiers: Perspectives on the African American Militia and Volunteers, 1865-1917* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2011).

Volunteer Infantry (U.S.), the Eighth Illinois Volunteer Regiment, and the Twenty-third Kansas Volunteer Regiment, experienced combat in Cuba.[73]

Before the United States declared war in April 1898, newspaper articles discussed the eagerness of some African American soldiers and civilians to participate in a war with Spain, queuing up to enlist even before the United States military called upon civilian volunteers for support. The First Independent Colored Company, Maryland National Guard expressed their desire to fight Spain during a celebration of the regiment's sixteenth anniversary. For these black soldiers, war with Spain meant the chance to display their patriotism and join Cubans of African descent in their fight for "'freedom from oppression.'"[74] The men also responded to those who questioned their preparedness for war by stating that their regiment just required time to put on their uniforms before setting out for Cuba.[75] Black Marylanders sought out assignments in Cuba to show solidarity with Cubans of African descent that faced similar oppression and discrimination that they themselves experienced within the United States. Their desire to participate as potential liberators of Cuba indicated they experienced frustration with American segregation and subjugation. These soldiers wanted freedom from oppression in the United States as much as the Cuban people, and chose to participate in that liberation rather than stand idly by.

The article also included a quote from the commander of the First Independent Colored Company, Capt. William R. Spencer, who discussed why black soldiers had to be ready to march in case of war. Captain Spencer mentioned that patriotism came first, but fighting with Cubans of African descent for their freedom came second, recognizing that the United States denied this

[73] Gatewood, 11.
[74] "Spain Had Better Look Out: Each Colored Soldier Said He 'Only Wanted Time Enough To Get Into His Uniform'," *The Baltimore Sun*, 23 Feb. 1898.
[75] Ibid.

freedom to men under his command.[76] For Spencer and his soldiers, the denial of freedoms based upon race or ethnicity remained an important reason for African Americans to participate in the forthcoming war with Spain. Spencer and the men under his command hoped that if they eradicated oppression abroad in Cuba, they might then return and rid America of it as well. Their experiences in Cuba, in turn, would encourage them to become leaders within the African American community in the battle against segregation and discrimination in the United States. At the turn of the century, some African Americans continued to rely upon military service as a pathway to equality, but without a national organization, their service remained mired in the Jim Crow system adopted by the United States military.

As was the case with accounts of African Americans in Maryland, young black men in Georgia eagerly entered military service once the United States declared war with Spain. Young black Georgians understood that as part of the Georgia state militia that included more than five hundred men in four companies, the United States military would only enlist their services after all regular army regiments received assignments. One commander of a Georgia militia company, Capt. Jackson McHenry, argued that Cuba "'. . . would be a good country for the colored man, and when the time comes for a fight the country will find the negro ready.'"[77] Captain McHenry noted that African American troops were better suited to Cuba's climate than white soldiers, and they would be useful either in Cuba or guarding Florida in case of a Spanish invasion.[78] McHenry implied that African Americans should not remain within the United States since they would be better off somewhere else, namely Cuba. Despite the utilization of prevailing stereotypes concerning African Americans, including their supposed tolerance to certain climates, in McHenry's assessment, his position concerning African American migration to Cuba

[76] Ibid.
[77] "Atlanta Negroes Are Ready to Fight Spain," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 6 Mar. 1898.
[78] Ibid.

after war implied his concern for his soldiers, their families, and their future in the Jim Crow South. He understood the limitations that Jim Crow imposed on African Americans, and recognized that their futures would be brighter outside the confines of America's racial and social structure. McHenry recognized that restrictions created concerning citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense would continue to plague the soldiers under his command as well as their families if they remained in the United States. He suggested that instead of attempting to change the American system, African Americans should instead find a more hospitable home elsewhere, possibly Cuba after the Spanish departed. Many African American soldiers did not share McHenry's support for relocation, and some instead sought to work toward eliminating Jim Crow and its restrictions.

The same article that quoted Captain McHenry also included a story about a black man from Cuba traveling in the United States who spoke only Spanish and the problems that arose from the language barrier. The article's author mentioned an encounter that this man had with a black Atlantan, and how that confrontation nearly led to violence due to the differences in language. White Atlantans and their perceptions of the proper social structure throughout the south created problems for the Cuban because he could not address white Atlantans' questions or remarks in English, nearly resulting in his death due to miscommunication.[79] This story exemplified various encounters faced by blacks in America, but more particularly the American South, where one slight misstep, even one out of their control, could result in violence and death.

The fact that this young Cuban did not speak English and therefore could not respond in a satisfactory manner to either black or white Atlantans meant trouble. A misinterpretation of encounters like the one documented in the article occurred all too often, especially in the American South, and sometimes ended tragically with white violence and lynchings. African

[79] Ibid.

Americans understood that if a lynching or some sort of violence against them occurred, they had no legal recourse, as most local law enforcement either participated in the violence or looked the other way. This story symbolized why Captain McHenry believed that African Americans might have brighter futures in Cuba: they would not have to fear daily violence over the slightest grievance by a white American and might obtain equal protection under the law. Escape to Cuba also provided the possibility of escaping a society heavily influenced by white supremacy and Social Darwinism. The perpetuation of white supremacy and Social Darwinism within American society contributed to the conditions that Captain McHenry hoped his soldiers could escape by migrating to Cuba after defeating Spain. African American soldiers challenged Jim Crow, subjugation, and white violence at all possible turns but their efforts fell on deaf ears in the United States military. Without a national organization with political and social influence supporting them, African American soldiers sometimes found their challenges to Jim Crow unheeded.

As war with Spain became likely, a debate among military and government officials arose concerning African Americans and their potential as soldiers in battle, documented in various newspapers with high circulation among white Americans. Part of that discussion focused on whether to use African Americans on the frontlines: "Though colored soldiers have rendered conspicuous service in all of our wars except the Mexican war, the employment of colored men as soldiers has always been more or less of a problem. . . . The fact is that the negro as a soldier is no longer an experiment."[80] The unidentified journalist writing for the conservative *Chicago Daily Tribune* referred specifically to previous wars, where the government hesitated in both enlisting African Americans as soldiers as well as recognizing their

[80] "Negroes in Next War: Colored Troops Will Fight Bravely if Liberty Is the Issue," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 10 Apr. 1898.

capabilities on the battlefield. In these previous conflicts, African American soldiers displayed all the characteristics that any military typically desired within its ranks. Black soldiers succeeded beyond the low expectations set for them by white commanders, and continued to volunteer for military service despite the treatment they received within the military. African American men associated military service with citizenship, contending that their service to the country that subjugated and segregated them would lead to further equality and respect as citizens and men.

At the start of the Spanish-American War, the government and military were not hesitant to turn to the United States Army's four segregated regiments. African American soldiers had already distinguished themselves in the Indian Wars immediately following the Civil War, and one officer named Charles Young had received a commission as a lieutenant.[81] The debate as to whether or not African Americans could competently serve in the military was already settled for the unidentified journalist. Based upon historical precedent, it made sense for the federal government and military to employ the four all-black regiments already formed and serving in the United States military for the impending conflict with Spain. The article mentioned that "The principal reason assigned for sending the colored regiments to Cuba is that they can better endure the heat and resist the fevers than the white soldiers. This seems to be more of a supposition or sentiment than an established fact."[82] According to the journalist from the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, segregated troops possessed no more immunities to warmer climates because most of them resided in the North rather than the South, and when Northern blacks tried to colonize Liberia, they were unsuited to the climate and could not survive there.[83]

[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.

While this unidentified journalist appeared to praise African Americans for their bravery and abilities as soldiers and men, the writer focused on why members of the United States military leadership chose to employ African American soldiers for their supposed tolerance of Cuba's climate. The theory that African Americans' genealogical origins in Africa, regardless of how many generations removed, encouraged the belief that African Americans possessed more tolerance to Cuba's climate. Even though their families had resided in the United States for generations or that the Cuban climate was even more oppressive and hot than the American South's climate, this theory persisted. The author also hinted at one of the main conflicts arising over the start of the Spanish-American War: only one black commissioned officer existed in four regiments. African American men would lay down their lives for service to a country denying them basic rights, but they also had to endure a limit on how far their military career could go. The fact that Lieutenant Young achieved a commission, but did so alone, was completely ignored by the article praising African American soldiers in the regular army. The author may have meant the praise of having at least one black commissioned officer as progress, but instead it highlighted the fact that a glass ceiling existed in the military for African Americans, and they could not rise past a certain rank as career soldiers. The United States military structure required African American soldiers to petition for better conditions within a system that not only adopted Jim Crow, but also exported it overseas and often ignored any efforts to end discriminatory policies. African American soldiers also could not turn to the few national organizations in existence at the turn of the twentieth century since these groups did not have the political clout necessary to affect change on behalf of African American soldiers.

As war with Spain continued to draw closer in April 1898, African American civilians and military personnel experienced frustration and dismay at their limited role in American

society. Limitations upon citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense all led some African American men to refuse to serve in the military at a time of war.[84] Their dissent represented far more than mere objection to military service or the conflict arising in Cuba. It characterized their resistance to the oppressive restrictions upon citizenship and freedom institutionalized through Jim Crow segregation throughout the South and de facto segregation imposed throughout the rest of the United States. Resisting military service implied that African American men did not believe that they should participate in the possible spread of the same oppressive system they experienced on a daily basis.

African Americans who empathized with the refusal of a few men to enlist, though, thought that support for the war and service in the military was vital. Military service equated to weapons training and gaining valuable military instruction for self-defense, asserting their masculinity, displaying their worth as citizens and their bravery in the face of certain danger, and the receipt of praise for their exemplary service.[85]

> It seems fair and right to both our soldiers and the race that the American people should know how willing we stand to do our part in upholding and defending the strong right arm of our country. It is easy to talk and shout at long range, but as a race we can congratulate ourselves upon having men who have smelt the powder, faced danger, and, in view of all, are ready to present themselves—real soldiers.[86]

In short, military service provided a means to an end for African Americans. By serving their country in a time of war, they could dispel stereotypes about African American intelligence and capabilities, encourage and fight for equality in all aspects of life, and ensure a positive future for forthcoming generations, including freedom from the fear of violence and intimidation. This knowledge and training would remain with veterans after service, ensuring that veterans could

[84] Gatewood, 21.
[85] Ibid.
[86] "The Negro and Patriotism: Colored Veterans Who Have Seen Service Ready at Country's Call," *The Washington Post*, 13 Apr. 1898.

not only protect their families, but also their community during peacetime from the racial violence that remained a constant throughout the United States at the turn of the century. These men could also use the skills, including management, leadership, and self-defense, honed in the military to become race men, or leaders within the African American community.

Numerous articles run in nationally circulated newspapers at the start of the Spanish-American War emphasized the perceptions African Americans held concerning military service and its ties to citizenship and equality. An article in *The Washington Post* in April 1898 discussed the four segregated regular army regiments, stating that, ". . . [black soldiers] do not lack courage has been proved again and again."[87] The unidentified journalist addressed white perceptions of African Americans, essentially attempting to dispel these stereotypes since so few white Americans considered African American men competent soldiers, loyal, and truly "American."

> No better Americans are born than these same Afro-Americans, and it will pay the government not to overlook their value. They know how to take care of themselves, despite all the talk about their improvidence. As a matter of fact, a much less number in proportion of colored people are depending upon others to take care of them than of any other class of the population.[88]

The journalist, most likely a white male, challenged prevailing white notions of African Americans with his statements, implying that white perceptions and stereotypes were not only incorrect, but so far from the truth that Americans must stop labeling all African Americans as lazy, dependent, and un-American. This journalist simultaneously implied that due to their "American-ness," laws inhibiting African American citizenship should be overturned. If African Americans were truly "American," it suggested that the journalist supported the uninhibited extension of civil rights to African American men. The author concluded the article by stating,

[87] "Uncle Sam's Colored Soldiers," *The Washington Post*, 10 Apr. 1898.
[88] Ibid.

"A huge army of colored men would give a splendid account of itself in case of a war with Spain, although in such an event it is probable that the American spirit would soon rise high enough in the army to obliterate all invidious dividing lines, and there would be but one soldiery, as there is now but one form of American in the navy."[89]

The unidentified author's implications here were transparent. Arguing that African American soldiers would perform admirably in a potential war with Spain, the author asserted that their service combined with the rising patriotism within America at a time of war would eliminate the color line in the military. Consequently, when these barriers in the military fell, they would then fall in American society. With the barriers removed, African Americans could exercise their rights as American citizens without fear of reprisal or violence. While not mentioning commissions in the article, the unidentified journalist most likely supported African American commissions and that black officers, not white officers, should command the segregated regiments in the United States Army. Commissions for African American soldiers remained a complicated issue within the military. Military leadership still argued that African Americans should not and could not command their own regiments. Military personnel also cited lack of intelligence, discipline, and leadership capabilities as reasons to maintain white officers in segregated regiments. This journalist undoubtedly disagreed with the established military leadership at the turn of the century, particularly due to the heavy emphasis upon masculinity, leadership qualities, and loyalty inherent in African American soldiers within the United States military prior to the Spanish-American War. African American soldiers frustrated with the limited upward mobility in the ranks had no alternative organizations to turn to for assistance to petitions for more black officers in the ranks.

[89] Ibid.

Just days before the United States declared war on Spain in late April 1898, a clash between African American soldiers and civilian law enforcement in Key West, Florida amplified racial tension and the frustration white civilians felt toward African American soldiers stationed at bases nearby. Sergeant Williams of G Company, Twenty-fifth Infantry examined his weapon while accompanied by a fellow soldier on a Key West street corner and subsequently agitated white residents in the area. At this point, ". . . a policeman ordered him to put the weapon away. Williams refused, and the policeman drew his weapon, but it missed fire."[90] Sergeant Williams then ". . . blazed away. He was overpowered before any one was hurt. During the struggle to overcome the negro several white men struck him in the face."[91] Local law enforcement imprisoned the sergeant at Key West City Hall, but not long after his arrest, some of his fellow African American soldiers, ". . . fully armed with rifles and fixed bayonets surrounded the house of Sheriff Knight and demanded that he release the prisoner. The Sheriff was alone and ill. The negro troops gave him five minutes to comply with their demands. He gave up his man."[92]

This incident provided yet another glimpse into the Southern social order and its attempt to exercise control over all aspects of African American life. When the policeman asked Sergeant Williams to stow his weapon, the law enforcement official attempted to control the actions of a black soldier in public, an act that ensured keeping the Southern social order intact. Most likely the officer would not have asked a white soldier to holster his weapon and would instead have respected the white soldier's ability to responsibly handle his weapon and not instigate any tense or problematic situations. That inherent trust was indicative of white fears concerning armed African Americans and the need for whites to assert control over their actions

[90] "Unanimous for War: Demonstration by Cubans at Key West Last Night. Clash Between Civil Authorities and Colored Troops Over the Arrest of a Negro Soldier—Investigation Ordered," *The Los Angeles Times*, 21 Apr. 1898.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.

no matter the situation. The anxiety over a trained and armed black soldier and the possible implications meant that white civilian law enforcement officials would go to any lengths to ensure white citizens' safety, even if it led to discrimination, unfounded accusations, and the persecution of innocent African American soldiers.

The attempt to free Sergeant Williams showed the lack of control white society in the South had over African American soldiers. These soldiers defied white attempts at authority and control over their actions and bodies regardless of the potentially violent consequences of this defiance to discrimination. Black soldiers arming themselves and confronting a biased legal system blatantly challenged white supremacy, the Southern form of "justice," and control over African American soldiers through Jim Crow segregation. An armed retaliation against such a degrading social, political, legal, and economic structure scared white citizens and law enforcement officials, as that opposition meant African Americans were not as satisfied with the Southern social structure and segregation as elite whites convinced themselves that blacks were. For African American citizens, seeing black soldiers defy Jim Crow segregation and white attempts to control them encouraged further challenges to the biased legal, political, and economic system. Black soldiers already serving in America's four all-black regiments were race men because of their constant push for equality within the military and American society, and their status as race men did not require a formal education as W. E. B. Du Bois posited in *The Souls of Black Folk.*[93]

Despite confrontations like Williams' with local authorities in the South, by June 1898 white Civil War veterans encouraged African American soldiers in their service, including Richard J. Hinton of the First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment. Hinton, an abolitionist and advocate of John Brown, wrote an editorial in *The Washington Post* supporting an increase in

[93] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994), 55-67.

African American officers in the United States military. Hinton opened his letter with a rhetorical question: "Is it possible that the right to command will be denied to competency, because the color of the fighter is darker than that of the man who commissions and directs?"[94] Hinton answered an emphatic no. Instead, Hinton argued that African American soldiers intended to fight in Cuba to help Cubans throw off the tyrannical Spanish rule. Due to their willingness to sacrifice, African American soldiers should not be denied a commission in the United States military because of their race. Hinton thought that equal skill and sacrifice on the battlefield should yield equal results for white and black soldiers when it came to commissions or promotions.

As a veteran of the Civil War, Hinton believed African Americans should experience equal treatment as well as take leadership positions within the military hierarchy, rather than remain in supplemental roles. Hinton recounted the existence of multiple black military leaders from Haiti including Toussaint L'Overture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, and General Fabre Geffrard, asking, ". . . [have we] so degraded the negroes among us that there are none fit to command?"[95] If people of African descent rose to leadership in other parts of the world, why could not do so in the United States? Hinton's rhetorical question directly challenged white supremacist stereotypes describing the ineptness and inability of African Americans not only to become world leaders, but also to competently perform any duty or obligation the job required. It was clear that Hinton believed Social Darwinism and white supremacy combined to provide white Americans a way to encourage segregation and discrimination and ensure no African Americans surpassed arbitrary and ill-defined limits economically, politically, and socially in the United States.

[94] Richard J. Hinton, "Black Men in Command: Maj. Hinton Contends that the Colored Soldiers Are Worthy of Office," *The Washington Post*, 5 Jun. 1898.
[95] Ibid.

Hinton's assessment then reminded readers of the numerous successful black soldiers during the Civil War, arguing that they were capable of leading soldiers into battle then and current black soldiers should also be given the opportunity to lead their regiments into combat at the turn of the century. "Why not take the competent 'non-coms' of the four colored regiments of regulars, and give them rank in colored volunteer regiments? Why not?"[96] Hinton's assertion made sense based upon the precedent of concluded American military conflicts as well as the service of black "non-coms" who experienced the Indian Wars of the west throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. If these men possessed the ability, discipline, and leadership qualities necessary to command, they should earn a commission and command African American volunteer regiments. Their skin color should not have been the barrier that prevented them from achieving a commission.

Finally, Hinton asserted that war between the United States and Spain had three significant consequences for Americans: it began due to public opinion in the United States fueled by yellow journalism, it was the only war the United States fought expressly for the purposes of the freedom and relief of a neighboring country, and it eradicated the sectional divide that had existed since before the Civil War. Hinton argued that, on account of these three consequences, the United States should aim to make the final goal of the Spanish-American War ". . . wip[ing] out our public race hatred and colorphobia[.] If it does all these it will be worth its cost… That they [African Americans] have done their duty cannot be denied. That they are competent soldiers, I myself, as the first white man, commissioned and mustered in to recruit and command colored soldiers during the civil war, am still a competent, if unimportant witness."[97] Race should not hinder African Americans' access to leadership roles in the military, especially

[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.

after so many had shown that if given the opportunity, they would succeed. African American soldiers must have the same opportunities to succeed as white soldiers, and that included commissions and commands over regiments, even if it would only be black soldiers. Their career trajectory in the armed forces was determined not by skill or competency, but by the color of their skin. Hinton reasoned that the United States military needed to stop discrimination and instead embrace its current soldiers and their talents, rewarding success and positive leadership with commissions rather than keeping African American soldiers in limited positions with no possibility of advancing their careers. While support from a Civil War veteran like Hinton was encouraging, African American soldiers remained trapped in a discriminatory system that ensured their careers peaked quickly. Their individual advocacy on behalf of themselves and their fellow soldiers remained unsuccessful without the necessary political and social influence necessary to influence great change within the United States military.

African American soldiers remained aware of the limitations within the United States military for career advancement during the Spanish-American War, and some including John E. Lewis of Troop C, Tenth Cavalry asserted that the answer was enlisting educated African American men to become officers and race men. Lewis encouraged young African American men to enlist in the military, especially educated ones, because of the advantageous possibilities service would provide. "If some of our best people would encourage their sons to enlist instead of looking down upon a soldier as a debased being, this regular army would be more of an honor to the race. . . . The colored race must venture and seek every avocation of life and it is to the race's interest that they should become skilled in warfare."[98] Lewis posited that young, educated black men could be successful in the military, particularly because the more education a young man received prior to entering the service, the more likely he would become an officer. At the

[98] Gatewood, 30.

same time, Lewis challenged upper class African American attitudes concerning military service. He implied that upper class African Americans at the turn of the century associated military service with characteristics including violence, immorality, and lack of education, characteristics that elite African Americans sought to separate all members of the race from. Instead, Lewis proposed enlisting educated African American men to ensure more black officers in the military as well as creating a new form of race leaders among veterans.

At the start of the Spanish-American War, very few officers in segregated regiments were black, and Lewis wanted that to change. Lewis argued, "I still maintain that if our best people will encourage their sons to enlist in the army, they will be, when the war is over, an honor to themselves and the race. We must have intelligence as brute force and ignorance are not the requisites upon which our great men won success."[99] Lewis tied success in the military to education, and he asserted that the lack of highly educated black men who received more than a public education within the military meant fewer black officers. Highly educated black men enlisting in the military also guaranteed the existence of more capable and trained race men. The training and knowledge they obtained while in the United States military could easily translate to civilian life through leadership in social uplift organizations or employment as well as assertions of citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense against white violence. Military service guaranteed another way to resist white supremacy and Social Darwinism throughout the United States aside from political and social activism. Lewis hoped that writing to local African American newspapers would encourage more educated African American men to enlist and become race men, but these local newspapers did not have a wide enough circulation for Lewis's efforts to make much of an impact. Without a national organization with political and social influence, Lewis's petition most likely reached only readers of the *Illinois Record*.

[99] Ibid, 34.

Along with encouraging educated African American men to enlist in the military, Lewis expressed his appreciation for "good" white officers, "who did not care about your color as long as you was a good soldier."[100] He stated that other white officers "look down upon you if you happen to be a dark skin."[101] White officers represented the multiple facets of American culture and tolerance, or lack thereof. African American soldiers like Lewis navigated this confusing and contradictory environment daily. Some white officers supported African American soldiers, even defended their intelligence, capabilities, and right to enter military service, while others actively worked to prevent African American soldiers from succeeding while in uniform. That intolerance led to an increased desire to challenge discrimination and inequality in the military and in civilian life once African Americans left the service. Even though Lewis respected white officers who looked beyond race when considering the success and recognizing their troops, he hoped, "that what colored troops are raised will have colored officers. It will not be long before they are calling heavily upon the colored race, and many colored regiments will be raised to hold what the U.S. has taken in conquest."[102] Lewis implied that African American officers were needed, especially if the war lasted more than six months since the United States Army would turn to volunteers to fill regiments. He also reiterated that more young, educated black men needed to enlist and become those strong leaders and commanders of segregated regiments. Regiments required commanders, and educated African American men should be more than willing to enlist and serve their country and participate in racial uplift through their service. Lewis continually defied middle and upper class African American attitudes concerning military service by contending that race men could indeed come from the military if educated black men became officers. They would not be immoral, debased men without any sense of decency or

[100] Ibid, 36.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.

intelligence. These men would become role models for black men just entering the military as privates, seeing how far others like them managed to accomplish within the military structure, and potentially attempting to go down the same career path.

Aside from encountering discrimination within the military and a glass ceiling in terms of promotions, African American soldiers also fought Jim Crow segregation in businesses when they were stationed throughout the Southern United States while awaiting transport to Cuba. Some challenged Jim Crow before even arriving at their final destination in Florida. The Tenth Cavalry's John Lewis told the *Illinois Record* that on the way to Florida, black soldiers from various regiments challenged Jim Crow on the trains used to transport military personnel. Lewis reported that prior to his regiment's arrival at Chattanooga, TN, ". . . [some African American soldiers of the Ninth Cavalry] broke up the Jim Crow car and took several shots at some whites who insulted them, and the officers were afraid that serious trouble would arise."[103] Lewis implied that officers in his regiment feared retribution by local law enforcement against the Tenth Cavalry as they passed through for actions performed by the Ninth Cavalry. Retaliation would most likely come in the form of white violence or lynching, even if the men who attempted to desegregate the transportation utilized by military personnel had already departed. Soldiers from other regiments, including the Tenth Cavalry, would become the targets for that violent revenge as a way to warn other African American soldiers not to challenge segregation and discrimination throughout the South.

For African American soldiers like Lewis, citizenship, race, and subjugation were part of their everyday lives, but they refused to accept the status quo and confronted Jim Crow and the color line as often as possible. The incident Lewis described occurred just two years after the Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and African American soldiers' challenge to that

[103] Ibid, 31.

ruling displayed the dismay that the African Americans suffered concerning the legalization of discrimination. Also inherent in Lewis's statement was the pride that he possessed for his brethren in the Ninth Cavalry and their bravery to stand up to discriminatory policies, especially in a time of war. Lewis noted that, "Many a resort had to close on account of refusing them [black soldiers] certain privileges. The Jim Crow car that ran from Lytle, Ga. to Chattanooga was discontinued. The 25th Infantry broke that up, but yet life was a pleasure at Chickamauga Park [GA]."[104] Segregation and discrimination were likely reasons that Lewis documented businesses closing rather than facing an integration effort, especially when these soldiers succeeded in integrating a train operating within the South.

When African American soldiers finally departed for the war zone in Cuba, they experienced far more violence than they did in the American South, yet they continued to emphasize African American soldiers' capabilities to counter white supremacist stereotypes. H. B. Bivens, a member of the Tenth Cavalry, recalled his combat experience in the Battle of Santiago de Cuba, intending to reinforce the success and bravery of African American soldiers in battle. Bivens mentioned taking heavy fire for sixty hours and even being hit by an enemy bullet: "I was stunned for five minutes, but soon forgot that I had been hit."[105] Bivens then said, "I need not tell you how my regiment fought. Bravery was displayed by all of the colored regiments. The officers and reporters of other powers said they had heard of the colored man's fighting qualities, but did not think they could do such work as they had witnessed in the sixty hours' battle."[106] Bivens mentioned his regiment's bravery in battle as an almost reflexive response since numerous white Americans suspected African Americans were incapable of heroism and bravery in combat. At times, Americans possessed a limited historical memory, so some overlooked all

[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid, 49.
[106] Ibid.

of the accomplishments and successes African American soldiers experienced in previous engagements when this new conflict with Spain arose. Even though virtually no difference existed between white and black soldiers, white Americans did not consider questioning the abilities of white soldiers in combat, yet constantly examined that of black soldiers. Questioning the abilities and commitment of black soldiers linked Social Darwinism and white supremacy, because some white Americans thought that African American men were incapable of becoming competent, loyal, and courageous soldiers. Bivens, writing to a friend who then published his letter in the *Southern Workman*, a magazine printed by the famed Hampton Institute, discussed the praise that officers and reporters heaped upon his regiment. Bivens did so to ensure a record of these events existed. He believed that African American soldiers performed admirably, but that this information might be left out of the national news stories or even the history of the Spanish-American War due to the race of the participants. Bivens understood that other factors, particularly race prejudice, influenced the journalists and historians who would eventually write about the Spanish-American War.

Bivens's concerns were confirmed not long after the war when President Theodore Roosevelt aided in rewriting history. Roosevelt assured the American public that his Rough Riders alone affected the outcome of the battles at Kettle Hill and San Juan Hill, completely ignoring the participation of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries as well as the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantries in winning these victories. Roosevelt's regiment became the heroes, while he depicted the black regiments involved in the same battles as cowardly and incompetent. Bivens's desire to record his regiment's accomplishments in combat challenged white supremacy and stereotypes held about African Americans at the time, proving that these men were not only capable, but also that they were willing to fight. Like other challenges to white supremacy in the

United States, African American success on the battlefield most likely frightened many whites because it meant that when these soldiers returned, they would not be submissive or complacent to Jim Crow or racism. Instead, they would challenge Jim Crow and racial violence targeting African Americans by utilizing the knowledge and training provided to them by the United States military.

Other soldiers, including M. W. Saddler, a member of the Twenty-fifth Infantry, shared Bivens's anxiety that African American soldiers' achievements would be excluded from the press and the historical record. Saddler wrote to the *Indianapolis Freeman* lamenting that, "We have no reporter in the division and it appears that we are coming up unrepresented."[107] Saddler wanted to make sure that someone documented the Twenty-fifth Infantry's participation in the surrender of Santiago. He mentioned that his regiment arrived at the battleground of El Caney on July 1, 1898, where other regiments retreated and told the Twenty-fifth that another charge was useless and they were sure to die.[108] Once in position, Saddler's regiment managed to continue advancing despite heavy fire from artillery and sharpshooters, taking the enemy by surprise at the steadiness of their advance. Saddler asserted that, "When they saw we were 'colored soldiers' they knew their doom was sealed. They were afraid to put their heads above the brink of their intrenchments [sic] for every time a head was raised there was one Spaniard less."[109] Saddler concluded the letter by stating, "If any one doubts the fitness of a colored soldier for active field service, when the cry of musketry, the booming of cannon and bursting of shells, seem to make the earth tremble, ask the regimental [sic] Commanders of the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth infantries and Ninth and Tenth Cavalry."[110]

[107] Ibid, 55.
[108] Ibid, 55-56.
[109] Ibid, 56.
[110] Ibid, 57.

The fact that other regiments retreated while Saddler's advanced, that the enemy feared African American troops, and that African American soldiers helped take the city all were important and should be recorded for posterity. In Saddler's estimation, his regiment bravely and boldly attacked the enemy, effectively frightening the enemy with their capabilities as soldiers and men. He believed this information was vital to understanding the end result of the war. Saddler recognized that even in the face of all of the violence and death associated with combat, African American military success on the battlefield would be ignored in the United States by whites who shaped the national memory of events. Saddler, Bivens, and other soldiers like them refused to deny their accomplishments on the battlefield and be written out of histories regarding the Spanish-American War and instead sought to document their accomplishments themselves if necessary. Saddler, like other African American soldiers who faced the violence of the battlefield, challenged the white social order by making sure that at least some Americans realized the sacrifices and heroism of his regiment rather than allowing their deeds to fade into obscurity in favor of an incomplete narrative.

When some African American regiments returned to the United States in the first few weeks of August 1898, they found themselves once again in precarious situations while stationed in the South. An unsigned letter to the *Illinois Record* recounted one such incident. According to this letter, as the Ninth Cavalry passed through Lakeland, Florida on their way back to New York, they had to retrieve a fellow soldier from a Tampa jail.

> This trooper was arrested for carrying concealed weapons and [for] drawing his pistol on a little boy, about ten years old. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to six months in the county jail at Tampa. No member of his regiment would believe that he drew his pistol upon a little boy, and from responsible parties we learned that the charge was false. They arrested him and threw him in jail. He was black, that was enough to convict him.[111]

[111] Ibid, 63.

The soldier's tale was reminiscent of other encounters African American soldiers had with law enforcement throughout the United States. Whether it was through confrontations with military or civilian law enforcement, African Americans experienced a biased system that rarely provided a fair trial and usually resulted in excessive punishments for various alleged crimes. A similar incident to the one described in the *Illinois Record* occurred before the Tenth Cavalry departed to Cuba, resulting in heightened racial tensions in the area. Some white Americans, especially in the South, encouraged this sort of behavior among law enforcement officers because it was a way to intimidate African American civilians and maintain the social order already in existence.

Regardless of whether or not the accused soldier waved his gun in the face of a child, the incident implied that Southern whites refused to tolerate a black man carrying a concealed weapon in the South irrespective of his status as a soldier. All it took was a false charge to jail a black soldier since fair trials were not possible for African Americans in the South. Incidents like this might discourage educated African Americans from enlisting in the military and potentially becoming officers, as they would become targets for this sort of action by whites as a way to suppress their attempts to succeed and continue to advance their careers. Potential race men among elite African Americans throughout the United States might have shunned military service to avoid becoming entangled in legal problems and what they viewed as a dead-end career due to the limitations of rank advancement in the military. Without advocacy from a national organization aimed to ensure citizenship, self-defense, and masculinity for African Americans, individual protests against discrimination did little to bring change to the United States military or American society.

Another instance recorded in the same unsigned letter involved an incident where an African American civilian accidentally stepped on a white woman's toes in a crowded store. The

result: ". . . one of the noble sons of this southern country shot this man down for insulting a white lady."[112] The soldier stated that he could recount, ". . . many instances of this kind that makes any man who has any degree of manhood feel like resenting some of the crimes which are committed against the colored people and the soldiers who are soldiering in the South."[113] For African American civilians and soldiers, one slight action or reaction in any given situation meant the difference between returning home safely and the possibility of jail time, violence, or death. A simple error, like stepping on someone's foot or accidentally bumping into someone on the street, could result in death. Like Jim Crow cars and segregation in public places, if the offending party was black and the "victim" was white, an overly excited white male believed it was his duty to reinforce white supremacy by intimidating the African American community through violently attacking someone for a simple error. The unidentified soldier who wrote to the *Illinois Record* expressed outrage at both instances and implied that not only were these incidents uncalled for, but that they could have been prevented or even avoided if African Americans were treated as equals by whites in the South. Limitations on citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense through Jim Crow left African American soldiers stationed in the South frustrated, and many endeavored to challenge these limitations as often as possible. Their individual efforts were commendable, yet had an influential organization existed that African American soldiers could rely upon for legal or political assistance when it came to situations like ones described by black soldiers at the turn of the twentieth century, the circumstances most likely would have been different.

While the Tenth Cavalry had been sent back to the United States in early August 1898, the Twenty-fourth Infantry remained in Cuba, where Cpl. John R. Conn wrote home to his sister

[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.

about combat in Santiago de Cuba, regaling the constant violence and devastation faced by Conn and his fellow soldiers. Corporal Conn's sister chose to send the letter to the *Washington Evening Star* so that Conn's combat experience reached a larger audience. The lengthy letter detailed what Conn and his fellow soldiers witnessed: "There were wounded and dead men lying all along, beside and in the road, and the air seemed alive with bullets and shells of all descriptions and caliber. You could not tell from what direction they were coming; all that we could understand was that we were needed further in front, and we could not shoot, for we could not see anything to shoot at."[114] Corporal Conn recounted his regiment's advance on San Juan Hill, where the Twenty-fourth Infantry had to destroy barbed wire in their way. After doing so, they advanced, forcing the enemy back into Santiago and taking the hill.[115] A long and gruesome battle for the Twenty-fourth, they continued advancing and fighting amidst the dread of certain death. The constant barrage of enemy fire could have broken the regiment, but instead they continued to fight until they seized San Juan Hill.

Corporal Conn's letter depicted the determination and strength of soldiers who fought alongside him, thereby presenting a challenge to white supremacy and negative racial stereotypes of African American men that described them as uneducated, weak, and emasculated. Instead, their combat experience asserted their masculinity and ability to fight against oppression. Corporal Conn presented his regiment as exceptionally brave and disciplined who did not retreat in the midst of battle, but charged forward with determination. What the corporal described as positive traits in his fellow soldiers exemplified traits that whites in the United States feared in African Americans. These characteristics could mean that upon return, these men would oppose Jim Crow and white supremacy, upsetting the supposed balance of life in the South and the

[114] Ibid, 68.
[115] Ibid, 69.

assertion of masculinity and citizenship by black males. Their challenge to the current oppressive system and potential positions as race leaders might then encourage other African American citizens to fight oppression and degradation throughout the United States. Corporal Conn's activism resembled that of his fellow soldiers, yet like other soldiers, he challenged white supremacist stereotypes and Jim Crow alone. If an organization existed to provide the unity and influence necessary to challenge Jim Crow, soldiers like Conn might have experienced more equitable treatment within the military and upon returning to the United States.

By September 1898, most African American soldiers returned from Cuba to face a restrictive social and cultural structure when attempting to participate in everyday life throughout the South and continue to challenge it. Chaplain George W. Prioleau of the Ninth Cavalry wrote to the *Cleveland Gazette* concerning an incident involving the chaplain and two other soldiers attempting to attend church in Tuskegee, Alabama during a recruitment trip. The white congregation of the local Methodist Episcopal Church gave the soldiers the options to ". . . take the extreme back seat, go up in the gallery or go out."[116] Prioleau asserted that they were not "back seat or gallery Christian[s]," so they preferred to leave and ". . . inform[ed] them on the next day that the act was heinous, uncivilized, un-christian, [and] un-American."[117] An exchange between the chaplain and local whites, who stated that ". . . niggers have been lynched in Alabama for saying less than that. We [Prioleau and the two soldiers] replied that only cowards and assassins would overpower a man at midnight and take him from his bed and lynch him, but the night you dirty cowards come to my quarters for that purpose there will be a hot time in Tuskegee that hour; that we were only three who would die but not alone."[118] Prioleau and his companions left the area not long after this, but Prioleau expressed disdain for their destination

[116] Ibid, 74.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.

since in Charleston, South Carolina "The prejudice is not so much against the ignorant Negro, the riff-raffs, as it is against the intelligent, educated, tax-paying Negro; the Negro who is trying to be a man . . ."[119]

Based on Prioleau's experience, white citizens of both Tuskegee and Charleston intended to keep African Americans from interacting with whites and from improving their position economically, politically, or socially. In Alabama, a church, which should have been a refuge for all people from the hatred and vitriol of the world, treated African American soldiers as second-class citizens and sub-human after the men commented on white worshippers' un-Christian behavior. These soldiers believed that a place of worship should not discriminate against those who desired entry and participation in a religious service. Prioleau asserted that places of worship should not segregate their patrons, as all men and women attended for the same purpose. Prioleau and his fellow soldiers responded to white congregation members who threatened to lynch them with a violent warning in return. They did so in case any white men in the crowd formed a mob to lynch these soldiers for their assertions of citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense. The white men they challenged believed that these soldiers crossed an invisible line, and wanted to restore what they believed was the right social order in the South, with African American civilians and soldiers kept in a subordinate and submissive role.

The men in Alabama seemed akin to those in South Carolina, as Prioleau and his companions faced a potential confrontation for not only speaking out against mistreatment, but for also doing so in an intelligent, educated, and responsible fashion, thereby upsetting the balance of whom in the South could lay claim to these traits. Experience and testimonials from other African American soldiers and civilians led Prioleau to the conclusion that white Southerners feared educated and successful African Americans far more than poor, uneducated

[119] Ibid, 75.

African Americans. An education combined with success meant that African Americans could challenge white economic and political control throughout the South. White Southerners feared any loss of control, and believed that if they kept the African American population uneducated and poor as well as intimidated through the threat of violence, they could maintain that control easily. These soldiers were not complacent, and instead continually asserted their citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-defense.

Chaplain Prioleau discussed other confrontations of the social and cultural structure of the South elsewhere in his letter, particularly when he examined the treatment of African Americans citizens and soldiers by the chief of police of Charleston, South Carolina. Prioleau asked the chief of police ". . . why it is that the Negro of the South is so badly treated . . ." since African Americans were ". . . the protectors of your families from '61 to '65 while you were fighting to keep them in bondage."[120] The officer replied, "'The Negroes of the South are perfectly happy, satisfied with their treatment and if you Northern Negroes would stay away from them, and your Northern newspapers would attend to their own section, we would have no trouble with our Negroes.'"[121] Prioleau, a native of South Carolina, responded by telling the chief where he was born, which family from the area had owned his before the Civil War, and how he spent his childhood in bondage.[122]

This exchange provided an impeccable model of the South's social and political structure. The chief of police wanted to keep out Northern newspapers and citizens at the turn of the century because Northern newspapers and citizens supposedly influenced African Americans to adopt expectations of equality and economic independence rather than accept the violence, economic intimidation, and second-class citizenship that existed in the South. Southern blacks

[120] Ibid, 75.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.

opposed Jim Crow segregation and discrimination, but many had few options when attempting to express that opposition due to the constant threat of violence or economic intimidation. African American soldiers traveling through the South to encourage black enlistment in the military consistently encountered these attitudes concerning Jim Crow and desired to do all they could to challenge it. The Charleston police chief implied in his assertion that Southern blacks remained content with the fact that most African Americans in the area were uneducated or easily intimidated, and he intended to keep them complacent. The chief of police blamed all of the "trouble" in the South on Northerners rather than acknowledging that white Southerners might bear some responsibility for any "trouble" in the region, including exaggerated charges that resulted in violence perpetrated against African Americans. He also ignored the fact that African Americans were subjugated, but that many attempted to defy Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, and violence regardless of education or economic standing. The Charleston police chief preferred to imagine that all Southern blacks accepted their mistreatment complacently, and Northern civilians and soldiers traveled South just to create controversy by encouraging black Southerners to challenge Jim Crow. When Prioleau and other soldiers like him confronted Jim Crow and the treatment of African Americans throughout the United States rather than accepting these impositions on African Americans' freedom and potential for success through assertions of citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense, they shattered notions of a peaceful, complacent, and accepting black population.

Chaplain Prioleau continued his correspondence with the *Cleveland Gazette* through October of 1898, when the Ninth Cavalry departed from Montauk Point, New York to Fort Grant in the Arizona Territory. Prioleau recounted the journey west, noting that their arrival in Kansas City, Missouri, "the gateway to America's hell," sparked hostility among white citizens, even

though the United States First Cavalry, a white regiment, arrived just before the Ninth Cavalry.[123] Both regiments fought in Cuba, and both were successful in combat ". . . yet these black boys, heroes of our country, were not allowed to stand at the counters of restaurants and eat a sandwich and drink a cup of coffee, while the white soldiers were welcomed and invited to sit down at the tables and eat free of cost. You call this American 'prejudice.' I call it American 'hatred' conceived only in hellish minds."[124]

Prioleau thought the injustices of discrimination and segregation experienced by African American soldiers were far too common, especially given the sacrifices paid by the men of the Ninth Cavalry. The chaplain believed that no veteran should be treated in this manner, let alone a man still wearing a United States military uniform. He felt that veterans of a recent military conflict, regardless of race, should be treated with respect and not denied access to public facilities throughout the United States after the sacrifices they made for their country. Instead, African American soldiers and veterans continually experienced segregation and degradation throughout the United States that intended to challenge their masculinity and limit their citizenship. Prioleau then asserted, "There are but few places in this country, if any, where this hatred of the Negro is not. . . . . Some say that it is not in the army. . . . But whether it's here or not, and he is fortunate enough to wear the insignia of his rank upon his shoulder instead of his arm, let him behave himself and no man can take his place."[125] Prioleau's letter dripped with disdain, and emphasized that even in the military, African Americans must ascribe to white definitions of identity, citizenship, and masculinity.

The United States military created an environment akin to the Jim Crow South through various means. These included separate regiments for African Americans, restrictions upon

[123] Ibid, 83.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid, 83-84.

commissions, and harsher punishments meted out for similar crimes to white soldiers. The chaplain also mentioned that few regions of the United States were exempt from racial hatred, implying a shift in how he interpreted the spread of racism and discrimination. Prioleau no longer saw racism and discrimination as a Southern problem but instead as an American problem. Chaplain Prioleau implied that the challenges he and his fellow soldiers continued to employ against Jim Crow, white violence, and discrimination needed to become a national objective. This shift in perception exposed his upbringing within the peculiar institution, and the misconception that prior to the Civil War most whites in the North fully embraced the free black population rather than embraced segregation and racial strife. Racial hatred had always been an American problem, not just a Southern problem, but it was far more prevalent in the South than any other region of the country. Chaplain Prioleau's assertions displayed the complexities of race, discrimination, and segregation within the United States military and society. The inherent discrimination African American soldiers experienced in the military reflected a larger problem existing throughout the rest of American society, attempting to subjugate African American assertions of masculinity, citizenship, and success, especially if it might situate that black soldier in a position of power over a white soldier. The chaplain's desire to challenge segregation, discrimination, and white violence on the national scale would come to fruition in the intervening years, but without a national organization already in existence at the turn of the twentieth century, Prioleau's continued activism would remain on the individual level rather than a unified effort among African Americans.

Due to the problems that African American soldiers faced with white citizens and Jim Crow segregation in the South, some of these soldiers dreaded heading to the region before their assignments overseas. While stationed in Montauk Point, New York, an unidentified member of

the Tenth Cavalry wrote in early October 1898 that "On every side you will hear Cuba in preference to the South, as the boys all dread that section of Uncle Sam's domains; yet they will have to treat us right if we go there."[126] The fact that African American soldiers feared the Jim Crow South more than military combat in Cuba was telling. Even though black soldiers dreaded these assignments, they vowed to continually fight Jim Crow segregation and second-class citizenship even though they feared the discrimination and potential violent encounters. To emphasize the fight against segregation, this unidentified soldier stated, "It is not the desire of any man to have trouble with the Southerner but the conditions will be the same as when we went South last April, an insult and a blow."[127]

In short, while African American soldiers wished to avoid Southern bases and the conflicts that might arise at these locations, they would not hesitate to contest the "conditions" rather than accept segregation, discrimination, and racism. African American soldiers were in a prime position to fight segregation and discrimination because of their roles as members of the United States military and defenders of the country. Resisting this system remained difficult since, "Too many believe that if you are insulted that it is the proper thing to turn and go away because a white man insulted you and that you must remember that you are *black*. This don't go in the 10th, and I am glad that we have men who have enough manhood to resent any insult cast upon them."[128] African American soldiers either ignored or directly challenged the assertion that African Americans must maintain the status quo of Jim Crow and white supremacy since it was not only a matter of principle, but also one of citizenship, masculinity, equality, and the right to self-defense against white violence. By doing so, these soldiers became, at least in their eyes, race men. While their efforts to resist discrimination and subjugation continued unabated,

[126] Ibid, 79.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid, 85.

without support from a larger and more influential organization white military personnel and the War Department itself overlooked the conditions African American soldiers faced in the military and in local areas where they were stationed.

By the time all African American combat regiments returned to the United States from Cuba in October 1898, their first stop was typically a base in the South where they continually encountered violence that should have been left on the battlefield. Chaplain Prioleau addressed African American soldiers' anxieties linked to violence in the South when it came to interaction with white civilians after they returned from fighting for Cuban freedom. The chaplain cited South Carolina Senator Benjamin R. Tillman, a staunch white supremacy advocate, to describe white perceptions of African Americans: "'Down with the niggers, but if we must tolerate them, give us those of mixed blood.'"[129] Prioleau responded to such remarks by declaring, "And yet if a Negro man marries, or even looks at a white woman of South Carolina, he is swung to the limb of a tree and his body riddled with bullets. It seems as if there is no redress in earth or Heaven."[130] The chaplain recognized the hypocrisy of Senator Tillman's assertion that if African Americans must be tolerated, they should be part white. Tillman referred to white men crossing the color line, probably in the form of rape, to impregnate black women. Prioleau and his fellow soldiers knew that the concept did not work in the case of black men crossing the color line to have a relationship with a white woman. Many African American soldiers knew that once their tenure in the United States military ended, they returned home to viewpoints similar to Tillman's that sought to control them in all possible ways.

Chaplain Prioleau's acknowledgement of Tillman's hypocrisy implied understanding Tillman's position concerning African American citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-

[129] Ibid, 84.
[130] Ibid.

defense regardless of military versus civilian status. Tillman's position concerning African Americans was quite skewed, and suggested that he preferred contact with African Americans produced from interracial sexual relations, but only when white men crossed the color line. When white men crossed the color line, they believed it protected white women's femininity and chastity and represented white men's masculinity. If any black man crossed the same line, it meant white men failed in their protection of white women's virtue. The threat of violence for any such act even perceived as threatening in some way the purity or virtue of a white woman meant death, even for an African American soldier. Black soldiers knew neither the uniform nor the military would protect them, even in the case of a false accusation. Tillman encouraged the sexual exploitation of African American women, yet sought to deny African American citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-defense. Tillman supported denying African Americans, regardless of status as civilian or soldier, due process if charged with a crime like rape, and instead preferred lynch law to manage these situations. Black men could not protect black women from rape or crossing the color line, which challenged their masculinity. Finally, local governments and lynch mobs overlooked African Americans' right to self-defense if African American men attempted to defend themselves against accusations of rape or against white violence. African American soldiers continued to resist limitations imposed upon their citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-defense, yet their efforts did little to end this persecution that would continue for multiple decades.

While some African American soldiers avoided conflicts, other black soldiers stationed in the South after the war could not avoid the violence perpetrated against them. One such case occurred in Huntsville, Alabama involving the Tenth Cavalry. According to an article in the *Lafayette Gazette*, a weekly Democratic paper published in Lafayette, Louisiana, an unidentified

soldier of the Tenth Cavalry ". . . attempted to take the town and was arrested by a detail of the provost guard. The negro cavalrymen attempted to rescue the prisoner and a riot was precipitated. . . . The white soldiers are very bitter against the negro troopers and they have been separated in order to prevent trouble which will certainly occur if the races meet."[131] The article continued with a commentary on African American soldiers, stating that as soon as they became soldiers, they believed themselves to be invincible so only a bit of alcohol ". . . is all that is required to make him insulting and intolerable to white people."[132] The article emphasized the necessity of control, and violent control, over black bodies and the subservience of black men, even in uniform. African American soldiers' continued resistance to Jim Crow and white supremacy frustrated and terrified white Southerners that an armed rebellion would occur to overthrow this repressive system. The *Lafayette Gazette's* piece exaggerated the details of the incident, especially since another article in the *Chipley Banner*, a weekly publication out of Chipley, Florida, reported that the soldier ". . . was arrested in a house which is open exclusively to white men. He had tried to whip out the place."[133] The black soldier in question attempted to integrate a segregated business by asserting his right as a citizen to frequent any business, and was arrested for his challenge to Jim Crow. Instead of an accurate account of the incident, newspapers in the South exaggerated the situation to the point of absurdity, claiming the unidentified soldier contested the limitations of Jim Crow and needed to be taught proper black identity and station in society.

Other members of the Tenth Cavalry fought the ramifications of these types of incidents as best they could, including writing letters to various African American newspapers throughout

[131] "Lawless Negro Troops," *The Lafayette Gazette*, 15 Oct. 1898.
[132] Ibid.
[133] "Fight Among Soldiers: Negro Cavalrymen and White Guards Use Guns With Fatal Effect," *The Chipley Banner*, 22 Oct. 1898.

the United States about the incident and the injustice done to them. One unidentified soldier sent a letter to the *Illinois Record* stating that the Tenth Cavalry were eventually disarmed in early December 1898 and left ". . . at the mercy of any set of thugs" after the October incident. That disarmament resulted in the deaths of Pvt. John R. Brooks and Cpl. Daniel Garrett, both of Troop H, Tenth Cavalry.[134] As Brooks and Garrett returned to camp, they were attacked and killed, while local police captured another member of the Tenth and accused him of brandishing a pistol.[135] According to a second unidentified soldier, who signed his letter to the African American publication *The Richmond Planet* "Equal Rights," the welcome the Tenth received was ". . . a volley of bullets. . . . Our trouble had begun."[136] Both soldiers' letters addressed the bounty that local whites had engaged on any member of the Tenth Cavalry, and that "Ignorant colored citizens were enlisted into the confidence of the faint hearted and cowardly whites to lay in wait at night and murder members of the 10th."[137] Both cavalrymen also called for returning weapons to the Tenth Cavalry or a transfer from Alabama, under the guise that ". . . our rights as U.S. soldiers and citizens are not protected by our Republican form of Government . . ."[138] The unidentified cavalryman writing to *The Richmond Planet* even argued that African American soldiers were just as despised by white Alabamans as enslaved peoples were prior to the Civil War.[139] The other cavalryman took a vastly different approach to the situation and how it played out. He argued that, "I do not blame the whites of the South for killing off so many blacks in this and other sections of the South. They will never be respected as a race until they work for the

[134] Gatewood, 88.
[135] "Uncle Sam and the 10th Cavalry: More About the Treatment at Huntsville. A Strong Plea for the Return of Arms. A Fine Thanksgiving Dinner. The Ladies in Evidence," *The Richmond Planet*, 3 Dec. 1898.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid. And Gatewood, 88.
[138] Ibid. And Gatewood, 88-89.
[139] "Uncle Sam and the 10th Cavalry: More About the Treatment at Huntsville. A Strong Plea for the Return of Arms. A Fine Thanksgiving Dinner. The Ladies in Evidence," *The Richmond Planet*, 3 Dec. 1898.

interest of their own race. . . . [instead of] accepting money to murder those who have aided largely to bring the race up to its present standard [and] who fought so bravely in Cuba."[140]

These two cavalrymen addressed the problems African American soldiers confronted daily while in military service, but what they anticipated facing upon leaving the military. These soldiers were expected, at least when in the South, to not defend themselves to any sort of extent, but instead allow white supremacy and Jim Crow to dictate their lives and the lives of their fellow servicemen. The entire incident began over a contested space and identity. A whites only establishment that one soldier tried to integrate led to a violent confrontation involving citizenship, masculinity, and the right to self-defense. White Alabamans wanted to reassert their authority over African American soldiers, whom they labeled as "uppity," by utilizing the local black civilian population to attack the Tenth Cavalry. African American citizens in the area were enticed by the offer because of the massive poverty they lived in with little access to decent wages or employment. Commanding officers requisitioned African American soldiers' weapons, leaving them undefended and open to attack from both white civilians and white soldiers Huntsville. White violence and at least two deaths resulted from this policy, leading soldiers to beg for their return of their weapons or a transfer out of the South to escape this violence. African American soldiers confronted these injustices and continued the fight against them, asserting citizenship, masculinity, and the right to self-defense. African American soldiers wanted to defend themselves against attackers, and their military training was front and center in the debate over African American soldiers' right to defend themselves and whether to re-arm them in Huntsville. Some white Southerners regarded this military training as a threat and believed trained soldiers would lead other African Americans in an armed rebellion to overthrow Jim Crow and white supremacy for good, destroying the status quo and ensuring that whites

[140] Gatewood, 89.

could not continue to subordinate African American citizens. African American soldiers saw this as necessary and their right as an American citizen, especially considering the brutality and violence they faced daily in the South.

By the end of the Spanish-American War, repeated disputes over the extension of commissions to African Americans in segregated regiments, clashes over segregation and discrimination in areas near military bases, and violence both on and off the battlefield affected African American soldiers throughout the end of the twentieth century. These disputes represented a larger conflict within the United States over citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense as well as limitations placed upon these concepts through the institution of Jim Crow. While African American soldiers continually struggled for civil rights, equality, and respect, their efforts were mostly individual rather than unified across all African American soldiers serving in the United States military. The Spanish-American War was the first war to occur after most African American men lost the potential to vote. Thus, their influence in making demands upon the United States government faced significant challenges. Historians have discussed the growing goal of orderly, bureaucratic, highly regulated authority as one of the most important developments in American business and politics around the turn of the century.[141] The question of how African Americans fit into this development, whether as part of the process of organizing or as objects to be organized, was unclear. C. Vann Woodward's old argument, supported by numerous historians since the 1950s, that the Southern progressive movement was with a few exceptions "for whites only" left African Americans not only out of politics but also out of all sorts of discussions about authority. As a result, African American soldiers wrote to African

[141] See Charles W. Calhoun, *From Bloody Shirt to Full Dinner Pail: The Transformation of Politics and Governance in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford Unviersity Press, 1980), Karen Pastorello, *The Progressives: Activism and Reform in American Society, 1893-1917* (Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), and Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

American newspapers to petition for change and encourage further enlistment despite the struggles faced in the military rather than more official avenues. Their critiques and challenges to Jim Crow and white violence most likely did not reach a large audience due to the limited circulation of black newspapers. The lack of a national organization with the political and social power to influence the United States military and federal government or provide legal or financial aid to African American soldiers in distress inhibited the soldiers' ability to affect change in the United States military and in American society.

CHAPTER 2: 'THIS IS A WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY':

AFRICAN AMERICAN SOLDIERS AS

OCCUPYING FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR

When the Philippine-American War began in February 1899,[142] African American soldiers in the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiments arrived in the Philippines unaware of what American intervention on the islands would eventually mean for the Filipino people. Some believed their experiences in the Philippines would resemble that of Cuba, fighting a war for liberation and citizenship. By May 1900 though, African American soldiers learned precisely how brutal American intervention in the Philippines would be and how it differed from Cuba. An unidentified soldier, most likely with the Twenty-fourth or Twenty-fifth Infantry, penned a letter to the *New York Age* which the *Wisconsin Weekly Advocate*, an African American newspaper based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin lamenting American intervention on the islands. In the letter, the soldier stated that Spanish occupation was harsh in terms of laws, but Spanish officials, ". . . were polite and treated them [Filipinos] with some consideration. . ."[143] White American military personnel,

> . . . as soon as they saw that the native troops were desirous of sharing in the glories as well as the hardships of the hard-won battles with the Americans, began to apply home

[142] See Raymond B. Ansel, *From Segregation to Desegregation: Blacks in the U.S. Army 1703-1954* (Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1990), H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891-1917* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1974), Williard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898-1903* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), Bruce A. Glasrud, ed., *Brothers to the Buffalo Soldiers: Perspectives on the African American Militia and Volunteers, 1865-1917* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2011), Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), and Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

[143] Gatewood, 279.

> treatment for colored peoples: cursed them as damned niggers, steal [from] and ravish them, rob them on the street of their small change, take from the fruit vendors whatever suited their fancy, and kick the poor unfortunate if he complained, desecrate their church property, and after fighting began, looted everything in sight, burning, robbing the graves.[144]

The Filipino people opposed Spanish rule, but at least under the Spaniards they experienced at least some modicum of respect, cooperation, and understanding, not to mention as human beings. Under American rule, Filipinos instead experienced the oppressive and discriminatory policies typically seen in the American South meant to subjugate roughly half of the Southern population. Filipinos also suffered violence, theft, and mistreatment at the hands of white American soldiers who denied their humanity and ability to govern themselves.

The unidentified soldier reported that white soldiers from other regiments boasted of their behavior to African American soldiers, thinking black soldiers would not only support their actions, but also participate in them. White soldiers asserted that they were entitled to confiscate property from Filipinos to compensate for their pay rate of $13 a month, and treated Filipinos with the same contempt many white Americans, both military and civilian, reserved for minorities within the United States. “One fellow, member of the 13th Minnesota, told me how some fellows he knew had cut off a native woman’s arm in order to get a fine inlaid bracelet.”[145] When white American soldiers asserted their perceived privilege through their violent treatment of Filipinos and violence when robbing a Filipino woman of a bracelet, they revealed the complexities of defining citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense. These white soldiers believed they had every right to take this bracelet, and to do so violently if necessary since the United States military encouraged the establishment of discrimination, violence, and subjugation in the Philippines. Their actions were just one way to reinforce this sort of behavior and treatment of

[144] Ibid, 279-80.
[145] Ibid, 280.

the native population. They thought that violence perpetrated against the Filipino people reinforced their masculinity, while simultaneously denying that people of color deserved better treatment than disdain and subjugation.

When the unidentified African American soldier questioned his brothers in arms further, he discovered that they believed theft and violence against the native population was an assertion of their right as soldiers. These white military personnel also asserted that white men could not live off of what they called starvation wages from the United States military.[146] These white soldiers failed to take into account the disparity in military pay rates between white and black American soldiers. White soldiers' pay consistently remained above black soldiers even if men of both ethnicities were equal in every respect of their rank and accomplishments while in the military. White American soldiers in the Philippines displayed arrogance and implied they held a privilege that non-white Americans did not because they thought they were entitled to what they defined as a living wage. The unidentified soldier showed his contempt for the actions taken by his fellow white soldiers, condemning them and their attitudes in regard to robbing defenseless Filipinos and asserting they remained sorely underpaid during their service overseas. He found these outrages problematic and sought to bring attention to such atrocities and incorrect perceptions of military life. The unidentified African American soldier implied that the violence incurred upon the Filipino people was unnecessary and that innocent people should not encounter violence perpetuated in their country by an occupying force that attempted to subjugate them in almost every aspect of their lives. The soldier acknowledged the contradiction inherent in the actions of white American military personnel claiming to be a force for civilization then acting as uncivilized as possible.

[146] Ibid.

More intense violence combined with harsher language and insults to influence African American soldiers. According to the unidentified African American soldier writing to the *New York Age*, white American soldiers ". . . talked with impunity of 'niggers' [Filipinos] to our soldiers, never once thinking that they were talking to home 'niggers' and should they be brought to remember that at home this is the same vile epithet they hurl at us, they beg pardon and make some effeminate excuse about what the Filipino is called."[147] For this unidentified soldier, the actions of white soldiers were a glaring reminder of the United States and the treatment African American soldiers received within their own country. He sympathized with the intimidation and racial subjugation of Filipinos, desiring a different type of occupation forces, ones who would treat Filipinos as humans rather than as sub-human or even animals. The unidentified soldier's portrayal of white American soldiers as brutal and "uncivilized" in their actions provided an interesting contradiction to the official policy that the United States military and government sought to "civilize" Filipinos. The soldier concluded that "if it were not for the sake of the 10,000,000 black people in the United States, God alone knows on whish side of the subject I would be."[148]

The writings of this unidentified African American soldier highlighted the complexities inherent in defining citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense as well as limitations restricting them. His sympathy for the Filipino people arose because their situation mirrored his own, characterizing what awaited him when the military discharged him. The United States military intended to not only secure the islands as a strategic possession, but also to subjugate the resistive Filipinos. The military also exported Jim Crow to the islands, attempting to recreate social patterns and structures from the United States in new areas that aimed to control the native

[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.

population. African American soldiers experienced white definitions of citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense in the Philippines in a more violent and turbulent manner than in Cuba because the occupation put them in close proximity to the Filipino people for a very long time and the onset of total war ensured a more violent military force to subdue a rebellion.

White officers and the military attempted to make it clear to African American soldiers that their American citizenship situated them in a superior position to the Filipino people, even if the military treated both African Americans and Filipinos in the same manner. African American soldiers stationed in the Philippines continued to encounter paternalism, Social Darwinism, and white supremacy, but also experienced a complicated relationship with the native population due to military policies that resembled Jim Crow and racism in the United States. These men faced numerous obstacles while in the Philippines, including questioning whether or not their race was capable of fighting in the Philippines against a group of people potentially similar to them. Some African American soldiers also contemplated migrating there permanently to rid themselves of the problems and frustrations associated with returning home to Jim Crow. Others continued to petition the increase in African American officers and acknowledgement of their status and report violent encounters with both Filipino forces and white soldiers stationed on the islands. African American soldiers determinedly maintained the struggle against Jim Crow, discrimination, white violence, and subjugation the best that they could, but did so almost entirely alone. Writing to newspapers about atrocities and mistreatment only got them so far, and without a national organization to turn to for legal, financial, and moral support, these soldiers were left to attempt petitioning the United States military to minimal avail.

By late 1898, the United States had concluded the Spanish-American War and now looked to the Philippines for expansion once the Spanish Empire collapsed. The Filipino people

wanted independence rather than yet one more country asserting its control over them. American politicians, military personnel, and leaders ignored this, and plans for annexing the Philippines appeared as early as December of 1898, arguing that annexation would ". . . be profitable both to the interests of American white labor and also to those of Southern black labor, as well as to the great advancement of the American negro, to adopt the policy of making those islands and others of like character that we may yet acquire in the Pacific Ocean an outlet for the surplus negro population of our Southern States."[149] Some white American citizens believed that African Americans would never succeed in the United States, therefore annexing the Philippines and transporting all black Americans there was a viable option. African Americans sometimes undercut union, or white, workers' wages due to a discriminatory wage system, so some white Americans believed it would be far more beneficial to white working class Americans for African Americans to leave the country entirely. By migrating to the Philippines, African Americans would no longer compete with white Americans for employment. Since competition for employment was a factor in racial conflict, and white Americans faced competition from immigrants as well, migration would eliminate a group that competed for the best jobs and ensure white supremacy in the United States through job security and success for white Americans.

If the United States annexed the Philippines, some Americans, including Rev. W. B. Gallaher of Danville, Illinois, believed that white America could rid itself of African Americans once and for all, ending racial violence and discrimination in the South, albeit in an indirect and insolent way. Writing to the editor of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Reverend Gallaher argued that white Americans should send over "American negroes [that] are vastly superior to the natives" to colonize the islands, then followed by Southern black soldiers. The United States would maintain

[149] W. B. Gallaher, "Philippines and Negro Colonization," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 11 Dec. 1898.

white supervision over both the migrants and the indigenous population.[150] Reverend Gallaher's argument exuded white supremacy and limitations on citizenship, masculinity, and the right to self-defense. Reverend Gallaher believed wholeheartedly that educated African Americans would be the first to aide in the colonization process, creating some sort of rapport with the native population. The next migrants were to be Southern African American soldiers, most likely due to their attempts to resist Jim Crow, discrimination, and subjugation within the United States. The remainder of the African American population could theoretically follow these educated black Americans from the United States. In turn, labor conflicts would decrease as job competition lessened for white Americans.

Reverend Gallaher's argument ignored the realities of labor in the United States. Reverend Gallaher and others like him ignored the fact that African Americans typically earned far less than white Americans who worked the exact same jobs. Instead, men like Gallaher allowed ethnicity and discrimination to factor into their belief that labor competition with white Americans was the main problem within the American labor system, not the oppressive, demanding, and exploitative nature of the American labor system. Black migration to the Philippines also meant that white Americans retained some sort of control over the African American population, even though they were half a world away. While white Americans wanted all African Americans out of the country, they still deemed African Americans incapable of independence or self-rule, so white America must retain control over not only the governmental system, but also over these potential migrants once they reached their new homeland. Reverend Gallaher sought colonization as a solution to labor tensions as well as the anxiety over African American soldiers.

[150] Ibid.

By the following year, the United States military stationed African American soldiers in the Philippines, where the ever-present reminder of racial tensions in newspapers arriving from the United States and the military hierarchy they experienced plagued their lives daily. Rienzi B. Lemus, a member of Company K, Twenty-fifth Infantry, recalled an incident that occurred in September 1899 at La Lanio. According to Lemus, "A Corporal and a private of the 16th Infantry are sentenced to be shot for robbery and assault on a sixty year old native woman. He was caught in the act and tried by military court which passed the above-mentioned verdict."[151] Lemus mentioned the regiment that the soldiers were affiliated with to ensure that people back home did not blame African American soldiers for the crime, since only six regiments, the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry, the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, and the volunteers of the Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth Infantry, were all stationed in the Philippines.[152] The fact that these men did not belong to any of the six African American units was important to Lemus, and important to his audience reading his letter in the *Richmond Planet*. Mentioning which regiment the men who committed the violence belonged to reinforced efforts by black soldiers to distance themselves from negative stereotypes that both white and black Americans considered factual. Elite African Americans and most whites believed that black soldiers in the regular army were some combination of violent, immoral, and incapable of becoming race leaders.

Lemus ensured that African Americans back in the United States understood that white soldiers, not African American soldiers, committed some of the most violent and disturbing crimes in the Philippines. Lemus said, "Every time we get a paper from there [United States], we

[151] Gatewood, 247.
[152] "Negro Soldiers for Otis: War Department Orders the Enlistment of Two Regiments," *The Baltimore Sun*, 11 Sep. 1899. The War Department issued an order on Sept. 9, 1899 to organize two new all-black regiments, with only black officers. The officers appointed were all men who served in Cuba during the Spanish-American War. This was the first time the War Department chose to form regiments with black officers, something African Americans had fought for throughout the Spanish-American War as well as the Indian Wars and the Civil War.

read where some poor Negro is lynched for supposed rape. In this case there was no Negro in the vicinity to charge with the crime and the law has had its course."[153] Lemus stressed that white soldiers were tried and sentenced to death in this case because no African American soldiers could be blamed for the crime. Lemus's accurate assertion described conditions that led to numerous lynchings of African Americans in the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He and other African American soldiers were well aware of the violence and intimidation aimed at African Americans throughout the United States, and consistently expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of protection for African American citizens. Lemus's cynicism about the situation most African American men found themselves in showed that these men were not complacent and wanted a better environment not only for themselves, but also for future generations. Lemus and his fellow soldiers felt that as citizens of the United States, African Americans should be protected from violence and intimidation by law enforcement and the legal system rather than pushed off as second-class citizens with no rights or protection from fear, violence, economic intimidation, or discrimination. Lemus was left with few options when incidents like this occurred, and while he condemned discriminatory treatment, he did not have enough influence either in the military or the federal government to ensure these situations changed for the better.

The frustration apparent in Lemus's letter to the *Richmond Planet* appeared in other aspects of African American soldiers' service in the Philippines, including how to comprehend fighting against an enemy that physically resembled them far more than their comrades in arms. Sgt. M. W. Saddler of the Twenty-fifth Infantry commented on this confusion and the complexity of service in the Philippines. Saddler stated,

> We are now arrayed to meet what we consider a common foe, men of our own hue and color. Whether it is right to reduce these people to submission is not a question for the

[153] Gatewood, 247.

> soldier to decide. Our oath of allegiance knows neither race, color nor nation, and if such a question should arise, it would be disposed of as one of a political nature by a soldier.[154]

Sergeant Saddler expressed that he would continue to fight because of his oath to the United States, but revealed that he considered his participation in the Philippines as a conflict of interest. Saddler's perception revealed how he understood military action in the Philippines as a man, not as a soldier. While Saddler asserted that soldiers should not decide such matters, he implied that he did not necessarily support fighting against Filipinos and just followed the orders given to him by superior officers.

Sergeant Saddler suggested that some African American soldiers disagreed with their assignments in the Philippines requiring them to subjugate a people who resembled them physically in the same manner African American citizens were subjugated within the United States. These soldiers then struggled with their assignments and what subjugating another group of people signified. The sergeant gave away his sympathies when he said, "I am thoroughly convinced that if these people are given home rule under American protection it will finally result in absolute independence."[155] In Sergeant's Saddler's estimation, the Filipino people were capable of self-rule, and if Filipinos could rule themselves, African Americans should also be provided with self-determination and equal opportunity in the United States rather than remain second-class citizens. In short, Saddler believed that all people, no matter their origins, had the right to determine their own destiny and governing body rather than remain impeded by discriminatory and oppressive rule by either or foreign or domestic governments.

In a subsequent letter from Sergeant Saddler to the *Indianapolis Freeman*, an African American newspaper in Illinois, he continued to recount the possible difficulties African American soldiers might face when engaging in combat with the Filipino people. Saddler

[154] Ibid, 248.
[155] Ibid, 249.

wondered what would happen when "Military maneuvering and fighting between civilized colored men…" occurred.[156] Sergeant Saddler's assertion that the Philippine-American War would experience two civilized non-white forces fighting one another demonstrated an alternative perspective to American military and government perceptions concerning whether Filipinos were "civilized" or not. Saddler described Filipino forces as "civilized," an interpretation that challenged white American beliefs that Americans needed to "civilize" the native population of the islands.

Some black soldiers, including Sergeant Saddler, also recognized that Filipino forces would be tougher opponents than Cubans were during the Spanish-American War. If captured, Filipinos would not immediately kill American forces in the same manner Spanish military personnel were by Cuban forces.[157] Saddler worried about what would happen in case Filipino forces seized him, but believed that Filipino military forces would show more restraint than Cuban forces did. Soldiers feared the violence that could be unleashed upon them as the invading force, but some like Saddler made special note of whether or not the enemy was "civilized." African American soldiers who fought in Cuba prior to their stint in the Philippines appreciated just how violent one could be to an enemy, but believed that they would not see the same level of violence from Filipino soldiers because of how these forces presented themselves during combat.

African American soldiers soon found out what fighting Filipino military forces would be like, and described it thoroughly when writing home to newspapers and family members. When the Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment first encountered Filipino soldiers in October of 1899, the violence was intense. C. W. Cordin of the Twenty-fifth Infantry described the action as rough, stating, "We worked like demons. . . . Company B came out to our outpost on the left, volley

[156] Ibid, 248.
[157] Ibid, 249.

firing. . . . there is lots of difference in looking a man in the face when you are shaving him and looking him in the face when he is throwing lead at you."[158] Cordin asserted that battle meant facing almost certain death and a capable foe intent on victory, with potentially disastrous consequences for American regiments. What African American soldiers witnessed on the battlefields stayed with them, and they knew that anything could happen to them instantaneously. When confronting this violence, African American soldiers did not evade their duties or responsibilities, documenting their experiences when writing home, ensuring that American audiences understood just how African American soldiers would react in the face of danger. Reasons for African American soldiers to write home was twofold. Writing to newspapers and family members in the United States provided a record of actual events that many black soldiers thought might be overlooked once the Philippine-American War ended. African American soldiers also sought to dispel negative stereotypes commonly held by white Americans concerning them and their abilities. White soldiers faced this same violence when in combat, but they did not have to reconcile the fact that African American soldiers and Filipino forces experienced similar treatment by whites and intermingled so easily off the battlefield due to mutual experiences with discrimination, violence, and racism at the hands of white Americans.

African American soldiers stationed in the Philippines not only recognized the potential similarities between themselves and Filipinos, but also recognized when white military personnel attempted to implement a Jim Crow-type culture in the islands. To implement Jim Crow in the Philippines, white military personnel "establish[ed] their diabolical race hatred in all its home rancor in Manila, even endeavoring to propagate the phobia among the Spaniards and Filipinos so as to be sure of the foundation of their supremacy when the civil rule that must necessarily

[158] Ibid, 250.

follow the present military regime, is established."[159] White soldiers and officers safeguarded white supremacy and paternalism in the Philippines through reestablishing the same system of oppression and subjugation that African Americans and other minorities experienced daily in the United States. White American military personnel began this process by imparting a fear of African American soldiers to the native population through threats and violence and treating Filipinos as if they were incapable of taking care of themselves. White American military personnel believed that by these methods, subjugation would equate to a peaceful occupation with white officials in control, teaching the "uncivilized" Filipinos how to become more "civilized" like white Americans. These methods also allowed white military officials to divide the population even further, ensuring a wide partition between Filipinos and African American soldiers. Dividing the population was a direct influence from elite whites in the American South who introduced Jim Crow segregation and white supremacy to that region, but white American military personnel could not keep the populations entirely divided.

In defiance of the separation of populations, Sgt. Maj. John W. Galloway of the Twenty-fourth Infantry interviewed multiple well-educated Filipinos to understand how at least a small group of the native population felt about American forces regardless of ethnicity. Galloway's interviewees provided a glimpse into Filipino viewpoints and observations, and specifically about how differently they regarded white and black American military personnel. Initially, white soldiers and officers,

> . . . began to tell us [Filipinos] of the inferiority of the American blacks—of your brutal natures, your cannibal tendencies—how you would rape our senioritas, etc. Of course, at first we were a little shy of you, after being told of the difference between you and them; but we studied you. . . . Between you and him, we look upon you as the angel and him as the devil.[160]

[159] Ibid, 252.
[160] Ibid, 253.

Galloway discovered through these interviews something the United States government and military hierarchy predicted as a possibility of interactions between Filipinos and African American soldiers. His investigation revealed how white military personnel intended to drive a wedge between Filipinos and black soldiers by utilizing negative racial stereotypes commonly held in the United States concerning African Americans, as well as to discourage African American desertion and subsequent aid to Filipino forces.

Despite the American military's best efforts, Filipinos discerned through interactions with both white and black American soldiers that white American soldiers tended to be far more brutal and violent than African American soldiers. That realization resulted in better relations between African American soldiers and the Filipino people, as well as Filipino military forces encouraging black soldiers to desert an unjust, oppressive military system to join the efforts to remove American military and political control from the Philippines. The McKinley administration considered a policy regarding interaction between black soldiers and Filipinos that was ". . . urged on the theory that certain racial affiliations may be utilized in a way to defeat rebellious acts on the part of [Emilio] Aguinaldo and his party and to bring peace to the newly acquired possessions of the United States in the East."[161] In short, the policy meant that the use of African American soldiers had the potential to benefit attempts at colonization on the basis of racial similarities. Even so, military officials feared mass desertion if black soldiers and Filipinos joined forces to fight the white oppressive military and political regime on the islands. In part, this led to white American military personnel spreading rumors concerning the potential behavior of African American soldiers toward the Filipino people, as elite and educated Filipinos reported to Galloway.

[161] "Negroes for Philippines: A Proposition to Use Colored Soldiers in Future Military Operations in the Islands," *The Baltimore Sun*, 36 Apr. 1899.

But for the people Galloway interviewed, the relationship between Filipinos and African American soldiers after United States military forces arrived in the Philippines was more than mere ethnic similarities. African American soldiers expressed far more hospitality and kindness to Filipino citizens, while white American soldiers ". . . push them off the streets, spit at them, call them damned 'niggers,' abuse them in all manner of ways, and connect race hatred with duty, for the colored soldier has none such for them."[162] What these Filipinos described included the same sort of incidents that transpired in the United States targeting African Americans, specifically in the South. The Filipinos' description addressed the concept of identity indirectly, as some white Southerners used these types of methods to discourage African Americans in the United States from challenging Jim Crow and second-class citizenship. Intimidation and discrimination affected not only how African American soldiers regarded themselves as part of the conquering force, but also how Filipinos viewed white and African American soldiers.

Galloway's interviews with wealthy Filipinos also lent credence to Filipino desires for interaction with only African American soldiers rather than white American soldiers. One wealthy Filipino landowner interviewed by Sergeant Major Galloway proclaimed that if the United States claimed sovereignty and turned the Philippines into a colony, they would prefer that the United States government send African Americans to run the islands since Filipinos feared annihilation at white hands. "I wish you would say to your young men that we want occidental ideas but we want them taught to us by colored people. In reconstruction of our country new ideas will obtain. . . . We ask your educated, practical men to come and teach us them. . . . Unless an unselfish people come to our assistance we are doomed."[163] This Filipino landowner, and others like him, resisted white control over the Philippines because of how white

[162] Gatewood, 253.
[163] Ibid, 254.

American military personnel treated the native population, denigrating them based upon their ethnicity and assuming them incapable of self-rule. Indeed, the Filipinos' plight and frustrations reminded many African American soldiers of life back in the United States, so they appreciated why a Filipino landowner wanted educated African Americans to take over American occupation. Filipinos preferred to have people who treated them with kindness, respect, and decency in control of their government rather than people who treated them the way white American military personnel and officials did.

The fact that African American soldiers often empathized with the Filipino people's condition was not lost on Filipinos. Due to this empathy, Filipinos wanted African Americans to settle and become leaders in the islands, teaching them "American political and industrial ideas."[164] After including part of the interviews in his letter to the *Richmond Planet*, Sergeant Major Galloway asked ". . . our [African American] young men who are practical scientific agriculturists, architects . . . engineers, business men, professors and students of the sciences and who know how to establish and manage banks, mercantile businesses, large plantations, sugar growing, developing and refining . . . [and] missionaries and teachers . . ." to migrate to the Philippines and take up influential positions on the islands.[165] Galloway requested that successful and intelligent African Americans migrate to the Philippines to aid Filipino adoption of the American system of government. He suggested their service in the Philippines would allow African American soldiers and civilians to escape Jim Crow, discrimination, and intimidation within the United States. African Americans could instead live in a welcoming environment, thriving there without the fear of intimidation and discrimination by whites. This would ensure African American participation at all levels of a newly formed government, influential roles in

[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid, 255.

education, and important influences in the Filipino economy. African American migration to the Philippines signified far more than escape from Jim Crow and the racial violence they experienced in the United States. It indicated that African American soldiers and civilians had the chance to excel in any given profession without the hindrance white supremacy and Jim Crow. The proposed migration never came to fruition, but due to no alternatives, including a national organization meant to eradicate segregation, degradation, white violence, and subjugation from the United States, the option seemed quite enticing.

For African American soldiers in the Philippines, the transplanted discriminatory environment also entailed enduring racial epithets and slurs hurled in their direction by white soldiers and officers. Sometimes, these racial epithets and slurs accompanied the discriminatory atmosphere that Filipinos and African American soldiers disliked so much and actively resisted. Some black military personnel heard this language incessantly since

> The first thing in the morning is the 'Nigger' and the last thing at night is the 'Nigger.' You have no idea the way these people are treated by the Americans here. I know their feeling toward them [Filipinos], as they speak their opinion in my presence thinking I am white…. The poor whites don't believe that anyone has any right to live but the white American, or enjoy any rights or privileges that the white man enjoys.[166]

When writing this in a letter to the *Cleveland Gazette,* an African American newspaper based out of Cleveland, Ohio, Sgt. Patrick Mason of the Twenty-fourth Infantry suggested that paternalism, Social Darwinism, and discrimination influenced military operations in the Philippines. White American soldiers believed that no other group of people should have the same rights as them. Due to this conviction, whites in the Philippines employed a paternalist attitude during interactions with certain groups, including African Americans and Filipinos. White military personnel argued that both African Americans and Filipinos were incapable of taking care of themselves and should not obtain equal rights to white men. Social Darwinism appeared in the

[166] Ibid, 257.

language aimed at Filipino citizens and African American soldiers as well when Sergeant Mason indicated that white soldiers thought that no one aside from white American men had certain rights or privileges. This perception implied that white American military personnel believed they were held in some sort of higher esteem than any non-white man, even if that person was more educated than they were.

Sergeant Mason also linked discrimination to how white American soldiers utilized stereotypes when he mentioned white soldiers' use of the word "nigger" to refer to both African Americans and Filipinos. The cavalier usage of the term suggested that widely held negative stereotypes about African Americans were also applicable to Filipinos. To white American military personnel, all non-white people could be grouped under these stereotypes, and these people needed to be "civilized" by the most "civilized" people in the world, white Americans. Delusions like these allowed white American soldiers to overlook their brutality and disrespectful treatment of African American soldiers and Filipinos. Under the guise of white supremacy, paternalism, and Social Darwinism, these non-white peoples could never match or exceed feats completed by white Americans. Soldiers like Sergeant Mason wrote home about these sorts of incidents to inform American citizens about the discrimination and racism rampant in the Philippines and oppose these behaviors and viewpoints, yet could not do something as simple as petition the military to change the culture because he did not have the political or social clout to influence military or governmental decisions.

By January 1900, the Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment faced extensive violence in combat with Filipino military forces alongside the discrimination and subjugation experienced daily in the camps. The regiment was ambushed by indigenous soldiers and C. W. Cordin, a member of the regiment, stated, "Never did bullets rain thicker and faster…our officers and men not only

stood the fire from the right, front and left of us, but charged a hill of 250 feet high, thick with prickly briars and underbrush…. We crawled on one hand and knees with the gun in the other hand. How we got up that hill so quick under heavy fire…I can never tell."[167] Cordin portrayed the Filipino attack upon the Twenty-fifth as brutal, constant, and exhausting. Cordin asserted that the intensity of the attack emboldened Cordin and his comrades to retaliate with all the energy and bravery they could muster. Cordin's description of combat reinforced Sergeant Saddler's assertions that Filipino forces were far superior to the Cuban forces American soldiers fought alongside against the Spanish, thereby increasing the intensity, length and casualties from combat. As the fighting continued, the Twenty-fifth found an enemy encampment, and the regiment soon discovered the camp held five American prisoners of war who faced a firing squad as the Twenty-fifth attacked the location. One died after the firing squad released a volley, but the Twenty-fifth then surrounded Filipino soldiers, allowing the regiment to carry out the wounded prisoners on stretchers after setting fire to the encampment. The next day, a company of the Twenty-fifth attacked a small town, and violently drove out Filipino forces.[168]

Cordin's description of the battle was intense and strenuous, particularly when he described engaging the enemy. He mentioned the bravery and strength of the men fighting, guaranteeing that the *Cleveland Gazette's* readers in the United States would know the strength, capability, and heroism of the Twenty-fifth Infantry. Cordin intended to dispel negative stereotypes of African American soldiers, asserting that the United States government and military should rely upon African American soldiers because of their accomplishments in battle. Cordin's descriptions of life and combat in the Philippines lacked a discussion of the conflicting emotions multiple African American soldiers had about fighting Filipinos. Many black soldiers

[167] Ibid, 260.
[168] Ibid, 260-61.

writing back to newspapers or family members in the United States addressed the complicated nature of serving in a military that intended to subjugate and control Filipinos, denying the native population self-determination or complete and unfettered independence. It seems highly unlikely that Cordin did not see the similarities in how white American military personnel treated Filipinos, but it was possible he found that fact to be unimportant in comparison to recording the actions and accomplishments of the Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment. Even so, Cordin and his comrades suffered such treatment daily, along with constant reminders from white soldiers of their assigned roles by whites within the military and American society. He most likely witnessed the attempt to establish a system like Jim Crow segregation in the Philippines.

Other African American soldiers, including Capt. Theophilius G. Steward, a chaplain in the Twenty-fifth Infantry, encountered attempts to limit his citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-defense when white American soldiers resisted his position of authority within the military chain of command. When a white American soldier refused to salute Captain Steward one afternoon near a hospital on the islands, the chaplain followed the white soldier into the hospital, asked to speak to the officer in charge at the facility, and had the soldier who refused to salute summoned. Steward received the proper salute due him from the soldier, and the chaplain proceeded to teach the soldier proper military etiquette when encountering an officer of higher rank.[169] Another incident Chaplain Steward documented involved three members of the Forty-third Volunteers who

> . . . passed me as I was riding in the other way and indulged in some vile cursing at my expense. . . . I ordered my driver to turn and follow them, and soon overtaking them, I ordered their driver sternly to halt, a command which he obeyed instantly. I then got out of my carriage and read them a lecture, they denying they had said anything disrespectful and begging me to let them pass on.[170]

[169] Ibid, 263.
[170] Ibid, 263-64.

Chaplain Steward's actions challenged white perceptions of how African Americans should react in the company of whites, even if their rank was higher than a white soldier's in the military. The chaplain did not let slights and insults go unnoticed or unanswered, whereas white military personnel, even those of a lower rank, assumed they could treat Steward and other black officers with disrespect because the military exported Jim Crow to the Philippines. White military personnel constantly asserted their privilege as white American men over African American soldiers, and attempted to remind black officers of that privilege. These white soldiers ascribed to white supremacy, believing that no matter how high an African American rose in the military or in society, because they were white, they remained in a superior position. Chaplain Steward refused to allow this behavior and always made sure these sorts of disrespectful soldiers received reprimands for their insubordination. The chaplain challenged white privilege and adherence to Jim Crow segregation within the military by asserting his authority as an officer over white soldiers of a lower rank. Chaplain Steward and other black officers stationed in the Philippines during the extended conflict did all they could to contest white supremacy and white privilege through their actions and approaches to the Jim Crow system that white military personnel clung to. Their commendable actions did not guarantee that future incidents would be avoided, though. Without much influence in the United States military or the federal government, little hope existed that the systematic modifications necessary to ensure equality to all soldiers would occur without a unified force acting on behalf of African American soldiers.

Like Sergeant Saddler, C. W. Cordin, and Chaplain Steward, Michael H. Robinson, Jr. of the Twenty-fifth Infantry also discussed facing the Filipinos in battle as well as Filipino questions to African American soldiers about their participation in the subjugation of the Filipino people under the guise of expansion, freedom, and liberty when he wrote to the *Colored*

American, based out of Washington, D.C. Robinson stated, "Yet the fact that we are American soldiers instills within us the feeling and resolve to perform our duty, no matter what the consequence may be as to public sentiment."[171] Just like Saddler, Robinson believed that first and foremost, his role as a soldier was far more important than his personal feelings about fighting Filipinos. Similarly, Robinson implied that duty to country and to the military gave him pause. He struggled with the implications of subjugating another people and how the African American community back in the United States might view their actions. Robinson also felt obligated to perform the duties assigned by superior officers, but struggled with the morality of his actions.

Unlike Sergeant Saddler, Robinson mentioned how Filipino military forces addressed African American soldiers on the islands in an almost inviting manner. Robinson stated,

> We have been warned several times by insurgent leaders in the shape of placards, some being placed on trees, others left mysteriously in houses we have occupied, saying to the colored soldier that while he is contending on the field of battle against people who are struggling for recognition and freedom, your people in America are being lynched and disfranchised by the same who are trying to compel us to believe that their government will deal justly and fairly by us.[172]

Robinson wrestled with the same confusion Sergeant Saddler did over whether or not to fight Filipino forces due to their similar circumstances when it came to whites' treatment of African American soldiers and civilians. He addressed the inherent contradiction in American control over the Philippines through enforced rule rather than self-determination. Robinson and other African American soldiers recognized the contradiction depicted in the signs and posters displayed strategically throughout the countryside by Filipino military forces. Filipino fighters did not understand why African American soldiers battled to uphold a system of government and society that excluded them and treated them as second-class citizens due to their race. Robinson

[171] Ibid, 268.
[172] Ibid.

implied that even though he was a soldier first and foremost, he did understand the contradiction and did not support this treatment, especially since earlier in his letter to the *Colored American* he included the praises his regiment received from officers and their success on the battlefield. Robinson sympathized with Filipinos' treatment by white soldiers and officers because of his own situation and experiences, just as Saddler did. They both understood how not only African American citizens but also Filipino citizens viewed their actions on the islands. African American soldiers dealt with these contradictions and struggles daily over the morality and legitimacy of their actions as soldiers for a military and country that viewed them as sub-human, incompetent, and incapable of any sort of success.

By July 1900, the United States military had stationed the Forty-eighth Infantry in the Philippines, one of the two newly created regiments consisting solely of African American officers and soldiers, even though the appointment of more black officers remained controversial. African American officers imbued these regiments with not only pride in their officers, but also the desire to show that the discriminatory nature of Jim Crow. Cpl. Walter E. Merchant of the Forty-eighth Infantry recognized this influence, writing to the *Richmond Planet* about the success and capabilities of black officers. Corporal Merchant argued that,

> . . . it is well known that the white officers . . . are deadly opposed to Negro men wearing the bars. It matters not how soon the war will end (of course after the war is over the commissions will be taken from the noble blacks as was done after the close of the Spanish-American War) the Negro captains and lieutenants of the 48th are by their bravery and daring vindicating the race and stamping the lie to those rumors that the Negro makes poor officers and for Negroes to accomplish anything in battle must be commanded by white officers.[173]

Corporal Merchant recognized that regiments with black officers would not last, but he also realized that what his officers accomplished should speak for itself rather than the military continuing to ascribe to white supremacy when considering promotions. The corporal recognized

[173] Ibid, 281.

that the military hierarchy would deny black soldiers commissions after the Philippine-American War even if they qualified for promotions while white soldiers who qualified for these same promotions would gain a promotion. Corporal Merchant, along with many of his fellow black soldiers, argued that the notion of white supremacy had no place in the military, as black men eligible for promotions could lead their men into battle without the white supervision numerous white officers believed necessary. The military still predicted complications with promoting black soldiers due to white supremacy, worrying that advancing African Americans to higher ranks meant that they might command white military personnel, something the American social order, white supremacists, and Social Darwinists thought completely impossible.

Other black officers occasionally hid their sentiments about the military's efforts to instill the American social order and white supremacy in the Philippines rather than criticized it so openly as Corporal Merchant did. Capt. David J. Gilmer of the Forty-ninth Infantry, the other newly created regiment of solely black soldiers and officers, addressed a circular to the people of Linao when the military removed him from his post as commander in the area. Captain Gilmer claimed,

> . . . I would be the last man on earth to try to deceive you or to sanction the cause of your oppressors. The United States Government of America is of a true democracy and the majority of our national legislative representatives are Christian men, opposed to the oppression of human and religious rights, and to enforce their protectorate policy to all peoples under the shadow of the country's flag, stands the soldiers of the noble republic, ready and willing to obey the command to march against the iron gateways of infamy in the face of the most destructive fortifications in defense of their country's subjects.[174]

Captain Gilmer implied throughout the circular that he opposed United States actions in the Philippines, but could not openly say so because of his position within the military as a commander and one of the military's few black officers. Gilmer asserted that the Christians

[174] Ibid, 292-93.

running America recognized the inherent contradictions in their opposition to oppression while the country simultaneously sought to oppress and control the Philippines.

Captain Gilmer displayed his opposition to American actions through the use of the word "oppressors," implying he did not consider the United States to be wholly innocent of the actions taken by the military in the Philippines. He observed how white American military personnel and federal government officials transported Jim Crow segregation and white supremacy to the Philippines, subjugating the native population in the same manner that white Americans oppressed African Americans throughout the United States. Captain Gilmer continued his almost half-hearted defense of white Americans by saying, "You [Filipinos] need not have any fear of that class of Americans, for they cannot reach you; because of that mob I beg of you not to believe all white men of my country are its sympathizers, for there are American white men by the thousands who would die for your rights, with no desire for compensation other than the blessing of heaven."[175] Gilmer acknowledged that not all white American men would participate in such oppression and discrimination and that those kinds of people remained in the United States, yet Filipinos still feared white American military personnel based upon discriminatory and violent treatment as well as the governing system the United States established in the Philippines.

Captain Gilmer concluded his letter by saying both Americans and Filipinos completely misunderstood that the conflict arose due to Filipino desires for sovereignty, asserting that both sides would eventually fully comprehend the conflict in due time. Gilmer expressed his hope for the future and that Filipinos would ". . . judge men according to the deeds of the individual and not by the color of his skin."[176] His unenthusiastic defense of white men who sympathized with

[175] Ibid, 293.
[176] Ibid.

the Filipino struggle and his statement that violent whites who participated in riots and lynch mobs cannot attack Filipinos probably did little to convince Filipinos to trust white American military personnel. While some white Americans sympathized with the Filipino and African American struggle, not enough protested the occupation and subjugation of the Filipino people nor the discrimination and segregation that was commonplace in the United States military by the start of the Philippine-American War. Without a strong, unified resistance to Jim Crow and its expansion, little occurred to prevent the subjugation of both Filipinos and African American soldiers in the Philippines.

As the Philippine-American War continued, the close proximity to a population for an extended period of time led to multiple social interactions between the native population and occupying forces. After the United States Philippine Commission returned from its investigation of American-Philippine interactions, they reported that "The social scale of morality under American military rule, while considerably superior to that under the Spanish regime, is very far below what would be tolerated in any American town, however remote. It is the commonest of sights to see the negro soldier of the Ninth Cavalry walking the street with his straight-haired native girl."[177] The Commission proclaimed that African American soldiers had stepped beyond what the Commission defined the normal rules of social morality through their interactions with Filipino women. The Commission asserted that African American soldiers challenged their roles as part of the occupying forces through these interactions as well as flaunting those relationships in front of white American soldiers and officers.

The Commission claimed that social interactions in the Philippines should mirror that of the United States in terms of what was considered moral: no interracial sexual relations between

[177] "Philippine Governments: Results of the Commission's Tour in Southern Provinces. Native Women Induce Negro Cavalrymen to Desert—Schools in South Camarines," *New York Times*, 13 Jun. 1901.

races. Exceptions to this ruling existed, though. The Commission excluded white American soldiers, similar to the exemption of white American citizens when it came to rape or consensual sexual relations with non-white women, no matter the moral implications. The Commission maintained that, "Their [African American soldiers'] amours go far beyond what Americans would call propriety, with little or no heed of what the local public may say or think. Nine desertions which have occurred from the ranks of the Ninth Cavalry are attributed to the influence of the native women. Some of the deserters are now serving with the ragged remnant of the insurgents."[178] To the Commission, African American soldiers shirked their duties as soldiers and instead joined the rebellion against the United States, for no other reason than a "woman's charms." They failed to even consider that African American soldiers might desert in resistance to American segregation and discrimination and the United States military's policy of transferring Jim Crow to the Philippines.

The Commission ignored any possible cultural or social differences between white and black Americans, which might account for the various behaviors documented in their official report. Instead, they only believed that African American soldiers rejected their assigned identity within the United States military and American society by deserting and conducting such an open relationship with Filipino women. They openly challenged white American notions of propriety and morality by walking hand in hand with Filipino women down the street, showing more affection than white American military personnel thought appropriate. Also, the Commission utilized existing stereotypes about African American women, particularly that of the Jezebel, to describe the influence Filipino women possessed over supposedly impressionable young black men, leading to desertion. Most Filipino women did not fit this description at all, and instead treated black American soldiers with respect and kindness, leading to increased

[178] Ibid.

communication and familiarity between African American soldiers and Filipino civilians. The Commission completely overlooked the fact that the United States military transplanted Jim Crow and discriminatory practices to the Philippines, and black soldiers' commonalities with Filipino forces might actually be the cause for desertion, not women tempting them to do so.

As with the United States Philippine Commission, the debate over whether African Americans were capable of becoming officers in the United States Army and if their appointments as officers would create tension between white and black servicemen continued into late 1901 despite the existence of two regiments staffed with solely African American officers. Some white military personnel, including officers, believed that, "Upon the whole, the negro is considered to be better fitted for the subordination of the modern soldier than is his white brother."[179] These white officers asserted African American soldiers were suited to follow, not lead, making their position in the military always below that of whites. African American soldiers and officers disagreed with this assessment of their performance and capabilities, as well as the discriminatory treatment encouraged by Jim Crow. African American soldiers stressed that more African American officers were necessary to lead segregated regiments rather than continuing to appoint white officers, sometimes from the South, to command these regiments. The military's unofficial policy of appointing white officers to segregated regiments continued to reinforce the commonly held perception within the United States that white men must remain in a position of power over African American men.

After the United States Philippine Commission released their report and the debate over the advantage of African American officers continued, Capt. Theophilius G. Steward, chaplain with the Twenty-fifth Infantry, sent a letter to the *New York Sun* that was subsequently published

[179] "The Negro Volunteer: Better Fitted Than White for the Subordination of the Modern Soldier," *The Washington Post*, 10 Oct. 1901.

in the *Los Angeles Times*, presenting a vastly different interpretation of possible desertions. Steward argued that African American soldiers experienced ". . . a degree of freedom here [the Philippines] that he cannot feel in many parts of the United States."[180] Some soldiers told Steward that they did not care to ever return to the United States due to disfranchisement and that they felt freer in the Philippines than they ever did at home. Steward contended that these sentiments were not representative of disloyalty to the United States. Instead, these sentiments symbolized individual experiences with discrimination, segregation, and white violence in the United States.[181] What Steward and the soldiers he spoke to describe was something the Commission could not understand. In the Philippines, African American soldiers could more readily assert their citizenship, masculinity, and right to self-defense without the fear of violent intimidation and discrimination at the hands of the local population intent upon maintaining a white supremacist and paternalist social order.

With everything African American soldiers went through prior to their service in the Philippines, it was quite surprising they entered service to a country that assigned them the bottom rung in every way possible. Instead, African American men continued to enter military service from the end of the Civil War through the turn of the twentieth century for a variety of reasons, including serving the country they were born and raised in. Many of these men took pride in their service, and hoped their talent, intelligence, and assertions of manhood would change white American perceptions of African American men, and promote equality and interracial cooperation. Most African American soldiers desired to return home and continue aiding in the fight against discrimination, racism, and oppression. For some soldiers, enough was

[180] Theophilius G. Steward, "Chance for Negroes in the Philippines: Chaplain Steward Looks for a Migration Thither. Colored Soldiers Who Like the Islands. American Negroes Prized as Husbands by Filipino Women—Opportunities for the Negro," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 Mar. 1902.
[181] Ibid.

enough and they chose to remain in the Philippines rather than return to a life of subjugation and discrimination at the hands of white Americans. They decided to disregard their assigned identity and chose to live in a freer, more respectful environment where they did not have to fear making the slightest perceived error, resulting in intimidation, violence, and sometimes death.

As the war continued, numerous reports of the violence and brutality aimed at Filipinos forced President Theodore Roosevelt to defend American policies and military presence in the Philippines. In an address to the attendees of the Memorial Day celebration at Arlington National Cemetery in 1902, President Roosevelt argued, "These younger comrades of yours have fought under terrible difficulties and have received terrible provocation from a cruel and treacherous enemy. Under the strain of these provocations I deeply deplore to say that some among them have so far forgotten themselves as to counsel and commit, in retaliation, acts of cruelty."[182] The president implied that Filipino military forces provoked the American soldiers who committed atrocities against them, and that provocation was a valid excuse for what American soldiers did to the native population. Roosevelt told the attendees of his speech that Filipino victims deserved the violence aimed at them for some slight or completely imagined provocation.

The president failed to acknowledge the fact that most reports from American soldiers about atrocities committed in the Philippines were one-sided, enacted almost entirely by white American soldiers upon the native population rather than by Filipino forces upon American military forces. President Roosevelt fundamentally excused the atrocities committed by American soldiers upon the Filipino people, most likely due to embellished reports concerning incidents of Filipino violence perpetrated against American military personnel, incidents that might not have occurred at all. Roosevelt said that an ". . . unswerving effort must be made, and

[182] "Defends Policy in Philippines: President Roosevelt Replies to Army Critics in Memorial Day Address. Cruelty is not Upheld. Soldiers Fighting a War for Civilization Against Savagery," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 31 May 1902.

is being made, to find out every instance of barbarity on the part of our troops, to punish those guilty of it, and to take, if possible, even stronger measures than have already been taken to minimize or prevent the occurrence of all such instances in the future."[183] Even though Roosevelt declared such investigations would occur, there was little to no evidence of a crackdown on atrocities in letters and writings by African American soldiers during their time in the Philippines. Instead, incidents continued to occur with regularity throughout the Philippine-American War, seeing white American soldiers perpetuating violence and subjugation upon the Filipino people.

In his speech at Arlington, President Roosevelt mentioned not only atrocities in the Philippines committed by American soldiers, but also discussed those perpetrated at home by American citizens in the form of lynchings. The president stated, "From time to time there occur in our country, to the deep and lasting shame of our people, lynchings carried on under circumstances of inhuman cruelty and barbarity—a cruelty infinitely worse than any that has ever been committed by our troops in the Philippines; worse to the victims, and far more brutalizing to those guilty of it."[184] The inhumane act of lynching, as Roosevelt described it, was far worse than anything that occurred in the Philippines, meaning that atrocities committed by American military personnel on the islands should not concern the American public nearly as much as the violence that transpired at home.

Roosevelt's assertions were highly simplistic, as violence in the form of lynching was detrimental to American society, but Roosevelt intended to use lynching as a way to justify the violence and subjugation transpiring in the Philippines at the hands of American soldiers. The president then said that every effort was being made to stop the atrocities in the Philippines, but

[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.

argued that these atrocities were ". . . wholly exceptional, and have been shamelessly exaggerated," and that Americans must not condemn all soldiers for these actions, only the few who rarely committed them.[185] Roosevelt continued, "The fact really is that our warfare in the Philippines has been carried on with singular humanity. For every act of cruelty by our men there have been innumerable acts of forbearance, magnanimity, and generous kindness. These are the qualities which have characterized the war as a whole. The cruelties have been wholly exceptional, on our part."[186] The president believed that not all reports of violence and cruelty were true, and, in reality, was far better than the violence perpetrated on African Americans within United States borders, claiming that any action taken against Filipino military forces was something they instigated through their own actions.

President Roosevelt told attendees of Memorial Day celebration that these rare incidents in the Philippines remained isolated, the perpetrators would be punished severely, and what occurred in the Philippines was far different than the violence and cruelty that Americans read about in newspapers. Roosevelt presented a kinder, gentler occupation that sought to improve the lives of the Filipino people through "civilizing" them, when reality resembled something much worse. Instead, Filipinos experienced American attempts to introduce Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, and white violence to their islands, all while denying Filipinos self-government and independence. Roosevelt's explanation of incidents in the Philippines did not clarify that reports stated that American soldiers perpetrated atrocities against Filipino civilians, not soldiers. Also, the president ignored the fact that white American military personnel transplanted the American ideal of social order, or white supremacy, on the islands, which excused some of these actions in the name of "civilizing" the native population.

[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.

President Roosevelt's discussion of lynching in his Memorial Day speech directly addressed the fears of many African American soldiers upon their return to the United States, particularly in light of the increased number of lynchings occurring between 1888 and 1918.[187] African American soldiers saw reports like veteran Fred Alexander's lynching, and feared what might happen to them upon their return to the United States. In early January 1901, Alexander, a veteran of the Ninth Cavalry who fought in the Spanish-American War, faced charges for an attempted assault on one Eva Roth, a white woman, in Leavenworth, Kansas as well as the assault and murder of Pearl Forbes, another white woman, in November 1900. Roth,

> who is employed at one of the large stores, was going home and when opposite the residence of Professor Evans, of the high school, on South Broadway, she was met by Alexander, who seized her around the throat and threw her to the ground. . . . A crowd gathered quickly, among them a young colored girl, who told who the assailant was, and Alexander was soon captured and taken to the police station.[188]

Once police took Alexander into custody, a mob formed to take him. "Eight thousand persons witnessed the burning, many of them being women and children, as well as business men, whose offices and stores were closed so that they could see what they believed to be a just retribution for the crime. He [Alexander] was taken from the jail and paraded through the city at the head of a procession."[189]

White citizens of Leavenworth were not necessarily concerned with Alexander's guilt or innocence. They believed someone had to be punished for these assaults and a murder perpetrated against white women. As with other lynchings throughout the United States, unfounded accusations or hearsay convicted a man without the due process he had the right to as

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[187] See NAACP's *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918* (New York: Arno Press, 1969) for further information on documented lynchings throughout the United States at the time of the Philippine-American War.

[188] "Lynched Negro Served in Spanish War," *New York Times*, 18 Jan. 1901. Also "Mob Stormed a Kansas Jail," *Keowee Courier* (Pickens Court House, SC), 16 Jan. 1901. And "Alvord's Term. Goes to the Penitentiary Only 13 Years, Though a Many Times Thief. An Imitator Arrested. Negro Suspect Burned at the Stake in Kansas in Presence of Thousands Yesterday. More Trouble Brewing in China," *Paducah Sun* (Paducah, KY), 17 Jan. 1901.

[189] "Burned at the Stake," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), 16 Jan. 1901.

a citizen. Alexander instead faced a lynch mob because whites throughout the city sought some sort of retribution for the attacks on two white women, regardless of Alexander's guilt or innocence. This event was possibly even more frightening to African American soldiers and veterans because it occurred outside the South and resulted in the death of a Spanish-American War veteran. Most lynchings during this time period occurred in the South, where most African American soldiers and civilians expected to experience some sort of racial violence and oppression. When Alexander's lynching occurred, it was far more troublesome because events leading to his lynching transpired outside the South, and his status as a veteran did not matter to the mob in the least, even though Americans typically treated veterans with great reverence and respect.

Once the lynch mob took control of Alexander, they chained him up, doused him fully clothed with oil, and allowed John Forbes, the father of the murdered woman, to set Alexander afire. According to numerous reports, a mob overpowered Sheriff Everhardy who feared for his own safety. Also, reports stated Alexander continued to proclaim his innocence until his gruesome death, despite his supposed confession prior to the lynching.[190] The *Alexandria Gazette* even testified that, "Crowds of people gloated over the horrible spectacle and grabbed relics."[191] Sheriff Everhardy failed to call in the state's militia to stop the mob, and believed that if he had called the militia in, they would have not only been ineffective but that innocent people, including members of the militia, would have died. Initially, local law enforcement made no arrests even though officials could identify multiple members of the mob. Kansas Governor William E. Stanley expressed his disappointment and frustration over the lynching, arguing that

[190] Ibid. Also "Are Preparing a Defense: Officials of Kansas Will Try to Justify Failure to Protect Alexander. Legislature Takes up the Matter: Passes Joint Resolution Condemning the Deed and Demanding that Perpetrators be Punished to Full Extent of the Law," *Omaha Daily Bee*, 17 Jan. 1901. And "Along the Kansas Nile," *Wichita Daily Eagle*, 17 Jan. 1901.
[191] "Burned at the Stake," *Alexandria Gazette*, 16 Jan. 1901.

it would lead to the death penalty in Kansas and offered a reward for the arrest of anyone involved in Alexander's death. The Kansas state legislature also issued a joint resolution condemning the lynching and requested an investigation into the events leading up to Alexander's death, arguing that the people responsible should be punished for their crime. A mob once again approached the jail the day after Alexander's lynching in search of Charles Letcher, another African American accused of being part of the assault and murder of Pearl Forbes, to lynch him for the same crime, but the jailer and other officers were able to maintain control of the jail and Letcher.[192]

African American soldiers heard stories like Alexander's lynching constantly. Without much evidence or forethought, a mob grabbed Alexander and violently took his life by burning him alive, in spite of his continued claims of innocence up until the moment of his death. The mob denied Alexander, a veteran of the Spanish-American War who served with the Ninth Cavalry, due process when accused of killing Pearl Forbes and attacking Eva Roth. He was not treated like a citizen or a man. Instead, the mob considered him sub-human, not caring whether or not guilt for his accused crimes could be proven. Was Alexander guilty? No one will ever know for sure, but he was subjected to a massive amount of violence and intimidation prior to his death, possibly because someone needed to take blame for these crimes and whites found it easier to blame an African American. What conceivably tipped the scales and made the lynch mob choose Alexander was the fact he was a veteran. Alexander grew up in Leavenworth, so at least a few members of the lynch mob not only knew him, but also knew of his military service, making him a potential threat to white supremacy because he could defend himself with violent

[192] "Are Preparing a Defense: Officials of Kansas Will Try to Justify Failure to Protect Alexander. Legislature Takes up the Matter: Passes Joint Resolution Condemning the Deed and Demanding that Perpetrators be Punished to Full Extent of the Law," *Omaha Daily Bee*, 17 Jan. 1901. Also "Burned at the Stake," *Alexandria Gazette*, 16 Jan. 1901. And "Along the Kansas Nile," *Wichita Daily Eagle*, 17 Jan. 1901.

force due to his military training. While this was a commonplace attitude in the South, the fact that Alexander's lynching occurred in Kansas would have increased fears among African American soldiers for their return home after fighting in the Philippines. The lynching in Kansas showed that this sort of violence remained prevalent throughout the United States, so African American soldiers recognized what they returned to when their service ended. It really was no wonder why so many decided to stay in the Philippines and remain free rather than subject themselves or their families to the limitations upon citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense.

While some attention shifted to the violence and brutality faced by Filipinos and African American soldiers both at home and abroad, some military officials focused on why sending African Americans to the Philippines would fail, unlike initial proposals suggesting they would not only succeed, but also their departure from the United States would solve the "race problem." Gen. George W. Davis, a commander in the Philippines, argued that African American soldiers and civilians would fail in their attempts to migrate and permanently live in the islands. General Davis believed that permanent settlement in the Philippines would fail just as it did in Liberia because, at least according to him, African Americans could not successfully grow crops typically found in the Philippines (rice, maize, bananas, sweet potatoes, cotton, etc.) since small farms and limited growing capacity existed throughout the islands. The general also argued that unsupervised or uncontrolled African Americans would not be nearly as industrious, particularly if they were soldiers because a soldier's life would make a black man so dependent upon white aid and supervision that he could never be industrious or self-reliant again.[193] General Davis described negative stereotypes influenced by white supremacy and attempts to keep African Americans complacent and subjugated in deference to white Americans. The general fixated on

[193] Joseph Ohl, "Not for Blacks, The Philippines: General Davis on Scheme to Send Them to the Islands," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 5 Jan. 1903.

widely held beliefs throughout the United States that African Americans lacked the capability or intelligence to succeed economically, politically, and socially, therefore they must be taken care of and controlled by white Americans. General Davis used certain language to emphasize this, including the desire to control the African American population. The general argued that, if uncontrolled by white Americans, African Americans would not work, would not become self-sufficient, and would not survive.

General Davis also surprisingly asserted that military service essentially "ruined" African Americans, making them dependent and lazy rather than desirous for hard work and success, the opposite of what many military officials witnessed with white Americans who enlisted. General Davis found it easier to deal with the "race problem" and what he and other whites deemed the "overpopulated South" in the United States rather than send African Americans abroad to experience freedom from oppression. General Davis perceived African Americans as helpless, lazy, dependent, and unable to learn anything new in terms of how to farm, therefore they needed white guidance to accomplish anything worthwhile in society. Without whites, General Davis implied that African Americans would never succeed or even be forced to fend for themselves.

General Davis's assertions concerning the necessity of control over African Americans supported other white Americans' positions concerning the race question, yet some white Americans still supported black colonization in the Philippines, if only to rid the country of African American citizens, as defined by the Fourteenth Amendment. While acknowledging African American citizenship existed because of the Fourteenth Amendment, whites still argued that a "higher law" existed, ensuring whites and blacks in the United States would remain unequal. "What is generally understood as the African race never attained to a high civilization. In African forests and jungles the negroes do not readily take on the habits of civilized life. It is

only where by slavery they have been compelled to serve the whites that they have copied to an extent the ways of the superior races."[194] White Americans argued that people of African descent were incapable of self-rule and "civilization" without white supervision or influence, and the only reason African Americans had succeeded as much as they did in the United States was due to white Americans' guidance.

White Americans contended that without them, African Americans would devolve and become even less "civilized" and intelligent, as white Americans assumed native Africans were. Many whites at the turn of the century agreed with Herbert Spencer and his theory of Social Darwinism, and used that theory to reinforce white supremacy within the United States as well as in the Philippines. These white Americans also believed that

> The negroes have been made useful up to a certain period in the Southern States, and under proper tutelage attained to the highest culture of which their natures are capable…. There can be no disputing the fact that this is a white man's country, and if the white and black people of the South cannot be left to arrange their own affairs, then some other plan should be devised to save the country from periodical, spasmodic embroilments.[195]

White Americans believed that Southerners should be left to their own devices and govern themselves, but the only white Southerners should hold positions of power. African Americans residing in the South would then remain under white supervision and control, as white Southerners believed these methods were the only way to properly handle race and interracial relations within the region. That control and supervision meant the constant enforcement of Jim Crow segregation throughout the South, policing the color line, and ensuring poor white Southerners would remain separated from poor African Americans. Most elite white Southerners believed that this separation was essential to maintaining their political and economic supremacy in the region. Some white Southerners argued that if the federal government removed itself from

[194] A. J. E., "Negroes and the Philippines," *New York Times*, 3 May 1903.
[195] Ibid.

meddling with Jim Crow and the Southern social order, African American migration to the Philippines was unnecessary. Continued intervention might mean that Jim Crow and that structure white Southerners depended upon would end, leading to equality and the end of economic and social subjugation.

Throughout the Philippine-American War, African American soldiers daily challenged limitations placed upon citizenship, masculinity, and the right to self-defense, amid a more turbulent conflict than in Cuba just one year prior. Military involvement in the Philippines stationed African American soldiers close to the Filipino people, leading some African American soldiers to sympathize with Filipinos and the problems created by the United States exporting Jim Crow to the islands. All the while, a more complex and violent version of war meant African American soldiers witnessed new and disturbing atrocities that white American military personnel either condoned or overlooked entirely, reminding these soldiers of the problems they would return home to after the war. African American soldiers advocated for better treatment and the end to certain conditions, including discrimination in the military, through writing to newspapers throughout the country. African American soldiers continually wrote letters to local newspapers because no national organization existed that could lobby on behalf of all African Americans. Many elite African Americans believed that military service was not the way to properly benefit the African American community until after the turn of the twentieth century, so these soldiers remained on their own. Without such an advocacy organization to aid them, African American soldiers encouraged newspapers and their readers to challenge these problems both at home and abroad. Also, without an organization aimed at helping African Americans and veterans, these men who served their country bravely were left nearly defenseless when they returned to the United States. There was no telling how many African American veterans were

lynched after the Spanish-American War since many lynchings were not reported or documented fully. These men advocated for themselves to the best of their ability, but the lack of a national organization and its connections to politicians, philanthropists, and other leaders in the country left these soldiers and veterans without the access to leadership that they needed to influence change in America. That change would come in 1909, with the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP. Once created, the NAACP passionately advocated for all military servicemen, regardless of color. They sought better conditions, an end to discrimination, and an end to violence perpetrated against African Americans, and once World War I began in Europe, sought to ensure that the War for Democracy would require democracy at home as well as abroad. While victories remained limited in its endeavors against discrimination and white violence, the NAACP never wavered. The NAACP's constant advocacy for African American soldiers became a catalyst for increased activism among soldiers, eventually leading to what historians now refer to as the Long Civil Rights movement.

CHAPTER 3: 'LET OURS BE THE CIVILIZATION OF NO *MAN*, BUT OF *ALL MEN*': DEMOCRACY, WAR, AND THE CREATION OF THE NAACP

On May 8, 1916, local authorities accused Jesse Washington, a seventeen-year-old African American resident of Robinson, Texas, a town just six short miles from Waco, of attacking, raping, and killing Mrs. Fryar,[196] the wife of his employer. Washington, described as "big, well-developed," illiterate, and "perhaps mentally deficient, with a strong, and even daring temper," had earlier argued with a neighboring white man, who threatened to kill Washington on May 6.[197] Two days later, an incident between Washington and the Fryar family transpired, and Mrs. Fryar was found dead soon after. On that day, Washington worked for the Fryar family near their house, plowing and sowing cotton seed while Mr. Fryar, his son, and his daughter all hoed cotton in another location on the farm. Washington ran out of seed, requiring him to enter the Fryar family home, where the matriarch remained. She scooped up more seed, while simultaneously scolding the seventeen-year-old for beating the mules pulling the plow. Washington's "daring temper" allegedly exploded, and he struck down Mrs. Fryar with a hammer, raped her, and finally killed her with that same hammer. Washington returned to the field, finished working for the day, and returned to his home.

[196] Reports conflict as to the name of the murder victim. *The Crisis* reported the last name as Fryar and excluded a first name, while the *Scott County Kicker*, a Socialist publication out of Benton, Missouri, reported the victim's name as Lucy Pryor. For the sake of continuity, I refer to her as Fryar. "The Waco Horror," *The Crisis* 12, no. 3 (Supplement to July 1916): 1-8. And "What is Civilization?," *Scott County Kicker*, (Benton, MO), 27 May 1916.
[197] "The Waco Horror," *The Crisis* 12, no. 3 (Supplement to July 1916): 2.

Upon the discovery of Mrs. Fryar's body, Washington immediately became the first and only suspect. Officials arrested Washington and took him to the Waco city jail. There, local officials procured a confession from Washington, as well as a promise from white residents not to lynch the young man for his crime. The confession, attained under duress, was not sufficient for local politicians. Political candidates pushed for a lynching to earn votes from their potential constituents who visited the jail not long after Washington's arrest looking to exact extralegal justice. To their dismay, Washington had already been removed to a neighboring county jail. The mob searched for him there, but local officials moved him to Dallas until white residents of Robinson pledged not to lynch Washington, only if the law acted quickly and he waived any legal rights. Subsequently, Washington waived his rights, and Dallas authorities coerced a confession from the young man, with a grand jury indicting him based upon this confession and setting the trial for May 15, 1916. Both confessions given by Washington were suspicious, as the language used in them resembled that of a more educated person than Washington, an illiterate, and possibly intellectually challenged, young man. On May 15, residents from towns near Waco continually arrived, packing the courtroom to witness the quick trial. By 11:30 A.M. that same morning, a jury found Washington guilty, and the judge sentenced him to death.

Immediately following the ruling, a mob attacked Washington in the courtroom. The sheriff did nothing to intervene, as he claimed that he fulfilled the only responsibility given to him: to get Washington to court. The sheriff and his deputies all stood aside as the mob swept through the courtroom to capture the young man. The mob took Washington into the street after placing a chain around him. Initially, mob members attached the chain to a vehicle, but the chain broke. Someone then wrapped the chain around his own wrist, allowing the crowd, which included women and children, to pull at the chain while Washington struggled. The crowd

proceeded to remove Washington's clothing by force, simultaneously mutilating him by cutting off various body parts, including an ear and genitals. Finally, the mob dragged Washington for at least a half mile away from the courthouse toward Waco's city hall, beating and stabbing him repeatedly.[198]

After an unidentified crowd member started a fire, the mob rested another chain around Washington's neck and threw the other end over a tree, intending to hang him high over the flames. Washington attempted to run and struggled against the chain, so the mob cut off his fingers to eliminate his attempt to cling to life. Once the fire was burning to the crowd's satisfaction, an unidentified crowd member roughly lowered Washington repeatedly into the flames, using the chain wrapped around the young man's neck to aid the process. After Washington expired, an unidentified crowd member wrapped a rope around Washington's charred corpse and dragged him through the streets of Waco on horseback. A few people followed the horse, and collected various body parts and pieces of the chain as souvenirs to either keep or sell to others. After Washington's brutal death, local politicians, including the mayor, attempted to keep Washington's lynching unpublicized by banning photographers from selling the images outside of the Waco area. Local newspapers also contributed to this silence, including Washington's lynching as a line item, with no other information provided to their readers. At least one prominent individual in Waco stated that if the races of the murder victim and the accused were reversed, or if both were African American, "'We would not have stopped the niggers doing anything they wanted to.'"[199] That individual then insisted upon how

[198] "The Waco Horror," *The Crisis* 12, no. 3 (Supplement to July 1916): 6-7.
[199] Ibid.

Northerners failed to understand how to interact with African Americans, while Southerners like himself knew exactly how to "handle" the black population.[200]

Washington's swift arrest, conviction, and lynching convincingly displayed that full participation in democracy was not possible for African Americans in the United States, regardless of status as military personnel or civilian. Washington's lynching also illustrated the continual struggle African American men faced in the United States to assert their citizenship, masculinity, and ability to defend themselves from a violent attack. Washington's death occurred at the same time African American soldiers fought in Mexico with Gen. John J. Pershing against Francisco "Pancho" Villa. Texans called on the federal government to eliminate Villa's incursions onto American soil and attacks on their towns, yet engaged in similar actions when lynching Washington, according to the *Chicago Evening Post* as reprinted in *The Appeal*, a conservative African American publication based out of St. Paul, Minnesota.[201] A few American journalists did not overlook this hypocrisy, and most likely African American soldiers serving with Pershing in Mexico and stationed at bases throughout the United States noticed the discrepancy as well. Justice was guaranteed to all American citizens under the auspices of democracy, but denied to Washington and many others like him, including African American military personnel. Lynchings like the one that took Washington's life occurred throughout the United States between the Spanish-American War and World War I, claiming the lives of African American civilians and veterans alike. White violence associated with lynchings provided a constant reminder to African American soldiers and veterans that despite their continued service and exemplary records, citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense remained elusive for African American males, both civilian and military.

[200] Ibid, 1-8.
[201] "Waco and Americanism," *The Appeal* (St. Paul, MN), 1 July 1916.

The NAACP, created in 1909, tirelessly published articles exposing lynching and sometimes its perpetrators, as well as ensuring a record of these events existed to protest.[202] These articles provided detailed accounts of undemocratic actions against blacks, giving the NAACP more evidence to prove the lack of democracy allotted to blacks, both civilian and military, in the United States.[203] African American veterans, just like civilians, began turning to the NAACP for legal and political aid. Prior to 1909, African American soldiers and veterans petitioned the United States military on their own, with little to no aid since very few national African American organizations at the turn of the century held much influence with the United States government and initially focused on education rather than advocacy as the only path to become a race man. After 1909, though, the NAACP's creation and subsequent activism was a catalyst for change, providing African Americans, both civilian and military, a more influential voice within American politics and creating a more effective system to challenge the American legal system's inherent bias against African Americans. For African American soldiers, the creation of the NAACP provided a new approach to informing the American public of discriminatory military practices, encouraging black men to enlist in the United States Army, and modifying the military structure from within by eradicating discrimination and segregation in the service.

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[202] See Crystal N. Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), Minnie Finch, *The NAACP: Its Fight for Justice* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1981), Paula Giddings, *Ida, A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching* (New York: Amistad, 2008), Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009), and Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

[203] Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009). Sullivan provides the most comprehensive history of the NAACP from its inception to the 1960s, including the NAACP's support for African American soldiers during World War I and the competing ideologies within the African American community during the war era that nearly ended the organization before it could make an impact on American politics, society, and the law.

At the time of the NAACP's establishment, the United States was experiencing a period of relative peace, while tensions in Europe and Mexico continued to escalate. In Europe, the tension began around the turn of the century, with conflicts and secret treaties arising throughout the region as the most powerful European countries vied for territorial expansion throughout the world as a way to expand their empires. Old rivalries among European nations and the competition over territorial and colonial expansion, especially throughout Africa, exacerbated the hostility. Tensions finally erupted with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary in Sarajevo, Serbia. Within a few short months, the entire European continent was embroiled in a costly and destructive war. In Mexico, internal turmoil and civil unrest led to four changeovers in leadership in less than four years, with continued rebellion against the fourth government, led by Emiliano Zapata and Francisco "Pancho" Villa. Both of these conflicts threatened American neutrality in world affairs. African American soldiers, composed of four segregated regular army regiments in the United States military, remained ready to meet the challenge of combat if necessary, just as they had since these regiments formed after the Civil War. These men also sought to defy Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, racial violence, and subjugation that typically accompanied military service, hoping their assertions of masculinity, citizenship, and self-defense would prove enough to alter American society significantly.

Democracy remained central to African American participation in and perceptions of American involvement in both the conflict with Villa in Mexico and World War I, particularly since World War I became known as the war that would make the world safe for democracy. Some prominent African Americans described democracy as a gateway to complete equality within the United States, but democracy meant something else to white Americans. Despite the enactment of the Fourteenth Amendment that redefined citizenship to include all native-born

people, some white Americans argued that African Americans and poor whites should not fully participate in a democratic society due to their inherent inferiority. These white American citizens, especially in the South, utilized Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, subjugation, violence, and efforts to disfranchise men as a way to ensure an elite white power structure and white supremacy. The limitations created in regard to citizenship and self-defense under the ruse of Jim Crow and white supremacy created numerous obstacles for African American military personnel, yet ensured their determination to challenge the discriminatory system, going to the NAACP for aid when necessary.

Since a number of white Americans continued to retain a limited view of democracy, African Americans pushed for equal participation in the American democratic system. African American soldiers and civilians fought in every way possible to overthrow Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, and the threat of violence imposed upon them by white Americans since after the end of Reconstruction. These men and women, aided in part by the NAACP, challenged existing structures in a number of ways, attempting to create a more equal society in the process. In some ways, the conflicting concepts of democracy that existed before American entry into World War I centered on the Fourteenth Amendment and its legitimacy reflected a shared memory of the American Civil War.[204] That shared memory affected the experience of democracy in America, particularly how freedoms and rights were either supported or denied to African American soldiers and citizens based upon ethnic and economic factors. When some Americans adhered to the Fourteenth Amendment while others denied its legality, the legacy Civil War and its initial causes continued even though the war itself had ended nearly fifty years

[204] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001). Blight provides an interesting and well-researched interpretation of post-Civil War and post-Reconstruction America, the rise of Lost Cause ideology, and attempted reconciliation between the North and the South. Part of his analysis includes a discussion of the Fourteenth Amendment and how justice, or enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment, was thrown aside for reconciliation between the North and the South.

before. As historian David Blight rightly states in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory,* the Fourteenth Amendment and citizenship rights for freedmen and women were tossed aside so that white Americans from the North and the South could reconcile, united by ignoring the emancipationist legacy of the Civil War and instead focusing on the rise of the Lost Cause.

White American perceptions of democracy, Jim Crow segregation, white supremacy, and visions of a white-only America were evident the year before World War I began at the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. President Woodrow Wilson's speech at the battlefield on July 4, 1913, commemorating the three-day battle, defined white concepts of citizenship and democracy at the turn of the century. President Wilson described the peace resulting from the end of the Civil War as "wholesome and healing," the former sections united now as friends, and the conflict forgotten except for the valor of the men who fought on their respective sides. The rest of the president's speech focused on reconciliation, sacrifices made by both sides, lives saved with the war's resolution, and the valor of all soldiers involved. Wilson mentioned that all American citizens, regardless of ethnicity or country of origin, were ensured peace and freedom from civil strife.[205]

While President Wilson's speech mentioned the emancipationist perspective associated with Civil War memory, he clearly concentrated more on reconciliation and peace than on the freedom and citizenship of a formerly enslaved population. Mentioning unity among all Americans regardless of ethnicity was a minor portion of the speech. Instead, valor, brotherhood, and unity between white Americans from the North and the South took precedent. Indeed, Northern and Southern unity remained far more significant to white Americans than did unity of all American citizens regardless of ethnicity. This attitude ensured that white supremacy would

[205] Woodrow Wilson, *The Messages and Papers of Woodrow Wilson, vol. 1*, with an introduction by Albert Shaw (New York: The Review of Reviews Corporation, 1924), 14-17.

reign throughout the United States since even the president himself lauded the progress made in reconciliation between whites in the North and South over the fifty years since the war.

For Wilson to say the conflict was to some extent forgotten was key to what unfolded between 1914 and 1918 throughout the United States and into the Civil Rights movement. The Civil War was fought to end slavery, and collectively forgetting the conflict itself meant forgetting why the conflict arose initially. By pushing slavery and African Americans to the side and embracing reconciliation between whites in the North and the South, many white Americans neglected to acknowledge the meaning of the war itself. Reconciliation ignored the free black men and escaped slaves who joined the Union forces to emancipate their brethren still in bondage. Forgetting the reasons that the Civil War occurred also meant overlooking amendments to the Constitution that ended slavery, ended race as the basis for citizenship according to the law, and ended abridging rights, including voting rights, based on race. By disregarding the cause for sectional strife, protecting rights or extending democracy to the descendants of former slaves remained unimportant when reconciliation and brotherhood between whites from the North and the South took center stage. White supremacy, then, became even more engrained in the United States, ensuring de facto and de jure segregation throughout the country to restrict African American rights and freedoms as well as African American resistance to these institutions wherever present, including in the United States military.

When it came to the possibility, however remote, of American entry into World War I in late 1914, actions taken by United States military personnel and civilians, including in the Philippines and lynching, came under criticism from foreign political officials including the Turkish Ambassador, Rustem Bey. Ambassador Bey asserted that Turkish cruelty and barbarism, provoked by the expanding war in Europe, could never compare to American lynching incidents

and actions in the Philippines during the Philippine-American War.[206] Responses of American newspapers from across the country appeared in *The Crisis*, biting back at Ambassador Bey as well as a German ambassador who declared that Germany would not utilize colonized peoples to fight the war. An unidentified journalist writing for the *Chicago Examiner* stated that "occasional" lynchings could not compare to Turkey's cruelty, while journalists from *The Independent* and the *Boston Traveler and Evening Herald*[207] acknowledged the barbarism of lynchings in the United States and requested the repeal of segregation as well as disfranchisement. A contributor to the *Des Moines Register and Leader* went so far as to condemn all white Southerners for their actions as members of lynch mobs, Southern whites who overlooked the seriousness of lynching and racial violence, and segregation.[208]

The responses to actions in the United States at the start of World War I acknowledged the travesties of lynching and segregation, and also recognized the effort to gain equality and democracy for all Americans, regardless of economic or ethnic factors. Some journalists throughout the country argued that no reason existed to exclude close to twelve million people from due process and the legal rights guaranteed to them in the Constitution. Instead, discrimination and violence against non-white Americans needed to end according to these journalists, and through organizations like the NAACP that might become a reality. Journalists and African Americans overtly expressed opposition to exclusion from American society, politics, and the economy,[209] meaning democracy remained part of the arguments in favor of

[206] "The World War," *The Crisis* 9, no. 1 (Nov. 1914): 15.
[207] *The Independent* was a popular publication during the Progressive Era much like *McClure's* and *Collier's Weekly*, while the *Boston Traveler and Evening Herald* was one of the numerous incarnations of the *Boston Herald* after it absorbed a number of other Boston area newspapers at the start of the twentieth century.
[208] "The World War," *The Crisis* 9, no. 1 (Nov. 1914): 15-16.
[209] Ibid.

changing the laws of the United States, particularly when enemies could point to these conditions and claim hypocrisy.

Criticism did not only come from foreign countries about American atrocities and brutality in the form of lynching and interactions with the Filipino people during the Philippine-American War. Journalists, the African American community, and organizations including the NAACP questioned American intent and goals if the country did enter World War I. Questions arose concerning the treatment of African American military personnel and civilians by white Americans, alluding to the possibility that African American men would not enlist in the United States military if the country declared war. Dr. Jacques Loeb, a contributor to *The New York Review* whose article for that publication also appeared in *The Crisis* in December 1914, argued that the current generation of Germans grew up in an environment suited to categorize whites as the superior race and as the single proper civilization over all others. Dr. Loeb connected the actions and attitudes seen in Germany to those of white American Southerners at the start of the First World War. Loeb contended that while Southern whites may have held different stances concerning racial superiority than Germans did, the problem was that both groups of people believed that they were racially superior to all other peoples throughout the world. According to Dr. Loeb, the United States was guilty of racial antipathy. Due to racial hatred and white America's devotion to maintaining white supremacy, Loeb predicted racial tensions would only increase in the United States.[210]

To proponents of equality in the United States including the NAACP, acknowledging racial problems at home and abroad provided opponents little justification for why the United States continued to tolerate racism, segregation, and inequality. Activists understood that this hypocrisy threatened American democracy at home, as well as the belief that American

[210] "The World War," *The Crisis* 9, no. 2 (Dec. 1914): 69.

democracy must spread abroad. They also knew that this hypocrisy would only lead to racial tensions throughout the United States, with violence, intimidation, discrimination, and segregation spreading unchecked. Hypocrisy concerning democracy at home versus democracy abroad found its way into the United States military as well, affecting African American men who sacrificed their livelihoods for a country that treated them as second-class citizens.

African Americans in the United States Army and Navy understood the hypocrisy all too well. One former United States Navy sailor wrote a letter to *The Crisis*, published in September 1914, discussing the treatment he and his fellow black sailors faced within that branch of the military. The former sailor claimed, like many of his brethren in the United States Army in previous conflicts, that the United States Navy employed discrimination in the same manner the Army did. This unnamed former sailor claimed he and his fellow soldiers had no way to redress discrimination, as they reportedly could not complain to higher ranking officials about their treatment. The former sailor also mentioned that few, if any, African American sailors rose past the rank of petty officer simply because the Navy, like the Army, refused to assign African Americans a leadership position above white soldiers and sailors and actively discouraged blacks from enlisting in the Navy.[211] Despite his eight years of service, this former sailor experienced discrimination, subjugation, and segregation at the hands of the United States Navy, and by extension, the American government. It soured his experience so much that he openly discouraged other African Americans from following that same path, as he believed their service would remain relegated to support positions with little possibility for advancement in the service. For this sailor, race remained central to the day-to-day operations of the United States military, implying that race would play a factor in World War I.

[211] "The Navy," *The Crisis* 8, no. 5 (Sept. 1914): 250.

The unnamed sailor's experiences reflected a wider attempt by certain white politicians and military leaders to limit the number of black officers within various branches. Just months prior to *The Crisis's* publication, the *Afro-American*, a weekly newspaper for the African American community in Baltimore, printed an article concerning proposed legislation intending to criminalize appointing black soldiers as either commissioned or non-commissioned officers.[212] Congressman Frank Park of Georgia offered the bill to both the Senate and House of Representatives. The proposed bill would have outlawed appointing African Americans as commissioned and non-commissioned officers in both the United States Army and Navy, as well as repeal any law in contradiction with the bill.[213] The bill intended to reinforce identity by ensuring African American soldiers could never achieve career advancement, nor take on leadership roles that might have implications outside of their military service, including roles as civil rights activists. The Georgian politician most likely anticipated that his bill would also limit the number of African American veterans returning home with extensive military training that they could feasibly use to defend themselves and their communities from white violence. Congressman Park's proposed legislation sought to curb advancements African Americans had made since the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars, limiting the number of race men, and ensuring African American servicemen knew they remained wholly and unconditionally subservient to white control. The Georgia representative clearly envisioned a future in which the color line mattered little to white Americans aside from retaining paternalist and discriminatory practices meant to subjugate non-white peoples both at home and abroad.

[212] "Against Negro Officers in the U.S. Army: Georgia Congressman Would Bar Colored Soldiers From Being Commissioned or Non-Commissioned Officer. Negro's Record in the Army: A Fair Sample of Just How Far Southern Bourbons Will Go To Show Their Regard for the Golden Rule," *Afro-American* (Baltimore, MD), 4 July 1914.
[213] Ibid.

As the war escalated in Europe, African Americans in the United States, including those who staffed the NAACP's *The Crisis*, examined how the color line factored into the escalating conflict. World War I's persistent expansion meant the inclusion of various peoples outside of Europe within the war, particularly from areas colonized by European powers. W. E. B. Du Bois expressed his concerns with how the war in Europe would affect non-white peoples throughout the world in an editorial column published in November 1914. He argued that African Americans should support Great Britain and France, as he believed that these countries' treatment of non-white peoples far surpassed that of Germany and other Central Powers. Du Bois most assuredly pointed out that none of the main countries comprising the Central and Allied Powers remained wholly innocent in their treatment of non-white peoples throughout the world, but asserted that if the Central Powers succeeded, "It would mean triumphant militarism, autocratic and centralized government and a studies theory of contempt for everything except Germany."[214]

Du Bois recognized the flaws inherent within all participating countries yet maintained that at least some countries managed to learn from their past mistakes and deplorable treatment of non-white peoples. Du Bois understood what an important role the color line would play in the war itself, particularly when it came to soldiers on the ground and territory these powers fought over. Through their actions on and off the battlefield, these soldiers would assert their masculinity and desire for recognition as men, citizens, and potential leaders against discrimination and subjugation. Indeed, ethnicity remained central to World War I for African Americans, from how the militaries of participating countries including the United States utilized non-white soldiers to how most participating countries tolerated white supremacy by covertly

[214] W. E. B. Du Bois, "World War and the Color Line," *The Crisis* 9, no. 1 (Nov. 1914): 28-30.

encouraging racial tensions to maintain order and stability rather than equality and interracial cooperation.

Segregation became a central target in the NAACP's efforts to ensure equality to all Americans during World War I due to its prevalence in American society and the United States military. Many of the NAACP's members spoke out increasingly at the start of 1915, targeting segregation in the public sector and government departments. According to some white Americans, including President Woodrow Wilson, segregation was a necessary evil. When legalized, segregation provided the preservation of the white race, gave African Americans a "definite position in the city and government, instead of leaving him entirely to the mercy of the white man who wants to get rid of him altogether," and decreased racial tensions. Therefore, some elite whites argued segregation remained the best solution for the country.[215] These statements displayed an attitude typically found within the white American educated elite. Educated white Americans asserted that they alone knew what was best for all African Americans, ignoring the paternalist implications behind these arguments. If segregation was, as President Wilson described, "not humiliating but a benefit,"[216] then African Americans should accept their restricted roles within society for the betterment of the United States as a whole rather than consider segregation an insult and degrading.

African Americans understood that segregation meant separate, and in many cases unequal, a view that conflicted with the white American paternalist interpretation of race relations that asserted separate but equal existed. When the federal government sanctioned segregation for its employees with the approval of President Wilson, it set the precedent that white workers and black workers were different and, as such, were to be treated as two separate

[215] Mary White Ovington, "Segregation," *The Crisis* 9, no. 3 (Jan. 1915): 142. And "Mr. Trotter and Mr. Wilson," *The Crisis* 9, no. 3 (Jan. 1915): 119-127.
[216] "Mr. Trotter and Mr. Wilson," 119.

groups.[217] The separation caused inequality and a limitation on rights, leaving the varying definitions of equality and citizenship ascribed to by both white and black Americans central to any national discussion on segregation. Some prominent and influential white Americans maintained at least a partial adherence to white supremacy, encouraged segregation either by law or by custom, and argued that only white men could claim full citizenship rights. Many black Americans alternatively asserted that segregation inhibited equality, or even the chance for equality, and that upon birth, they also became full citizens and should be afforded all of the rights in accordance with the Fourteenth Amendment.

The varying definitions of equality and citizenship among white and black Americans routinely complicated hiring and business practices for private organizations and the federal government. Both chose to differentiate employment based upon ethnicity, thereby segregating the workforce. Once segregation occurred within the workforce, the door opened for many other inequalities, including salary discrimination, fewer jobs available to minorities, and less chance for upward mobility within a company or organization. With inequality already existing through employment, discrimination then invaded the private lives of African Americans, limiting housing markets available both through segregated neighborhoods and by what blacks could afford due to inequitable salaries.[218] President Wilson claimed America to be a bastion of democracy, a haven for freedom and rights, and that the United States might enter World War I to allow democracy to flourish abroad. But that democracy, freedom, and citizenship associated with the United States remained restricted to mostly white Americans, leaving most African Americans unrepresented, segregated, and unequal. The constraints associated with segregation

[217] Ovington, 142. And "Mr. Trotter and Mr. Wilson," 119.
[218] Ovington, 142-43.

found their way into numerous aspects of African American life, following men into the military before American entry into World War I.

While segregationists argued that African Americans should stop placing themselves in positions that whites deemed unacceptable, black activists asserted that ambition led men to achieve power, therefore African Americans must remain motivated for upward mobility in society. If African Americans maintained the position in society mandated by white segregationists rather than aiming for social uplift, this would allow the ruling class, mainly white men, to continue to use the lower classes in the United States to their advantage. The labor industry exemplified the interactions between upper and lower class Americans: many underpaid and overworked employees, supposedly not motivated in their work, remained in poor conditions while their employers reaped the rewards of their labor. The poor labor conditions could only be described as exploitation.[219] Because the American labor structure represented oppression, it also represented an undemocratic system that exploited rather than equalized. The American labor structure, then, tied directly to segregation and degradation aimed at African Americans throughout the United States. Whether employed by various businesses, the federal government, or in the military, African Americans remained economically disadvantaged through discrimination and labor exploitation in the workforce.

Frustrations over labor and economic exploitation could not compare to the battle over racial violence, with lynching as the most prominent of this type of hostility.[220] Concerns over lynching became an important part of resistance to segregation, discrimination, and subjugation

[219] Ibid, 143-44.

[220] Multiple manuscripts exist concerning lynching, its origins, and the violent consequences of lynch law, but one of the most recent and compelling is Crystal N. Feimster's *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). By pinpointing the origins of lynching with womanhood, masculinity, race, and sexuality, Feimster provides a persuasive analysis of lynch law, Southern white male adherence to such violence as an assertion of white supremacy, masculinity, and dominance over black female sexuality. Simultaneously, Feimster shows how Southern white and black women viewed interracial relations, whether consensual or forced, and how that affected their citizenship, femininity, and identity.

for African Americans. In some sense, lynching eclipsed questions of black service in various militaries fighting during World War I for the African American community and the NAACP. African Americans believed racial violence and the lack of due process in the United States violated their civil rights and forced them to live in constant fear of brutal reactions to slight misinterpretations of their actions by white Americans. The violation of legal rights and protection under the law, in turn, limited freedom and citizenship for African Americans. African Americans could not participate fully in democracy if their rights were infringed upon, so the NAACP opposed lynching due to its violent nature and its restriction on rights, encouraging the United States federal government to pass anti-lynching legislation. Racial violence was a problem long before the World War I era and remained so long after due to the lack of federal protection from mob violence. African American soldiers during the World War I era continually heard reports of lynchings, just as soldiers in Cuba and the Philippines did two decades before. In many cases, their awareness of racial violence and lynching ensured their continued desire to combat discrimination and racial violence within the United States military and American society, even if the extent of that action was as simple as walking on a sidewalk or defending oneself in a physical confrontation.

Numerous publications prior to World War I emphasized the problems racial violence caused within the black community, the horrors of violent attacks, the injustice of lynching, and the lack of equality when it came to punishments for wrongdoers. In February of 1915, one such article in *The Crisis* estimated the number of lynchings in 1914 as 74, but the unnamed author claimed that the numbers could be much higher since some lynchings may have not been reported. The author then discussed the fact that lynching violence was not limited to only African American men. Numerous American males of all ethnicities faced lynch mobs, as well

as women, children, and veterans. People were lynched for minor offenses and when little to no evidence existed to support accusations leveled against them. The unnamed author of the report then argued that the United States was unfit for moral leadership throughout the world because the country allowed lynchings to occur unchecked and unpunished, contrary to some white Americans' assessment of the United States as morally superior to other countries.[221]

Indeed, lynchings verified that undemocratic sentiments existed throughout white America, particularly in the South. The region's proclivity for mob violence as a way to mete out justice and avoid the legal system displayed a complete disregard for democracy. The methods used to lynch meant it was a rare possibility for a trial through the local, state, or federal legal system. Even if a trial occurred, the jury typically included only white American men who would automatically find the defendant, if African American, guilty rather than weigh the evidence properly to decide innocence or guilt. These methods ensured injustice, even though the United States Constitution guaranteed equal representation and judicial review of criminal charges. African Americans throughout the United States, including military personnel and veterans, questioned America's adherence to democracy at home due to local, state, and federal governments either condoning or ignoring lynchings throughout the country. Many, including members of the NAACP, wondered whether the United States could legitimately claim to be a model for democratic systems throughout the world if American citizens were denied rights and protections guaranteed them as citizens.

The outcry over lynching spread throughout the country, and even found its way into the South, a region far more prone to that type of violence than any other. In June 1915, *The Crisis* published a letter found in a Memphis, Tennessee newspaper written by a Bishop Gailor, a clergyman of the state. Bishop Gailor recounted a lynching local Memphis newspapers reported

[221] "The Lynching Industry," *The Crisis* 9, no. 4 (Feb. 1515): 196-98.

on the day before. An African American male identified as "Brooks" was lynched, his crime undocumented by Bishop Gailor. The lynching became a public spectacle, with hundreds of people taking photographs, vehicles traveling from miles around to see Brooks' body hanging from the Nashville, Chattanooga, & St. Louis Railway Bridge, photographers setting up mobile printing stations to sell postcards, and schools altering their schedules so students could witness the scene. Brooks's "'body dangled over the public highway, and was suspended low enough for travelers along the road to-day to reach up and spin the corpse around.'"[222] The description quoted by Bishop Gailor from a local newspaper was reminiscent of many other documented lynchings throughout the United States. The lynching itself was a public event, with schools delaying their start so young children could take part in the social spectacle of circumventing the legal system. Portable postcard printings of images depicting Brooks' lynched corpse most likely found their way across the country as purchasers either kept the postcards as souvenirs or sent them off to family or friends residing elsewhere. Indeed, Bishop Gailor's letter showcased the public exhibition and social event that resulted when white violence claimed the lives of black men and women throughout the South, a public exhibition the NAACP sought to end.

Bishop Gailor's letter did not simply chronicle Brooks' lynching but instead criticized the act as un-Christian, savage, and undemocratic, effectively calling upon citizens to end lynching rather than stand idly by. He asked, "Where is the respect for law, the refinement of feeling, the decent humanity, which differentiates us from brutes and savages?"[223] Lynchings typically occurred by circumventing the legal system, and Bishop Gailor most certainly believed that by participating in a lynch mob or in the social gatherings that usually accompanied these acts of violence, those participants cared little for the actual law. Lynchings, then, were undemocratic

[222] "Lynching," *The Crisis* 10, no. 2 (Jun. 1915): 71.
[223] Ibid.

and should not be permitted in a "civilized" and Christian society. Bishop Gailor even mentioned the right to self-defense, declaring that when Brooks "…defended himself, without appeal to law . . . the Negro is put to death without the form of law."[224] This statement was quite telling for a number of reasons. It emphasized Gailor's conviction that African American males, including Brooks, possessed the natural right to defend themselves from any aggressor. That assertion of masculinity directly challenged white definitions of manhood, which claimed that only white men had the right to self-defense.[225] White Americans considered African American males incapable of "white" masculinity, and therefore black males must remain subservient and submissive to white male assertions of perceived masculinity. Bishop Gailor's position also implies defining lynching and other mob violence like it as white violence, placing the onus on white Americans who perpetuate this brutal and unlawful system against an African American population denied protection under the law from such miscarriages of justice.

The second portion of *The Crisis* article containing Bishop Gailor's letter contained an editorial concerning miscarriages of justice in the state of Georgia, lending credence to Gailor's assertions. The editorial reported that an African American male was lynched after robbing a smokehouse. The unknown editor, probably a white male, suddenly shifted from the unnamed lynching victim to the widely publicized and controversial lynching of Leo M. Frank, convicted in Atlanta, Georgia for the 1913 murder of Mary Phagan. Frank, a Jewish-American businessman, reportedly one of the last people to see Phagan alive, became the center of the investigation into Phagan's murder.[226] Frank was lynched in 1915, and the unnamed editor of the

[224] Ibid.
[225] See Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 61-90.
[226] "'Frank is Innocent'—Burns: Famous Detective Analyzes the Celebrated Murder Case. He Says That Execution of This Man for This Crime Would Be a Greater Sin than That of Which He Unjustly Stands Convicted by the Courts of Georgia," *New York Times* (New York, NY), 20 Dec., 1914.

Columbia State, published in South Carolina, asserted that every one of Frank's lynchers deserved death just as much as Frank did. The editorial also stated that after Frank's continued appeals, the Supreme Court ruled that the Georgia courts had not mistreated Frank, mishandled evidence, or improperly conducted his trial. This prompted the unnamed editor to ask, "But if the commonwealth of Georgia is incapable of punishing a gang of men who take from jail a defenseless prisoner who stole a side of bacon or a ham and murdered him, what, after all, is Georgia justice worth?"[227]

The commonwealth was not "incapable" of pursuing and convicting lynchers but in fact typically chose not to pursue them. The editor's indignation at the consistency of lynching in the United States was quite clear, labeling that sort of violence akin to atrocities committed in Europe at the start of World War I. The unnamed editor was most likely aware that due to the culture and social entertainment that arose surrounding public lynchings, the fact that some lynchings went unreported, and victims of lynching usually coming from the African American community, rarely would the legal system pursue any sort of redress for the victims. In some cases, members of law enforcement took part in lynchings, or had friends or relatives who did so. Finally, if lynchers ever faced charges, an all-white all-male jury would most likely acquit them, as women and African Americans were not allowed to sit on juries in numerous states. In the end, then, "Georgia justice" was worth very little, as African Americans were continually depicted as criminals, degenerates, and incapable of anything more in life. Even if the evidence did not point to the accused, the legal system or local authorities would tamper with evidence until it indicated the accused, usually an African American male. The accused might make it to trial but, in some cases, did not even receive that formality because a mob would set out against the accused to mete out "justice."

[227] "Lynching," *The Crisis* 10, no. 2 (Jun. 1915): 72.

While the debate over lynching and its unlawful and violent nature raged within certain communities in the United States, World War I continued around the world, leading imperialism and racial superiority to become the focus of African American leaders when discussing the conflict. In June 1915, almost a year after the war began, Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois both addressed white supremacy and imperialism with competing philosophies. *The Crisis* chose to run two newspaper articles published by these distinguished men together, almost certainly to highlight their vastly different approaches when it came to discussing the color line. Washington asserted that "inferior peoples" throughout the world sought to rise above those in a superior position while seeing actions of the "superior" peoples as insulting, resulting in "inferior peoples" throwing "off the protection which the stronger races have imposed upon them."[228] The president of the Tuskegee Institute then proceeded to say that the general approach of "rebellion" to overthrow this system, while attractive, should be avoided due to the methods to repressing that rebellious approach. Instead, Washington proposed that more than one way existed to gain superiority within society. He claimed that one could "become superior by learning to do some one thing better than any one else in the world. And this may be a very simple thing; it may be raising cotton or it may be writing a book."[229]

Washington's approach in 1915 remained quite similar to his approach in 1895 when he presented the Atlanta Compromise. Rather than becoming an agitator as defined by white Southerners, African Americans must make a living and become a productive member of society, and that would lead to superiority. His reasoning in both instances considered racial hatred and discrimination apparent within America a protection for African Americans, implying that Jim Crow was necessary to ensure stability and order in society. Washington's assertions

[228] "The Great War," *The Crisis* 10, no. 2 (Jun. 1915): 75-76.
[229] Ibid, 76.

also implied that colonization around the world was not only necessary, but ensured protection for these peoples and would be better for them in the long run. In reality, though, Jim Crow, discrimination, and racial hatred contributed to more and more unrest and frustration in America, because those who followed Washington's model of "learning to do some one thing better than any one else" found they could not improve their economic or social situations. Rather, many African Americans remained trapped economically and socially due to Jim Crow and restrictions upon their citizenship, leaving them little recourse but to become the agitators Washington deplored. The same could be said for tensions throughout the world, as many people residing in European colonies sought self-determination and self-rule as opposed to restrictions that imperialism and empire employed upon them.

W. E. B. Du Bois's take on the same topic generated a stark contrast to Washington's, encouraging activism and attempting to understand World War I's wider implications for non-white peoples throughout the world when it came to imperialism, white supremacy, and discrimination. Du Bois asserted that the main aim of countries involved in the First World War was not to gain more territory in Europe, but rather increase their economic empires through expansion in Asia and Africa. To ensure successful imperialism, Du Bois contended that capital and labor must have a close relationship at home before spreading that same system abroad. That system encountered complications when white laborers began demanding not just an increase in wages, but also to limit the hiring of non-white peoples for open positions. "By threatening to send English capital to China and Mexico, by threatening to hire Negro laborers in America, as well as by old-age pensions and accident insurance, we gain industrial peace at home at the mightier cost of war abroad."[230] Du Bois maintained that the result meant continual tensions between white and non-white laborers, leading white laborers to do all they could to subjugate

[230] Ibid.

non-white laborers under the guise of protecting employment and maintaining white supremacy. For Du Bois, it was clear to non-white workers that "a white man is privileged to go to any land where advantage beckons and behave as he pleases; the black or colored man is being more and more confined to those parts of the world where life for climatic, historical, economic, and political reasons is most difficult to live and most easily dominated by Europe for Europe's gain."[231]

Du Bois's interpretation of imperialism and white supremacy was far more accurate than Washington's, especially in regard to the desire European countries expressed at the turn of the twentieth century to continue expanding their empires. "The Great Game" captured imaginations throughout Europe, and even the United States, so non-white peoples throughout the world experienced colonization, subjugation, and discrimination at the turn of the century and beyond. When Du Bois linked economic factors to imperialism, he aptly described the typical way a country attempted to conquer and subjugate another. He also recognized that the battle within the conquering country between white and non-white laborers would have far greater implications than just some laborers being refused positions. It instilled, at least in the United States, a feeling of nativism, fear of the "other," and desire to keep out all non-white laborers from both employment and unions. Here, the question of citizenship remained essential. Were non-white laborers, born in the United States, considered citizens by white laborers also born in the country? The answer was, unequivocally, no. Non-white peoples, regardless of their place of birth, were not considered citizens, and therefore would steal "American" jobs, undermining the labor system and union victories. It also safeguarded white supremacy within the United States, dividing the labor force by ethnicity rather than allowing them to completely unite against the businesses they sought to challenge. Finally, it meant that when expansion abroad occurred,

[231] Ibid, 77.

white privilege and white supremacy combined, guiding white American politicians, military personnel, and various officers in their policies when addressing non-white populations, and allowed the United States to export Jim Crow around the world.

Constant appeals to end white supremacy and Jim Crow and to guarantee all natural-born American citizens equality under the law fell on deaf ears. Moorfield Storey, a white lawyer and civil rights activist who eventually became president of the NAACP in 1909, penned an editorial in *The Crisis*, imploring Americans with influence, privilege, or leadership positions to turn their attentions to equality and justice in the United States. Storey asked that Americans no longer continue turning a blind eye toward the South that "claimed that they understand better than any one else what they call the 'Negro problem,' and have insisted that they must be allowed to deal with the colored people in their communities as they think best."[232] Rather, Storey suggested that the early twentieth century's apathy toward Jim Crow and racial violence in the South was akin to the antebellum era's indifference toward the institution of slavery. The latter resulted in a five-year struggle to ensure freedom to an enslaved and subjugated population. Storey argued that after the Civil War, Americans slammed shut "the door of opportunity," failed to educate the populace, and "ignore[d] our responsibility for their condition and put every obstacle in their way, permitting men whose views are warped by the traditions and prejudices of slavery to dictate our policy."[233]

Storey's assessment of racial tension and discrimination at the turn of the century was harsh, yet apt. The abolition movement gained ground in the antebellum era, but neither moral opposition to the institution of slavery nor advocacy for black equality were popular causes until the few years preceding the Civil War. Apathy existed throughout many areas of the United

[232] Moorfield Storey, "An Open Letter," *The Crisis* 10, no. 2 (Jun. 1915): 78.
[233] Ibid.

States concerning the moral implications of the peculiar institution, an indifference that returned during Reconstruction with the desire of most Northern Americans to leave what Storey termed the "Negro problem" to the South. By doing so, Northern Americans cemented the South's ability to create the institution of Jim Crow, and rather than removing obstacles before the newly freed population, paved the way for more and more restrictions and obstacles that maintained white supremacy and a particular social order.

Storey's examination of what he called the "Negro problem" in the South and limitations continued, just as scathing as before, with a discussion of the representation, economic advancement, and education denied to African Americans throughout the region. Instead of exercising their right to vote, African Americans found themselves largely excluded from the polls, thereby misrepresented by people who would continue a social structure intent upon their subjugation. At the same time, these representatives and other Southern leaders claimed that African Americans were "ignorant and degraded,"[234] yet denied segregated schools funding and trained teachers. These leaders intended to keep the African American population throughout the region as thoroughly uneducated as possible, negating any chance they might have of economic advancement. If any African Americans managed to obtain an education or advance themselves economically, obstacles would be immediately put in their way to prevent this sort of progress. Finally, any "man in whose veins flows only a trace of Negro blood, who inherits from his white ancestors their ambitions and their tastes, is treated as if he were hopelessly degraded, and all over the country the attempt is made to hold them down as an inferior class, denied those equal rights and equal opportunities which are the birthright of every American citizen."[235]

[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid, 78-79.

While some of Storey's assessment included assertions typically associated with paternalism and reinforcing stereotypes, he understood the limitations Jim Crow and the South's social order created for African Americans. Efforts for voter registration failed in many regions of the South, with economic pressure and threats of violence keeping African Americans from the polls. Also, laws based upon literacy or taxes embedded within Jim Crow kept not only African Americans but also poor whites from voting. This population could do nothing politically to change their situation because the system itself remained completely and utterly controlled by a minority of white Southerners determined to maintain their positions of power. This same population lacked access to education, something that might not only help them in their endeavors to vote, but also improve their economic situation. Limited to no funding for schools and the commonly held belief that sharecroppers and tenant farmers did not need an education to pick cotton left a large section of the Southern population without the possibility of an education. This ensured that Southern economic leaders would retain a poorly educated workforce that, for the most part, could not ever climb out of the debt and despair they lived in daily.

If, by chance, some managed to obtain an education, many employers found ways to exclude them from the workforce, guaranteeing their continual societal position beneath white Southerners. The "one drop rule" that determined the racial and social position of Southerners remained in effect. Storey's assessment that any African American who "inherits from his white ancestors their ambitions and their tastes,"[236] could improve his economic and social condition was, in part, intended to emphasize the ridiculous nature of the "one drop rule." Storey's statement also reinforced stereotypes held at the time that African Americans were incapable of ambition or success. His position as president of the NAACP notwithstanding, Storey still

[236] Ibid, 79.

implied paternalism and assimilation remained a factor, and that white ancestors assured that an African American would hold claim to ambition and white culture. Rather than acknowledging a different culture might be just as successful or feasible, Storey believed that the best culture and society to adhere to was still white American society. Despite these opinions, Storey's criticism of the Southern social and economic structure was highly accurate and necessary prior to the war that would "make the world safe for democracy."

Making "the world safe for democracy" certainly should have included the creation of a federal anti-lynching law rather than continuing to ignore the lawlessness and violence associated with lynching. By September of 1915, the Tuskegee Institute and *The Crisis* had both published their reports concerning lynchings that occurred in America between January and June of 1915. Tuskegee reported thirty-four lynchings in that time, with twenty-four African American victims and ten white victims.[237] *The Crisis* did not report their exact numbers, but specified that they counted thirty-five African American victims of lynching as opposed to the Tuskegee Institute's count of twenty-four in the first six months of 1915.[238] Outrage over the frequency and brutality of lynching began to increase significantly during the latter half of 1915, particularly after a gruesome double lynching in Georgia. *The Crisis* reprinted an article initially penned by Horace Traubel for the Altoona, Pennsylvania *Times*. Traubel's work directly referenced the frustration activists experienced over frequent lynchings and the extenuating circumstances leading to these incidents. Traubel wrote in response to a telegraph received concerning a double lynching in Georgia, done "'by mistake.'" He reported that after the mob discovered that they had lynched the wrong men, they set off to find the actual culprits, or as

[237] "Lynching," *The Crisis* 10, no. 5 (Sept. 1915): 226-227.
[238] Ibid, 227.

Traubel described it, "to murder some more Negroes by some more mistakes."[239] Traubel's anger and dissatisfaction with lynch law and its prevalence in America were more than self-evident in his first paragraph. His outrage, experienced and sometimes internalized by members of the NAACP and the African American community at large, was part of a larger movement encouraging the enactment of a federal anti-lynching bill. As the spearhead of that movement, the NAACP, as an influential organization within only a few years of its inception, constantly encouraged the federal government to act, drawing attention from African American communities and future soldiers alike.

Traubel's indignation was evident throughout the remainder of the article when he mentioned white supremacy, white violence, and racism and their influence upon lynch law. Traubel documented a conversation with a Danish musician, who clarified why some Europeans considered Germany's actions against Belgium an atrocity while ignoring actions taken against Egypt or India. In short, the musician claimed that Belgium was a civilized nation, while the colonized peoples were uncivilized, therefore "you can do as you please with a man if he is your inferior."[240] Traubel argued that Americans held the same position in regard to the "Negro problem" and white supremacy. The horrors of lynching would be considered atrocious and unlawful if they happened to citizens in "civilized" countries, but in the United States, "If he has a black skin he must be made to suffer for it. He may have a white heart. But no matter. It's the skin that counts."[241] Indeed, white supremacy was the de facto law of the land. The Southern elite held on to that custom most vigorously, and in many cases utilized white violence to enforce it, maintaining order, an adherence to Jim Crow, and retaining poor white support. Southern leadership found that poor whites could be kept separated from poor blacks, ensuring

[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Ibid.

their control over the region and from the majority to overturn their complex and elite power structure.

Traubel concluded his article with a personal story concerning white violence in the South and how incredibly brutal and unjust lynch law really was. The journalist had at one point known a Tennessee man who once resided on the family's former plantation. One evening, word of a potential rape came to the plantation and the sharecroppers working the land. A white mob arrived on that same farm, and grabbed a young black boy, hanging him and mutilating his body for the crime. That unnamed man from Tennessee began researching the supposed crime because he believed in the young lynching victim's innocence. After he proved the boy's innocence, members of the mob stated that even though they had made a mistake, it was of no consequence: "'He was only a nigger.'"[242] Often the attitude in regard to lynching and white violence, the mob's reaction indicated that they viewed the victim as sub-human, and his death, however unwarranted, was not a tragedy or a problem whatsoever. Traubel's outrage concerning these deaths, and many others, suggested that at least some white local newspapers supported NAACP efforts to enact a federal anti-lynching law.[243] He thought that these deaths could have been avoided, and should have been. Traubel would have supported meting out legitimate, lawful justice to those he saw as murderers. The only problem was that in areas like Georgia, black lynching victims would most likely never see true justice because the legal system and all-white all-male juries would never convict a white man for lynching a black man, regardless of the black man's innocence.

[242] Ibid, 227-228.
[243] For more information concerning lynching and the debate over a federal anti-lynching law, see Crystal N. Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 87-124, 158-185, and 212-233.

Some Americans, including Frank St. Claire, linked lynching and discrimination within the United States directly to the reported events of World War I. Published in the *Chicago Defender*, St. Claire took William Randolph Hearst's brand of yellow journalism to task after reading an article in the *Chicago American-Examiner*, one of Hearst's many publications.[244] St. Claire believed that an editorial printed on Oct. 3, 1915 intended to create racial antagonism, because that editorial discussed supposed cannibalism practiced by European soldiers of Asian and African descent. The story itself concerned "Negro soldiers selling human ears as souvenirs to the people of Paris."[245] St. Claire asserted that the French would not tolerate such behavior and then wondered why a paper such as the *Chicago American-Examiner* could see such atrocities abroad, but failed to see ones committed in the United States, including the lynching of a 12-year-old mere weeks before Hearst's editorial. St. Claire also took exception to Hearst's opposition to European nations utilizing non-white peoples as soldiers, especially since the United States had done so since the American Revolution.[246] St. Claire's critiques of yellow journalism implicated publications across the United States, not just Hearst's *Chicago American-Examiner*. Many newspapers either glossed over the atrocities of white violence and lynching or covered these events in such a manner that would justify this sort of activity. St. Claire found the acknowledgement of atrocities abroad while failing to even mention or recognize them within one's own country ridiculous. Instead of focusing on Europe's armies and their inclusion of non-white soldiers, St. Claire firmly believed that Hearst's efforts would be better-served examining lynching, white violence, and racial tensions in America.

The United States experienced many of the same concerns for African Americans in the country the following year, with NAACP journalists and investigators continually writing about

[244] The *Examiner* refers to the *Chicago American's* Sunday edition, published by William Randolph Hearst.
[245] Frank St. Claire, "Protect Home First," *Chicago Defender* (Chicago, IL), 9 Oct., 1915.
[246] Ibid.

concerns over lynching, the escalating war in Europe, and black soldiers, with lynching taking center stage as the United States had not yet entered into the global conflict. By April 1916, W. E. B. Du Bois penned an editorial for *The Crisis* concerning a mass lynching in January of that year. Local whites took five young black men in Georgia from the county jail to a neighboring county and gruesomely lynched them. Photographers documented the scene and distributed the images afterward. The mob violence transpired because these five young men defended themselves from a pending arrest for unknown charges, resulting in a county sheriff's death.[247] The initial charges themselves should not have constituted so much aggression in apprehending these five young men, yet, at least according to whites in the area, they had the audacity to defend themselves. That assertion of masculinity and self-preservation marked these young men for the noose because their actions to protect their own lives challenged white supremacy and the social order white Southerners so desperately wanted to maintain. Rather than allowing the legal system to determine the young men's guilt or innocence in the sheriff's death, white violence became the judge, jury, and executioner.

Du Bois asserted that a simple answer existed as to why these young men and many others like them faced lynch mobs: the peonage system. More than anything else, the peonage system in the South safeguarded white supremacy, Jim Crow, and economic exploitation, reducing African Americans and poor whites to near-slavery conditions. Du Bois utilized statistics from Worth, Lee, and Early Counties in Georgia to assert his point. The non-white population was nearly double that of the white population in the three counties, most of those whites resided in towns rather than rural areas like the non-white population, and the main business in the area was to raise cotton. In many cases, white landowners employed white overseers who would sometimes employ harsh tactics, including violence, to keep workers,

[247] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Peonage," *The Crisis* 11, no. 6 (April 1916): 302.

mostly African Americans, working hard and in line. Some incidents, like the beating of a young boy in Georgia "for some impudent reply made to the overseer" resulted in a race riot. After the beating, African American workers attacked the white overseer and killed him for his actions, causing white mobs to form and attack African Americans in the vicinity with impunity and culminating in the destruction of one church, numerous cabins, and various buildings.[248]

The African American community expressed their concerns and criticisms over the incident in Georgia because the young boy had no recourse whatsoever due to the legal and social structures of the South, intent on retaining Jim Crow and white supremacy at all costs. The economic and social structures in the region almost certainly maintained the ambiance and threat of force associated with the antebellum era and slavery itself, particularly when wealth resided within the hands of so few and the poor consisted almost entirely of enslaved peoples' descendants. While some white Southerners believed this method would keep the African American population complacent, docile, and agreeable, it instead left them frustrated, angry, and willing to violently defend themselves if necessary. The NAACP encouraged these actions, and became part of the method for fighting white violence and encouraging black men to participate in military service to gain knowledge of self-defense techniques.

While the NAACP encouraged self-defense and military service, obstacles remained to African American participation in the military even with the impending conflict in Mexico. Newly appointed NAACP Secretary Royal Nash wrote to President Wilson and a variety of other politicians and military officials concerning the treatment of African Americans within the United States Armed Forces. Nash professed his extreme disappointment in the Wilson administration's lack of action on behalf of these men and the possibility of expanding the African American presence within the regular army by suggesting the addition of four new all-

[248] Ibid, 302-304.

black regiments out of the already proposed expansion. Nash argued that the military would not face resistance to black enlistment and could easily fill these regiments if the military designated their creation. He reminded his audience that the United States Army reported fewer desertions from all-black regiments, and while in combat, these men served with honor, dignity, and bravery befitting the uniform. Nash also noted that all-black regiments experienced fewer disciplinary issues, with fewer court martials, resistance to unorthodox methods like waterboarding, and remaining dedicated to their position as defenders of the United States.[249]

The NAACP did not succeed in its endeavor to create more all-black regiments prior to World War I, but the support the organization provided to soldiers and their welfare proved far more significant. Before the turn of the century, middle and upper class African Americans sometimes argued against military service, referring to soldiers as debased beings,[250] and instead insisted that the more desirable route to masculinity and becoming a race leader remained an academic education.[251] After its creation, though, the NAACP took a different stance, changing how at least part of the African American community viewed military service. As Nash implied, military service provided men not only with employment, but also with training in self-defense, discipline, and confidence, all combining to create race men and civil rights leaders. Nash, and many in the NAACP, asserted that while the United States still participated in segregation and degradation of African Americans, the community would still take part in military service because they were in fact citizens, something many whites in the South did their best to deny.

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[249] Royal Nash, "Soldiers," *The Crisis* 11, no. 6 (Apr. 1916): 310.

[250] See letter from John E. Lewis to the *Illinois Record*, Springfield, Illinois in Willard Gatewood, Jr., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1987), 30. And W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994).

[251] See W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994). Here, Du Bois puts forth his ideal of the Talented Tenth, implying that academic pursuits provided the most advantageous route to becoming a race man rather than military service. Success in academics, not military prowess, would lead the race to greatness.

By the first few months of 1916 the war in Europe continued to escalate, and the United States found itself involved in a potential border war with Mexico, with African American soldiers in the midst of the action despite sentiment opposing their participation in the military. Amidst racial tension, violence, and turmoil in the United States, the Tenth Cavalry, commanded by Major Charles Young, and a few battalions of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment were part of Gen. John J. Pershing's forces that entered Mexico between late March and early April 1916 in pursuit of Francisco "Pancho" Villa. According to a journalist for the *Afro-American*, the black soldiers stationed at the border prior to Pershing's drive into Mexico hoped to cross the border soon, so they threw up the most temporary of camps. These men threw down little piles of hay and created a makeshift tent out of their blankets. The unnamed journalist even noted that the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment usually saw at least seventy-five percent reenlist once their original contract was up.[252]

Members of the Twenty-fourth actively sought the challenge of finding Villa and wanted to be prepared for a quick departure in the case orders arrived from General Pershing to move out. These regiments consisted almost entirely of career soldiers who were used to these sorts of temporary conditions, or what the unnamed journalist dubbed a "hardship." The retention rates for just the Twenty-fourth alone spoke to the opportunities available to African Americans through their military service: steady employment, proper compensation for their labor, and the chance to better themselves as individuals and men. Military service certainly provided African Americans all of these opportunities as well as many others, ensuring race men and civil rights activists upon their return home, something the NAACP continually supported. The organization's encouragement for black soldiers was a marked change from the late nineteenth to

[252] "Colored Troops Enter Mexico After Villa. They Constitute One Of the Best Fighting Units In The United States Army. Have Made Good Records. Major Charles Young and Lieut. Henry O. Flipper Are With 10th Cavalry.," *Afro-American* (Baltimore, MD), 1 Apr., 1916.

early twentieth century, specifically due to the change in attitude of elite African Americans toward soldiers. No longer were they considered "debased" or "uncivilized," but now seen as activists, race men, and examples of black masculinity.

The NAACP's support included publishing articles about African American soldiers, but it also went much farther than that, like insisting that when the United States Army created new regiments, a few be set aside for African American soldiers. A debate ensued over this topic, though, because some Southern politicians, including former Mississippi governor and U.S. Senator James K. Vardaman,[253] opposed the training and use of African American soldiers. Vardaman, who made his name and career through his advocacy of white supremacy, segregation, and lynching, addressed Congress in early April 1916 concerning the proposed National Defense Act up for debate in the Senate that intended to expand the size of the standing army prior to entry in World War I. The Mississippi senator opposed more African American regiments in the United States Army because he assumed that they would then "be recruited in the South which, in the hands of a 'hostile President,' may be used to oppress the whites."[254] Senator Vardaman then asserted,

> I understand that under the leadership of white men negroes make fairly good soldiers. A negro may become an obedient, effective piece of machinery, but he is devoid of the initiative and therefore could not be relied upon in an emergency. It is a peculiarity of the negro character that he can be taught to take orders, to imitate, to obey, but he can not be trusted to "carry a message to [Cuban General Calixto] Garcia." If I could have my way

[253] For more information concerning James K. Vardaman and his conceptions of race and white superiority as well as his use of those conceptions during campaigns and office-holding, see Archibald Coody IV, "The Race Question," from *The White Chief: A Story of the Life and Times of James K. Vardaman* (Vicksburg, MS: Mississippi Printing Company, 1944), 35-94. Coody's sentence structure and word choice indicate his agreement with Vardaman's positions concerning race and white supremacy, but also provides a comprehensive discussion of who Vardaman was and how he interpreted race in the South. Also see William F. Holmes, *The White Chief: James Kimble Vardaman* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), x-xii, 118-122, 129-146, 182-189, 193-195, 197-199, 235-237, 251, 270-271, 285-293, and 307-320. Holmes conducted a comprehensive study of Vardaman's political career and covered Vardaman's use of race as a political tactic for years, including restrictions on African Americans from military service and a warning concerning the return of African American veterans from World War I.

[254] "Soldiers," *The Crisis* 12, no. 2 (June 1916): 77. And Senator Vardaman, speaking on HR 12766, on April 4, 1916, 64th Cong., 1st Sess., *Congressional Record* 53, pt. 6: 5417-5418.

> about it, I should prohibit the use of negroes in the Army in any way except in positions of menials, but I am not going to discuss the question now.[255]

As the debates concerning the National Defense Act continued, a fellow Mississippi senator, John Sharp Williams, provided a refutation of Vardaman's position. The senator began his refutation by reminding "gentlemen from my own section of the country" that service under the National Defense Act was purely voluntary. Williams claimed that assertions that a "'President who had no sense of the race issue,' and of its vital importance in the preservation of white civilization [in the South] . . . could use section 56 of this bill to organize 'nigger' regiments, and mobilize them for military training" throughout the South were utterly false.[256] The senator reasserted his belief in political and social white supremacy and that the fear mongering his fellow Mississippi senator, Vardaman, traded on was nothing more than that. He contended that any man who volunteered for military service not only chose to be there, but could financially afford to provide their service to the country in a time of war. Senator Williams concluded that African American soldiers were "obedient, strong, courageous and satisfied," their regiments always filled to near capacity, and rarely deserted. Williams believed that the NAACP's request that if Congress approved the National Defense Act of 1916, the United States Army should reserve two regiments of those to be created for African Americans due to their exemplary service in the past.[257]

It was most intriguing that senators on each side of this debate came from the state of Mississippi. Vardaman's assertion that black soldiers would be used to oppress white Southerners oozed with fear and hysteria, using the popularity and fanfare surrounding *Birth of a*

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[255] Senator Vardaman, speaking on HR 12766, on April 4, 1916, 64th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 53, pt. 6: 5418.
[256] Senator Williams, speaking on HR 12755, on April 5, 1916, 64th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 53, pt. 6: 5536-5538.
[257] Ibid. And "Soldiers," *The Crisis* 12, no. 2 (June 1916): 77.

Nation to sell his proposed bill to the public. The film both crudely and inaccurately depicted what Vardaman claimed would happen if the United States Army expanded to include even two more black regiments. Vardaman's anxiety expressed a concern over the possibility that the majority population in the South might unite to resist the impositions and restrictions that a minority of elite, white men insisted upon enforcing. Senator Williams's response could only be described as surprising because he typically advocated white supremacy. Williams's backing of the NAACP's efforts to gain more all-black regiments displayed his understanding of historical precedent with previous conflicts as well as the need for more soldiers like them in the United States Army. Williams at least chose not to ignore the history of every military conflict in the United States since the American Revolution nor who participated in these conflicts, while all Vardaman saw was the possibility of a trained and armed subjugated population, intent upon reigning down terror and violence upon white Southerners who instituted and reinforced Jim Crow segregation and white supremacy.

As the debate in Congress continued over black enlistments and regiments, Secretary of State Robert Lansing penned a scathing response to Venustiano Carranza, President of Mexico, in June of 1916 after Carranza expressed concerns over American action in his country. Lansing proclaimed that if American lives continued to be sacrificed in either the United States or Mexico, the United States had the right to protect citizens if the Mexican government failed to do so. Du Bois published part of this letter in *The Crisis*, and used it as a basis for what he said President Wilson should have written to the state of Georgia in the wake of sixteen lynchings in that state alone before July 1916. By changing select phrases and sentences throughout, Du Bois sought to showcase the hypocrisy inherent within federal policy in regard to protecting American lives. Du Bois asserted that, "The United States Government cannot and will not allow bands of

lawless men to establish themselves *within* its borders with liberty *to kill, burn and plunder American citizens* with impunity, and when *accused* to seek safety *within state lines*, relying upon the plea of their government that *State Rights* must not be violated."[258] Du Bois implied throughout his editorial that a federal government willing to utilize African American soldiers to defend its citizens should also protect African American civilians within its own borders. Instead, white violence reigned with Georgia as the worst state, where white violence continually led to the lynchings of multiple black men every year without any attempts to restrain mob cruelty. Rather than protect these citizens or even attempt to apprehend their killers, most states, including Georgia, blatantly overlooked racial violence. To these officials, African Americans were not considered citizens, therefore the sort of lawlessness and violence that occurred was not objectionable, unless it happened to white Americans as in the case of Villa and his supporters.

Even with the NAACP's advocacy in favor of African American soldiers, the question of whether or not more African Americans could be convinced to enlist in the military if the country entered into World War I remained. Yes, wide support existed for African American military service in the war, but citizens wondered whether some black men would truly assist the United States in a war to ensure democracy abroad when they were denied it at home. W. Ashbie Hawkins, a citizen of Maryland, wrote an editorial to the Baltimore *American*, which was republished in *The Crisis*. Hawkins asserted that "When respectable colored men in this city have difficulty purchasing or renting homes for themselves and families simply because they are colored, they cannot easily be persuaded to fight to maintain such a condition."[259] Hawkins's proclamation plagued multiple African American communities, predominantly ones in the South, because racial discrimination and segregation continually relegated black Americans to

[258] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Editorial: Two Letters. The One which was Written to Mexico, The One Which was not Written to Georgia," *The Crisis* 12, no. 4 (Aug. 1916): 163-164.
[259] "Black Soldiers," *The Crisis* (12, no. 4 (Aug. 1916): 184.

subordinate positions within the economy, society, and politics, treating them as second-class citizens at best. Why should these men fight for a country that refused to acknowledge or even defend their citizenship and safety against white violence? Hawkins concluded that, "no man, white or black, can love a city, a state or a nation that restrains and hampers his activities on every hand, and that indorses and perpetuates race friction by class legislation."[260]

Hawkins's conclusions were not unfounded, as some journalists and politicians throughout the United States asserted that only African Americans should become soldiers, not because of their competence or abilities, but due to the lessened impact upon the economy and society. An editor for the Watertown, New York *Times* proclaimed that "good white men" should not be "wasted" on military service. That job should instead fall to African Americans, as they could be easily recruited "without drawing much from its industrial strength or commercial life. . . . If it comes to a real war we will be sacrificing white blood where Negro blood would, under the conditions, be a more fitting sacrifice, and drawing our skilled labor when unskilled labor was available."[261] Rather than presenting a position akin to that of Senator Vardaman of Mississippi, this unnamed editor chose instead to encourage genocide. Rather than sacrifice "good white men," black men, consisting of the unemployed, unskilled, and vagrant population throughout the United States, should be sacrificed for the good of a country that denied them basic civil rights and citizenship. The unidentified *Times* editor certainly believed that having an army consisting of only black soldiers would serve an important purpose for the United States by retaining white men, as well as ridding the country of an unwanted portion of the population.

The Crisis undoubtedly presented a different position than Hawkins of Maryland by continuing to encourage black men to enlist in the military. Their September 1916 publication

[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid.

examined the praise and encouragement found in various newspapers across the United States, contending that, "If the Negro makes such a magnificent soldier, by all means urge him to the defence [sic] of his hearth and home."[262] The NAACP's publication continually encouraged black military service, but rarely failed to point out the hypocrisy involved as a way to guarantee that men understood what they signed up for if they chose to enlist. The article took a sharp turn, though, by including writings from an unnamed editor of the Macon, Georgia *Telegraph*. The unidentified editor, just like his counterpart in Watertown, New York, argued that military service for African Americans would "rid the South of the vicious and loafing Negro."[263] The *Telegraph* editor believed that African Americans were more physically suited for the rigors of military life and the climate in Mexico where the current possibility of war existed. He asserted that, "The white people of our republic are essentially a north temperate zone race of people . . . But we have a breed within our borders, a breed physically constituted to out-Mex the Mexicans in the sort of fighting down there—that breed being the Negro of the South."[264]

Once again, white Americans used physicality, stereotypes, and white supremacy to conclude that only black men should fight in a harsher climate like Mexico. This way, the South could rid itself of what white elite Southerners deemed a "useless" and "worthless" population. Some white Americans would support African Americans in the military, but only because it meant a reduction in the civilian population through battle and a means of ridding themselves of an unwanted population. *The Crisis* journalist compiling the article that included this information concluded, "Too proud to fight Germans and too good to fight Mexicans! Will some one choose an antagonist worthy of the super-white American?"[265] Again, the NAACP encouraged black

[262] "A Discrepancy," *The Crisis* 12, no. 5 (Sept. 1916): 237-238.
[263] Ibid, 238.
[264] Ibid.
[265] Ibid.

enlistment, but never failed to point out hypocrisy in regard to that enlistment or service, particularly when it came to civil rights and citizenship.

By the end of 1916, it had become clear that the United States would soon enter the Great War. The debates over lynching, black enlistment, black officers, and citizenship would continue throughout the remainder of the war and beyond. The NAACP's assistance to black soldiers, encouraging their enlistment, the anti-lynching campaign, and self-defense was highly significant. The organization's efforts failed to end the military's discriminatory policies or segregationist methods, but it did manage to draw attention to the problems and frustrations African American soldiers faced on a daily basis, as well as encourage the protection and safety of all African Americans. Undoubtedly, African American soldiers came across reports concerning white violence and lynching, and those fighting against Villa in Mexico almost certainly knew that they fought to protect citizens that cared very little for their safety or rights. There is no doubt many saw the contradiction in pursuing Villa into a foreign country for his violence while local, state, and federal governments in the United States failed to prosecute lynch mobs. The criticism and opposition that arose to the possibility of even more black military personnel by 1916 undeniably also reached black servicemen, which might have very well served as an impetus for African American soldiers to become civil rights activists and race men to ensure citizenship, democracy, and equality for not only themselves as servicemen, but for African American citizens as well. In this pursuit of freedom, justice, and equality, the NAACP became crucial to their efforts through publications, legal representation, and political influence.

CHAPTER 4: 'HE THINKS HE IS A SOLDIER':

MANHOOD, IDENTITY, AND DEMOCRACY IN WORLD WAR I

Less than a month after Congress approved a declaration of war against Germany, Antoinette Rappal, a sixteen-year-old white resident of Memphis, Tennessee, went missing while riding her bicycle to school. Initially, Rappal's mother believed she ran away from home to become a nurse for the Red Cross, as the young woman had expressed that desire not long after war was declared. On May 2, 1917, Rappal's body was found near the Wolf River bottoms, approximately fifteen miles from the heart of Memphis. Her killer severed her head with an ax, and, according to a doctor employed by the city of Memphis, performed sexual acts upon the young woman after her murder. Even though city detectives working on the case initially suspected the culprits to be two white males based on the necrophilia that occurred after Rappal's beheading, the handkerchief and clothing found at the scene, fresh automobile tracks, and the position of the body, popular suspicion within the country sheriff's office immediately fell upon black male woodchoppers working in the area. In fact, the first arrests by the county sheriff's office consisted entirely of black woodchoppers, the first of whom was released upon his white employer's testimony that he had been at work the entire day and could not have had time to kill Rappal. When Dewitt Ford, described as "a deaf and dumb Negro," was arrested, he testified to witnessing the murder, and subsequently accused Dan Armstrong, a black timber

cutter. Armstrong was cleared of the crime upon his white employer's testimony that Armstrong remained at work the entire day, not offering him time to commit the murder.[266]

Throughout these arrests and accusations, the city detectives continued to disagree with the county sheriff's office, claiming that the crime was that of a white man or men, not that of a black man. The evidence collected indicated that Rappal was not physically pulled from her bicycle since it was found "leaning against a tree only a hundred feet or so from the bridge and the public road." The city detectives deduced that if Rappal were physically attacked while riding, everything in the bicycle's basket, including her schoolbooks, an apron, and lunch, would have been scattered and the bicycle hidden from view. The detectives also alleged that due to a white handkerchief and coat found near the scene, resembling the style a barber or waiter would wear, with no bloodstains on them, the attackers must have been white males. Investigators came to this conclusion because they assumed no black male would possess such a coat or a white handkerchief. City detectives thought that Rappal left the road under her own volition, indicating she knew or trusted the person or persons who murdered her. Investigators argued that, "Certainly no white girl would permit a Negro to lure her into such a place . . . A white man, known to her, would excite no such suspicion in her mind." Due to these interpretations, the detectives secured permission to exhume Rappal's body for physical evidence, including any particles of skin or dirt under her fingernails, as well as the highly controversial procedure of photographing the victim's eyes in the hopes that the last image she saw was imprinted there.[267]

[266] "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: The Lynching at Memphis," *The Crisis* 13, no. 4 (Aug. 1917): 185-186.
[267] Ibid.

Then, on May 6, 1917, local authorities arrested Ell Persons[268] and George Knox, both black male woodchoppers. The *Memphis Scimitar* published evidence against them the next day, which included mentioning an ax with "suspicious stains" outside Persons' home. Two days later, newspapers throughout Memphis reported that Persons confessed to Rappal's murder during his third time in the county sheriff's custody, even though his previous visits resulted in no new information on the case. Rappal's uncle, William Wilfong, along with another man turned Persons over to the sheriff's office for the third time because they both remained unconvinced of Persons' innocence after the first two interrogations. A previous employer initially accused Persons, and Persons' interactions with said employer combined with planted evidence discovered at Persons' house convinced Wilfong of Persons' guilt. Local authorities forced Persons' confession through the use of violence, intimidation, threats, and deception. The sheriff's office, along with the two city detectives, used these unlawful methods to convince Persons that the city chemist had found blood on shoes and pants discovered at his home, when in fact tests detected no blood on the ax, shoes, or pants entered into evidence. During their interrogation, local authorities convinced Persons that the shoes he wore were now covered in blood, most likely from the utilization of violence against Persons during said interrogation. It was enough to persuade Persons to confess to the crime.[269]

A Shelby County grand jury then indicted Persons for murder, but not for the assault that occurred after Rappal's death.[270] After his trial and a guilty verdict, local authorities transferred Persons back to Shelby County from Nashville where the trial occurred. Due to the transfer, armed whites, hoping to find Persons on board, searched every passenger train entering the

[268] Accounts have the last name listed as both Persons and Person. I have chosen to use the former for consistency, following Patricia Sullivan's reference to this lynching and Persons' name in *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009), 65-66.
[269] Ibid, 186-187.
[270] Ibid, 187.

county. Newspapers published announcements of the intent to lynch Persons upon his return to Memphis, complete with specifying the bridge where Rappal went missing as the location for the violent act. Schools reported numerous children absent on that day, and parents requesting their children be excused for that absence to witness the lynching. Thousands of men, women, and children were on hand when the men who had captured Persons arrived, with several vendors in attendance to sell food and refreshments to them. Rappal's mother gave a statement, thanking those who presented Persons for the lynching and expressing her desire that he suffer for what he had done.[271]

According to multiple accounts, Persons then attempted to make a statement, but could not be heard over the crowd. Instead, one of the white investigators responsible for finding evidence that linked Persons to the crime spoke for him, claiming that both Dewitt Ford and Dan Armstrong, also arrested at one point, colluded with Persons to commit the crime. Members of the mob then doused Persons with ten gallons of gasoline and set him on fire.[272] As the flames spread, white men in the crowd set a ten-year-old African American boy who witnessed the murder close to the fire, with members of the crowd saying to this young man, "'Take a good look, boy' . . . 'We want you to remember this the longest day you live. This is what happens to niggers who molest white women.'" Members of the mob proceeded to cut off Persons' ears and attempted to obtain pieces of clothing or bits of the rope as souvenirs.[273]

Once his body was sufficiently burned, a member of the crowd cut out Persons' heart and another removed his head from his corpse. After Persons' decapitation, white men transported

[271] "Memphis: May 22, A. D., 1917. An account taken solely from the Memphis white daily papers, save that we have added explanatory headings.," *The Crisis* 14, no. 3 (Supplement to Jul. 1917): 1-2.
[272] Ibid, 2-3. And "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: The Lynching at Memphis," *The Crisis* 13, no. 4 (Aug. 1917): 188.
[273] "Memphis: May 22, A. D., 1917. An account taken solely from the Memphis white daily papers, save that we have added explanatory headings.," *The Crisis* 14, no. 3 (Supplement to Jul. 1917): 3.

his head to Memphis, and at the intersection of Rayburn Boulevard and Beale Avenue, threw it out of a vehicle at the feet of African Americans.[274] Initially, members of the mob pursued Ford and Armstrong, but "the saneness and forbearance of the mob" led to their release rather than a triple lynching. To mark the location where Persons' lynching occurred, the mob left an American flag.[275] Some reports in the aftermath of Persons' lynching commented on the lawlessness of what happened, including the powerlessness of law enforcement in protecting Persons from a violent mob. Indeed, an editorial from the Memphis *Press* even argued that the silence of any citizens opposed to this sort of violence and lawlessness equated to consent for such actions, meaning lynchings would never end until that consent was revoked.[276]

Persons' arrest, trial, and subsequent lynching underscored the hypocrisy of America's entry into World War I as a way to "make the world safe for democracy." Americans remained segregated, subjugated, and experienced second-class citizenship in their homeland. Once President Wilson and Congress enacted the Selective Service Act in May 1917, those same Americans were expected to enter combat overseas to protect and spread democracy abroad, while being denied it at home.

Persons' case exemplified the contradiction between democracy and Jim Crow. Persons' three arrests and interrogations that involved what newspapers called "third degree" techniques led to his coerced confession, effectively denying Persons' rights as a citizen. Once local authorities received a confession, a Shelby County grand jury only indicted Persons for murder, not the sexual assault and mutilation of Rappal's body that occurred after her death. The lack of attention to all components of the crime indicated that the Shelby County sheriff's office cared

[274] Ibid.
[275] "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: The Lynching at Memphis," *The Crisis* 13, no. 4 (Aug. 1917): 188.
[276] "Memphis: May 22, A. D., 1917. An account taken solely from the Memphis white daily papers, save that we have added explanatory headings.," *The Crisis* 14, no. 3 (Supplement to Jul. 1917): 4.

solely for punishing someone for her death, even if the individual was innocent of all wrongdoing. When local authorities assigned sole blame upon Persons, it represented yet another way in which Persons' citizenship remained limited and his ability to defend himself eliminated. After a trial that almost undoubtedly utilized falsified evidence, Persons was found guilty of Rappal's murder, only to face a lynch mob rather than the life sentence the judge ordered. Rather than allowing the justice system to take its course with Persons' imprisonment, white men, women, and children sought extralegal justice through lynching Persons. Persons' encounter with white violence at the beginning of American involvement in World War I accentuated the restrictions on African American men through Jim Crow, subjugation, and discrimination, which were all components of the United States military at the start of the war.

Throughout the entire episode, Persons was treated as a second-class citizen and denied proper due process that any white citizen in his situation would have received at a time when the United States called upon all of its citizens to take part in World War I. The NAACP took particular interest in this case, sending an investigator to Memphis to interview eyewitnesses and examine material and information regarding Persons' lynching as well as publishing multiple articles in *The Crisis* concerning Persons' demise. Their attentiveness to the Persons case and similar incidents underscored the organization's rapid expansion and influence. The same sort of attentiveness had been, and would continue to be, applied to African American military service as well as the consequences of World War I for people of color throughout the world, continually addressing the hypocrisy of a war to "make the world safe for democracy" while denying democracy for some citizens at home. Due to its political influence as well as its ability to continue expanding to new audiences, the NAACP advocated an end to racial violence and discrimination on behalf of African American military personnel and civilians, black soldiers

continued their personal struggles against segregation and degradation on their own, and they began voicing their concerns to the NAACP itself through direct correspondence from their military posts.

In the same month that Congress approved President Wilson's declaration of war against Germany, the NAACP and its chairman, Joel Spingarn, advocated the creation of a segregated training camp to produce black officers. Spingarn's attempts to create a separate officer's training camp created tension within the African American community at large since people perceived these actions as the NAACP and Spingarn advocating segregation rather than endeavoring to end it. While separate camps meant reinforcing segregation, the separate camps also guaranteed that black men might lead segregated regiments in both training and battle.[277] By the start of World War I, very few black officers were commissioned in the United States Army, and Spingarn and the NAACP aspired to change that by increasing opportunities for educated black men in military service. Criticism arose when Spingarn lobbied for a segregated training camp, mainly due to its reinforcement of segregation and second-class citizenship. The NAACP argued instead that, "We continually submit to segregated schools, 'Jim Crow' cars, and isolation, because it would be suicide to go uneducated, stay at home, and live in the 'tenderloin.'"[278]

Spingarn's attempts to create a segregated training camp only occurred because the United States military refused to accept African American men into existing officer training camps, thereby leaving Spingarn and the NAACP with what they considered to be no other alternative. According to *The Crisis*, African Americans "must choose then between the insult of a separate camp and the irreparable injury of strengthening the present custom of putting no

[277] "The Perpetual Dilemma," *The Crisis* 13, no. 4 (Apr. 1917): 270-271.
[278] Ibid, 270.

black men in positions of authority."[279] The separate training camp endeavored to strengthen the fight against discrimination within the military rather than encourage it because many African Americans wanted black officers in charge of segregated regiments. The NAACP and many men in uniform encouraged more promotions for African Americans because, in some cases, it guaranteed that fewer white officers commanded African American soldiers. The change of command would potentially lessen discrimination within a regiment as well as encourage black military personnel to achieve a higher military rank than the one they currently held because they could see themselves in their black officers' positions. *The Crisis* then mentioned that Southern whites feared trained black men returning home after the war,[280] a concern continually apparent in Southern publications before World War I began. The NAACP's periodical made one final point concerning how the United States military would find enough manpower to successfully enter combat. Multiple newspapers, including the *Chicago Defender* and the Baltimore *Afro-American*, asserted that when the United States entered the war, the military would take volunteers rather than issue a draft. *The Crisis* and the NAACP disagreed, stating, "They assume a choice between volunteering and not volunteering. The choice will be between conscription and rebellion."[281]

For the NAACP, the choice between no officer training camp and a segregated one was simple. Without a training camp, no new black officers would be promoted, leaving current African American military personnel under the control of white officers, some of whom had shown proclivities toward racial discrimination in the past. A segregated officer training camp also ensured that military service remained an avenue toward leadership in the African American community and the development of more race men. Their accomplishments and experience

[279] Ibid.
[280] Ibid, 271.
[281] Ibid.

allowed African American veterans to establish themselves as race men and leaders once their military service ended, and also guaranteeing that various communities included black men trained to defend themselves physically. Military training and self-defense was vital before, during, and after World War I due to racial violence, discrimination, and segregation practices throughout the United States. Undeniably, the NAACP encouraged African American men to enlist in military service to obtain this type of training, assert their masculinity through that training, and remain fighting for equality and full citizenship after the war.

Intentions to retain military training, self-defense, and claims to full citizenship created tension in some regions of the United States, including the South, where white men dreaded the return of African American veterans for these very reasons. White Southerners rightly believed that veterans would challenge Jim Crow, racial violence, and intimidation in any way possible, which was exactly what some veterans did upon returning home. The NAACP also acknowledged that these young men experiencing segregation, degradation, and discrimination would be forced to fight in a war for democracy abroad rather than choose to do so, courtesy of a selective draft. If these men were forced to participate and made aware of the hypocrisy of the war to "make the world safe for democracy," then black officers should command segregated regiments.

As Spingarn and the NAACP advocated a separate training camp for African American officers to hopefully lead black soldiers in combat, Southern congressmen continued their attempts to exclude all African Americans from military service as a way to maintain Jim Crow and the subjugation of a large portion of their population. Just days after the United States declared war on Germany, a universal training bill that resembled legislation enacted in the state of New York in May 1916 came before Congress, suggesting nationwide universal training. The

initial New York legislation, referred to as the Slater Bill, the Slater-Walsh Bill, and the Stivers Bill, required "compulsory physical and military training in the public schools" and allowed the sitting New York governor to "draft for military duty at any time all able-bodied male citizens of the State between the ages of 18 and 45."[282] The legislation authorized the creation of physical training courses for all students eight years and older, compulsory military training for young men between the ages of sixteen and nineteen after school hours provided these young men were unemployed, and the ability of the sitting governor to order a draft at any time from men ages eighteen to forty-five. New York's governor signed the bills into law despite opposition from pacifist organizations concerned with compulsory service.[283] As the possibility of nationwide military training for all young American men between the ages of sixteen and nineteen was debated in the halls of Congress, Southern representatives opposed the proposed legislation. Representative Richard Whaley of South Carolina even stated,

> We of the South cannot stand for inclusion of Negroes in the universal service plan. It would bring down upon districts where Negroes far exceed the whites in number a danger far greater than any foreign foe. . . . The universal service plan . . . would accomplish the very thing which the South has always fought against, the placing of arms in the hands of a large number of Negroes and the training of them to work together in organized units.[284]

The possibility of universal military training for all young male citizens regardless of race created tension within Congress over defining citizenship and whom the government should consider as citizens of the United States. The state of New York, most likely influenced by Progressive era ideals of citizenship equating to duty and responsibility to the state and country, clearly articulated through legislation that in the case of a military conflict, New York would be

[282] "State Will Train Boys for Defense: Governor Whitman Signs Five Bills Which Make For Preparedness. Draft Also Authorized. New Law Enables the Executive to Bring the National Guard to Full Strength," *New York Times*, 16 May 1916.
[283] Ibid.
[284] "South Opposes Negro Soldiers: Opposed to Universal Military Training Bill Because it Would Mean Training Colored Soldiers. Urge Their Exclusion. Bourbons Urge President to Exclude Colored Men from the Universal Service Plan," *Afro-American* (Baltimore, MD), 14 Apr. 1917.

ready to provide trained men. Advocates of this law argued that this training was necessary not only to improve military readiness in the case war became imminent, but also because these young men would benefit greatly from compulsory service. Citizenship, then, extended to all young men, regardless of race in New York.

The subsequent battle in Congress over the same type of legislation arose due to racial prejudice, Jim Crow, and the belief that African Americans were not citizens of the United States. Representative Whaley's concerns about universal training for all American men, including African Americans, symbolized white Southern elite attitudes toward any military or self-defense training for black men in the South. First and foremost, Southern white elites did not consider African Americans to be full citizens of the United States, and therefore not subject to military service. Consequently, that lack of citizenship also indicated that Jim Crow segregation was necessary to maintain control over such a large population. Yet, while Southern white elites denied the legitimacy of African American citizenship, they still understood the frustrations black Southerners experienced with Jim Crow and their desires to remove segregation, disfranchisement, and racial violence form their daily lives. The apprehension concerning armed, military-trained and minded black men residing in the South, and sometimes in areas where black residents outnumbered white residents, remained ever-present in the Southern white consciousness. African American involvement in the military suggested the possibility of resistance to racial violence, lynching, economic intimidation, and disfranchisement, a situation Southern white elites could not fathom or process.

Organizations including the NAACP encouraged resistance to racial violence, intimidation, and disfranchisement through military service, most likely to the chagrin of white Southern elites and their desires to maintain segregation and exclude African American men

from the military. By June 1917, the NAACP asserted that the "fierce rivalry among European nations in their effort to use darker and backward people for purposes of selfish gain regardless of the ultimate good of the oppressed" was one of the primary causes of the war.[285] The NAACP believed that the war's end should then result in extending self-determination to nations not just in "Europe but among the natives of Asia and Africa, the Western Indies and the Negroes of the United States."[286] Consequently, the organization recognized the problems inherent in supporting the Allied Powers over the Central Powers, yet believed that the Allies gave non-white peoples the best possible chance at self-determination and encouraged African Americans to aid the war effort in any way, including enlistment. Understanding "the reasonable and deep-seated feeling of revolt among Negroes at the persistent insult and discrimination to which they are subject and will be subject even when they do their patriotic duty," the NAACP still encouraged any possible aid to the war effort. The organization asserted that the frustrations and "complaints" had not dissipated, but concerns and anger over discrimination would not stop African Americans from doing what was necessary to defend the country in a time of war because their participation equated to an assertion of citizenship.[287]

Debates over citizenship remained at the heart of discussions of black military service in the United States, and issues surrounding exercising the rights guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution as well as the consideration of self-determination for colonies after World War I influenced those debates. Clearly, African Americans and the NAACP envisioned American citizenship as defined in the Fourteenth Amendment: all citizens born in the United States, regardless of race, religion, creed, or previous condition of servitude were in fact citizens and possessed all of the rights bestowed upon citizens as set forth by the Constitution. Their

[285] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Resolutions of the Washington Conference," *The Crisis* 14, vol. 2 (Jun. 1917): 59.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid, 59-60.

definition of citizenship also meant that any duty or responsibility of a citizen accompanied those rights, so the NAACP continually advocated African American military participation despite de facto and de jure segregation, racial violence, and intimidation.[288] The NAACP also encouraged the United States to fulfill its promise to "make the world safe for democracy" by persuading European countries to support the end of empire and self-determination for all nations, not just European ones controlled during the war. Simultaneously, African American military service would promote an end to problematic economic, educational, political, social, and cultural inequities in the United States, further solidifying African American citizenship and the possible end to racially discriminatory practices.

As the year continued and the NAACP conducted investigations of the East St. Louis race riot, various lynchings, and the forced retirement of Colonel Charles Young, the organization began receiving correspondence from African American soldiers, including those eventually stationed in Houston, Texas at Camp Logan with the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment. The NAACP published some of that correspondence in *The Crisis* a few months after first receiving the communications, indicating the organization's attention through their July and August 1917 editions remained almost entirely with the East St. Louis race riot investigations. Chaplain George A. Singleton penned four letters to the NAACP and *The Crisis*, with only one of those letters signed by two fellow soldiers. Singleton's first letter, dated July 17, 1917, stated that he along with Thomas E. Davis and Vida Henry started a collection of funds among members of their company to aid victims of the East St. Louis riot that occurred earlier that

[288] For more information concerning citizenship, volunteerism, the draft, and race during World War I, see Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Also, Calvin White, Jr., *The Rise to Respectability: Race, Religion, and the Church of God in Christ* (Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 2012), 55-76.

month.[289] The riot, one of the worst in American history, began in early July 1917 due to racial tension tied to economic conflicts and an incident involving shots fired indiscriminately in an African American community by white males driving through the neighborhood. The violent and destructive race riot left over 100 dead and thousands displaced due to property damage. It was not surprising that these soldiers wanted to aid the displaced peoples of East St. Louis, even in the smallest way. Singleton, Davis, and Henry collected as many donations as they could, asking *The Crisis* staff to distribute the funds for them.[290]

Singleton's letter included not only the promise of continuing to collect funds to aid Americans displaced by the recent race riot, but also a commitment to enroll their fellow soldiers as members of the NAACP. He stated that, "*The Crisis* is held in very high esteem by the men of the 24th Infantry and we are always glad when it comes."[291] Singleton even expressed hope that the "noble fight for manhood rights for our people" would be highly successful, especially due to the NAACP's continued efforts to create a black officer's training camp. Singleton asserted, "We desire more publicity in these trying times when we believe that the hour has truly come when the Son of man is to be glorified. We stand upon the same platform as you and fight for the same principles."[292] Singleton's other letters all continued to emphasize his commitment to enrolling his fellow soldiers as members of the NAACP, raising funds for East St. Louis victims, and praising the organization's commitment to the problems facing African Americans in the United States. Singleton's last two letters came from Camp Logan in Houston, Texas, the first of which included information concerning the encampment there and the regiment's interactions with locals. Chaplain Singleton insisted that the Twenty-fourth Infantry "has made good and all

[289] "Correspondence from the Twenty-Fourth Infantry," *The Crisis* 14, no. 6 (Oct. 1917): 307.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Ibid.
[292] Ibid.

doubts as to the conduct of the Negro soldier have dissipated. The people of color of Houston are proud of their brother soldiers . . . and have welcomed us with a generous hospitality which portrays the high respect which our people have for our government."[293]

Singleton's unrelenting support of the NAACP and its efforts to aid African American civilians and military personnel was fairly characteristic of African American soldiers' attitudes during the First World War. As in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, African American soldiers participating in World War I emphasized masculinity, racial uplift, and the constant battle against discrimination, racial violence, and degradation within the military. Men like Singleton hoped their efforts and success in the military led directly to improved racial relations and the decline of segregation, discrimination, and violence in the United States. Singleton's desire to secure "manhood rights" for black men was highly significant. With the second rise of the Ku Klux Klan, Jim Crow, and white definitions of masculinity, black men remained wholly and entirely excluded from fully expressing their own masculinity.[294] Rather, African American men remained emasculated by American society's standards. Singleton's assertion that the NAACP sought to secure "manhood rights" for all black men displayed his aspiration that one day, young black men's masculinity and citizenship rights would be beyond reproach. The Twenty-fourth's warm reception by black Houstonians lent credence to Singleton's belief that not only the NAACP, but also continued service in the military by African Americans would ensure "manhood rights."

What happened two days after Singleton's last letter to *The Crisis*, though, proved disastrous for African American soldiers' determination to end segregation and discrimination

[293] Ibid, 308.
[294] See Crystal N. Feimster, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009) and Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

within the United States military and American society. On August 23, 1917, a race riot erupted in Houston involving the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment stationed at Camp Logan[295] after a violent clash between two white police officers and two African American soldiers. Initial reports, including one published in the *New York Times*, claimed the riot "originated in a difficulty which two negro soldiers had with police officers, who arrested them for disturbing the peace . . . The firing began when an ambulance started through the section occupied by the negro soldiers. They stopped the ambulance and fired a volley, riddling it with bullets."[296] The *Atlanta Constitution* provided a more thorough examination of the events that occurred in Houston, albeit with some gaps. Editors of the Atlanta newspaper put the death toll at twelve whites and over twenty injured while noting that, "It is unknown how many negroes are dead."[297] The publication reiterated the *New York Times*' explanation for the cause of the race riot, claiming that white civilians aided police officers by firing at members of the Twenty-fourth.[298] Houston was placed under martial law after "eighty negroes from the Twenty-fourth United States Infantry stationed at Camp Logan for guard duty, marched down Washington avenue toward the center of the city, shooting out lights in the houses along the way and leaving dead and injured behind them."[299]

As the soldiers marched down Washington Avenue, they turned south on Sandman Road and continued toward San Filipe Road, when the first victim, a white teenage girl, was fatally

[295] Adrienne Lentz-Smith has compiled the most exhaustive study of the Houston riot in *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[296] "Negro Regulars Riot near Houston, Texas; Twelve Whites Killed, a Score Wounded," *New York Times*, 24 Aug. 1917.
[297] 12 Killed, 20 Wounded as Negro Troops Riot: Whites are Shot by Negro Troops Run Amuck in Houston Camp. Sixteen Truckloads of Illinois Soldiers Are Rushed to Quell Outbreak of 24th Infantry; Guarding Construction of Camp Logan. Houston and Region Under Martial Law; Excitement Intense. State of Panic Exists at the Camp—Firing Started at 8 O'Clock and Continued for Hour—Cause of Trouble Is Not Known," *Atlanta Constitution*, 24 Aug, 1917.
[298] Ibid. And "Negro Regulars Riot Near Houston, Texas," *New York Times*, 24 Aug. 1917.
[299] Ibid.

wounded. The number of injured and dead continued to rise as the soldiers maintained their march through town. A coalition of Houston police, armed civilians, the Texas National Guard, and Illinois troops in town for training combined under the command of Captain W. P. Rothrock, the quartermaster at Camp Logan to suppress members of the Twenty-fourth marching through the city. Tension mounted as the coalition formed, with some men expressing their desire to lynch these soldiers. The hostility continued to escalate when a black soldier "who had been in Houston all evening and had had nothing to do with the trouble, stepped off a street car. Two civilians armed with shotguns followed him half a block as he went toward the camp and forced him to surrender."[300] The incident drew a crowd "bent on vengeance," but members of the Texas National Guard secured the soldier's safety. After the incident ended, a guard member from Camp Logan stated "that he had known it [the riot] was coming. Members of the negro troops, who were placed on guard duty at the camp have for two or three days, it is said, been insulting the white soldiers."[301]

By August 25, 1917, newspapers including the *New York Times* reported as many as seventeen deaths and orders received to remove all African American soldiers from Houston. The *New York Times* also reported as many as 125 soldiers involved in the incident, all but eight of whom had been accounted for, while the remaining portions of the regiments were to be transferred to a Columbus, New Mexico base. One of the dead listed in the publication was Vida Henry, the same soldier who signed his name to Chaplain Singleton's letter to *The Crisis* in July 1917. The *New York Times* listed Henry as the "leader of the riotous soldiers."[302] After the men

[300] Ibid.
[301] Ibid.
[302] "Army Riot at Houston Cost 17 Lives; Negro Troops Ordered Out of State; Congress Will Take Up Race Question. Gen. Bell Goes to Houston: White Troops Are Sent There to Avert Further Disorder. Negro Rioters Are Jailed; While Rest of the Battalion is Being Entrained for New Mexico. City in Fury Over Killings: Civilians and Police Shot Down and Mutilated by Lawless Regulars.," *New York Times*, 25 Aug. 1917.

seized rifles and ammunition, they left Camp Logan, marching toward the city shooting indiscriminately. Eventually, the coalition of police and National Guard forced the men to flee, with "some returning to camp, where they were placed under guard. Others hid in buildings and ditches in nearby roads."[303] After reinforcements arrived, including a portion of the Nineteenth Infantry, to provide extra guard at Camp Logan while members of the Twenty-fourth were disarmed and Captain K. S. Snow began the courts-martial process.[304]

The incident in Houston prompted the federal government once again to examine the role of African American soldiers in the United States military. It encouraged Southern representatives in Congress to reiterate their claims that the United States military should not include African American soldiers, nor should it station them at bases in the South. The *New York Times* reported that newspapers across the United States "refrained from printing anything about it [stationing black soldiers near African American communities in the South] out of consideration for the Government, which felt that it was entitled to be spared the embarrassment of having the matter agitated, particularly in view of the feeling that had developed in parts of the South."[305] The publication argued that the military should have stationed African American soldiers elsewhere, "as to avoid the likelihood of dissatisfaction on the part of white soldiers quartered in the same places, and the people of the neighborhood of the camps."[306]

The *New York Times* continued along this line of discussion, mentioning that the South did not oppose African American National Guard regiments training in the South, only Regular Army regiments. The publication asserted "negro soldiers from these sections [National Guard

[303] Ibid.
[304] Ibid. K. S. Snow was listed as a captain in the *New York Times* article cited above, yet the *Atlanta Constitution* listed Snow as a major in their article dated August 24, 1917, also cited above.
[305] "Texans Protest to President Against Negro Soldiers in South: Riots at Houston Raise Entire Problem as to the Quartering and Training of Colored Troops—Baker Awaits Full Report from General Parker Before Taking Formal Action.," *New York Times*, 25 Aug. 1917.
[306] Ibid.

regiments] are not objectionable to the white population because they understand conditions and are reconciled to them."[307] Soldiers who came of age within the constrains of Jim Crow segregation were not "objectionable" because white populations believed they could still exert authority over these soldiers, thereby effectively reducing the chance they would resist and attempt to overthrow Jim Crow. That control guaranteed the survival of the status quo, and reinforced white superiority and black inferiority. White Southern elites opposed African American soldiers from Regular Army regiments, since these men "are from all parts of the country and some of them are inclined at times to assert themselves in a way that is bound to bring a clash with whites."[308] These white Southern elites, then, effectively labeled black Regular Army regiments as "outsiders," determined to create trouble where none had supposedly existed previously. Refusal to adhere to Jim Crow, but instead resisting it, required segregated Regular Army regiments to become the enemy, one who might encourage other African Americans in the region to challenge Jim Crow more than they currently were.

The NAACP took immediate interest in the events leading up to and including the Houston riot, and just like the East St. Louis race riot, first published articles from various newspapers discussing the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment in *The Crisis*. Some newspapers, like the *Buffalo Express* claimed the Twenty-fourth included some of the most disciplined and capable soldiers in the military, while the *Shreveport Journal* (Louisiana) stated, "The swaggering of a Negro trooper in uniform is not a thing to be desired or to be suffered silently."[309] The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, a relatively conservative newspaper, even sympathized, however slightly, with the Twenty-fourth Infantry, asserting, "Race prejudice, race hatred, show their ripened fruits when strong men of the race that has been looked down upon, armed with

[307] Ibid.
[308] Ibid.
[309] "Houston," *The Crisis* 14, no. 6 (Oct. 1917): 302-303.

modern weapons and filled with deep resentment for the past, face what they regard as the wrongs and what they know are insults from men not so well armed of the race that regards itself as the superior one."[310] The *Eagle* also condemned the Twenty-fourth's actions, and acknowledged swift punishment must be meted out, but also indicated that lynch mobs should face the same justice and punishment for their actions.[311] While not all of these newspapers reacted similarly to the Houston riot, the variation of interpretation, even from traditionally conservative papers, was telling. In many cases, regional prejudices influenced perception of the incident and African American soldiers in general. Beliefs concerning African American soldiers were solidified in some regions, encouraging continued resistance to their inclusion in the United States military, while their actions evoked sympathy and understanding when racial discrimination and subjugation was taken into account.

The NAACP continued their efforts to gather information concerning the Houston riot, sending an investigative reporter to Houston in the aftermath to gain information regarding what prompted these men to march through a neighborhood and fire indiscriminately. The organization's investigator, Martha Greuning, concluded that the riot occurred primarily due to "the habitual brutality of the white police officers of Houston in their treatment of colored people."[312] Greuning asserted that two causes also contributed to the riot: "(1) the mistake made in not arming members of the colored provost guard or military police, (2) lax discipline at Camp Logan which permitted promiscuous visiting at the camp and made drinking and immorality possible among the soldiers."[313]

[310] Ibid, 303.
[311] Ibid.
[312] Martha Gruening, "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: Houston. An N. A. A. C. P. Investigation," *The Crisis* 15, no. 1 (Nov. 1917): 14.
[313] Ibid.

The combination of the two subsequent factors with discrimination, segregation, and mistreatment by law enforcement inevitably instigated a conflict between members of the Twenty-fourth and white Houstonians, something that most likely had been brewing for years despite claims that white Houstonians exercised "comparative restraint and self-control" after the riot and the "greater degree of freedom with less danger than in many parts of the South"[314] for black Houstonians. The NAACP's conclusions appeared months after the initial riot, most likely still due to the organization's concerns over the East St. Louis riot, Even so, the NAACP's efforts to investigate the true causes of the riot indicated that the organization, and probably a majority of its audience, considered the initial cause of the riot as reported by the *New York Times* a fallacy. Greuning's examination revealed the riot to be far more complex than initially reported, and reinforced the NAACP's efforts to aid black soldiers as much as possible. The results of Gruening's investigation also allowed lent credence to the NAACP's arguments concerning the serious problems that emerged from Jim Crow, discrimination, subjugation, and racial violence, all components of what led to the Houston riot to begin with.

Houston proved similar to other Southern cities, though, in regard to racial tension and the attempt to maintain a certain amount of control over African Americans by the white populace. Greuning continually received degrading comments from white Houstonians during her interviews regarding the Twenty-fourth being stationed nearby. Many were "willing to endure the colored soldiers if they could be 'controlled.'" White Houstonians interviewed also told Greuning, "Negroes in uniform were inevitably 'insolent' and members of the military police in particular were frequently 'insolent' to the white police of Houston."[315] Regardless of labels like "controlled" and "insolent" in reference African American soldiers, the white

[314] Ibid.
[315] Ibid.

Houstonians Greuning interviewed acknowledged, "the white police force habitually cursed, struck, and otherwise maltreated colored prisoners."[316] White citizens comprehended the inequities in how their white police force treated African Americans, but that recognition only went so far. Under no circumstance were African Americans, soldiers or civilians, to disregard Jim Crow and the societal controls it established in Southern life, nor should any black soldier be "insolent" regardless of what type of treatment they received. White Houstonians considered many of the actions advocated by the NAACP to resist segregation, violence, and discrimination as unwarranted. The message was clear: the white police force and their brutal tactics were not the problem, African American soldiers and resistance to Jim Crow, discrimination, violence, and subjugation were.

White Houstonians' attitude toward African American soldiers compelled the United States military to defer to their preferences, so members of the Twenty-fourth assigned to guard duty would not be armed with anything more than clubs. Due to their lack of weaponry, the Twenty-fourth "were supposed to call on white police officers to make arrests. The feeling is strong among the colored people of Houston that this was the real cause of the riot."[317] One of Gruening's black interviewees claimed that white Southerners preferred to retain their superiority through nefarious methods like keeping African Americans from fighting them "'on equal terms. . . . If Corporal [Charles] Baltimore [one of the two men assaulted by Houston police] had been armed, they would never have dared to set upon him and we should not have had a riot.'"[318] African American soldiers, then, faced seemingly insurmountable discrimination and subjugation in Houston, and remained at the mercy of a brutal white police force and white citizens who preferred them to remain "controlled," all while disarmed. If an incident were to

[316] Ibid.
[317] Ibid.
[318] Ibid.

occur, like the one that caused the Houston riot, black soldiers had no recourse to protect themselves against police officers firing wildly at them for simply asking for explanations concerning an arrest. The disarmament of the Twenty-fourth while on guard duty influenced the NAACP's interest in the Houston riot since the organization continually encouraged African Americans to practice self-defense, yet the men of the Twenty-fourth were denied that ability despite the United States Army requirements that men on guard duty be armed. The NAACP sought, through investigation of the Houston riot, to reiterate restrictions on African American citizenship and masculinity due to Jim Crow, discrimination, violence, and subjugation experienced throughout the United States.

Tension in Houston had been continually building prior to the riot, shattering illusions that Houston was any safer than other Southern city for African Americans. Before the riot, the Houston police chief "issued an order calling on his men to co-operate with the military police, to give them full assistance, and to refer to them as 'colored' and not as 'nigger' officers."[319] The most likely reason behind these efforts included the beating of a citizen and by a police detective a few days prior as well as a separate incident where city detectives assaulted two soldiers. The police chief's attempt to resolve hostilities between white police officers and black soldiers proved useless, as police officers ignored the order, at least in the case of the incident that started the riot. Two police officers, Lee Sparks and Rufe Daniels, entered Sara Travers' home on August 23, 1917 allegedly in pursuit of "a colored fugitive accused of crap-shooting. Failing to find him, they arrested the woman, striking and cursing her and forcing her out into the street only partly clad."[320] As the group waited for a patrol vehicle to pick them up, Private Alonso Edwards approached and attempted to ascertain the situation and inquired as to why the officers

[319] Ibid.
[320] Ibid, 14, 16.

were arresting Travers. Immediately, Sparks and Daniels "beat him [Edwards] to the ground with the butts of their six-shooters, continuing to beat and kick him while he was on the ground, and arrested him."[321] Not long after, military policeman Corporal Charles Baltimore "approached the officers and inquired for Edwards, as it was his duty to do. Sparks immediately opened fire, and Baltimore, being unarmed, fled with the two policemen in pursuit shooting as they ran. . . . [Sparks and Daniels] followed, dragged him out, beat him up, and arrested him."[322] The orders that barred African American soldiers from carrying weapons while on patrol significantly contributed to the destruction and severity of the Houston riot. These soldiers were left utterly defenseless against a police force known for their brutality and racism, something that would have never happened to white soldiers stationed in the same location.

Sparks' and Daniels' brutality and racism were evident when Greuning interviewed Travers, who spoke candidly about her experience that fateful day. After illegally entering Travers' home, Sparks remarked, "'You all God damn nigger bitches. Since these God damn sons of bitches of nigger soldiers came here you are trying to take the town.'"[323] When Travers questioned Sparks' and Daniels' reason for entering her home, Sparks retorted that Travers should never ask why an officer entered her home and ". . . 'we don't allow niggers to talk back to us. We generally whip them down there [Fort Bend County, Texas].' Then he hauled off and slapped me."[324] The two officers then dragged Travers from her home partially clothed, and waited for the patrol wagon. At this point, Private Edwards arrived, and more violence and insults ensued. Travers witnessed Sparks and Daniels beat Edwards, but did not observe the

[321] Ibid, 14-15.
[322] Ibid, 15.
[323] Ibid.
[324] Ibid.

incident with Corporal Baltimore.[325] Sparks and Daniels undoubtedly held multiple preconceived notions concerning African American soldiers and civilians, specifically their interactions with one another. The conversation with Travers in her home strongly implied that the officers thought the Twenty-fourth's presence at Camp Logan corrupted the surrounding community, threatening their perceived control over the African American population. These men preferred African Americans to remain complacent and contrite in their interactions with any whites, and responded violently to ensure that complacency.

One of the most intriguing facts Greuning uncovered in her interviews with Travers, though, was that both the United States Army and the local prosecutor's office, which filed its own charges against roughly thirty soldiers, failed to question her in regard to how the riot itself began. Travers asserted that "no one [military personnel] been out to see me or ask anything. I don't know why they don't come to me. They been to most everyone else around here, and I could tell them the truth."[326] Travers then declared that she did not fear coming forward with information concerning her arrest, "even if Sparks do come back afterwards and do some more to me, but you're the only one yet that's come to ask me."[327] The lack of investigation extended from the United States military to the local law enforcement. When Travers returned to the local prosecutor's office, the prosecutor in charge asked her if she knew anything about the riot beforehand. As soon as she began telling him what happened when Sparks and Daniels entered her home, the prosecutor cut her off, saying "he didn't want to hear anything more about that and he sent me home."[328] Neither the United States Army nor the local prosecutor's office could conduct a proper investigation into the riot without talking to Travers, yet both avoided

[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid, 15-16.
[327] Ibid, 15.
[328] Ibid, 16.

interviewing the primary witness to the entire incident. Without her statement, their investigations would be incomplete, particularly in regard to the necessary action to be taken on the part of local law enforcement to ensure that all citizens received fair treatment from the police force. The NAACP took note of this anomaly, and Greuning's examination provided ample evidence to the organization and its members that the United States military mishandled their initial investigation.

One possible reason for both investigations to ignore Travers' testimony was to shift blame from white police officers to African American soldiers, a more palatable scapegoat to the American public. Once Sparks and Daniels were cited for the incident that began the violence, "a systematic attempt was made to shift the blame for this also on to the colored people."[329] Greuning reported that strange stories frequently arose in local newspapers, pinning the blame solely on "the insolence of the Negro soldiers which in this case took the form of ignoring the 'Jim Crow' regulations of Houston, particularly on the Houston Street cars."[330] Greuning even noted that white citizens lied under oath, claiming that their cars were "boarded by a number of negro soldiers (unarmed) who threw the 'Jim Crow' screen out of the car window, over ran the car, forcing white passengers to get up and give them their seats, and who escaped unscathed to tell the tale."[331] When interrogated further, these people could not even name specific witnesses to these incidents. Some newspapers conducted a slanderous campaign against Travers, claiming she was a dubious character and asserted her arrest was due to her drunkenness and resistance to complying with officers.[332] It remained far easier to blame African American soldiers than admit white police officers' abhorrent behavior and unlawful searches caused such a destructive and

[329] Ibid, 17.
[330] Ibid.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid, 18.

costly race riot. White Houstonians most likely lauded these white policemen for their efforts to exert some form of control over black soldiers and reiterate the role of Jim Crow in daily life throughout Houston through violence. African American soldiers provided the perfect scapegoat for a city that refused to acknowledge its own prejudice and conflicts.

The NAACP's persistent interest and concern for the Twenty-fourth's fate proved crucial for the men tried and convicted of participation in the Houston riot. The organization's investigator, Martha Greuning, continually implied through her publication that the constant discrimination and degradation experienced by black Houstonians and members of the Twenty-fourth created conditions ripe for a violent conflict. These same circumstances existed throughout the United States, and the NAACP worked to eliminate the continual discrimination and degradation infecting all areas of life for African Americans, including members of the Twenty-fourth. Gruening also implicitly stated that the issue of self-defense remained central to what happened and how it might have been avoided. By insisting the Twenty-fourth Infantry remain disarmed during their assignments on guard duty and patrols through the city, white Houstonians produced an unprecedented situation for the United States Army and the soldiers themselves. In the case that tension might arise, members of the Twenty-fourth did not have the ability to physically, and sometimes violently, defend themselves against potential aggression, particularly when the aggressor possesses a deadly weapon and the soldier has nothing more than a club. Additionally, Houston's white police force frequently challenged the authority and legitimacy of military patrols by members of the Twenty-fourth rather than working in tandem, ensuring a constant barrage of degradation and subjugation. While the NAACP remained immersed in the aftereffects of the East St. Louis race riot during the trials and convictions of the accused members of the Twenty-fourth, the organization remained devoted to investigating and

aiding the convicted soldiers whenever possible, and this aid would prove crucial after World War I ended.

In the meantime, the NAACP continued to utilize *The Crisis* to emphasize the blatant hypocrisy of the United States military, government, and society in handling incidents like the Houston riot as well as fighting a war to "make the world safe for democracy." In November 1917, the first of three trials began, with sixty-three defendants of the Twenty-fourth Infantry "charged with mutiny, murder and rioting."[333] The courts martial resulted in convictions for the majority of the men, while thirteen received death sentences. The United States Army carried out the executions quickly in December 1917: "Thirteen young, strong men; soldiers who have fought for a country which was never wholly theirs; men born to suffer ridicule, injustice, and, at last, death itself."[334] *The Crisis* acknowledged that their protest arose not from the conviction and punishment of these men, as they disobeyed orders and broke the law, but the NAACP and its publication objected to the hypocrisy of the entire situation:

> But we can protest and we do protest against the shameful treatment which these men and which we, their brothers, receive all our lives, and which our fathers received, and our children await; and above all we raise our clenched hands against the hundreds of thousands of white murderers, rapists, and scoundrels who have oppressed, killed, ruined, robbed, and debased their black fellow men and fellow women, and yet, today, walk scot-free, unwhipped of justice, uncondemned by millions of their white fellow citizens, and unrebuked by the President of the United States.[335]

The NAACP and *The Crisis* unmistakably wondered how one group received such a harsh punishment for their crimes, yet another group remained free and clear for their actions, which were just as unlawful and destructive. Their legitimate critique of the justice system prevalent in the United States civilian and military courts underscored yet again the second-class citizenship

[333] "24th Infantrymen on Trial for Riot Started by Police Brutality," *Chicago Defender*, 10 Nov. 1917. And "63 Negro Soldiers Tried for Rioting: Witnesses Describe Events That Led Up to Houston Outbreak," *Atlanta Constitution*, 4 Nov. 1917.
[334] "Thirteen," *The Crisis* 15, no. 3 (Jan. 1918): 114.
[335] Ibid.

suffered by African Americans. No matter their actions versus that of whites, the justice system, both civilian and military, considered the African American criminal much more problematic than the white criminal, who in many cases, rarely faced charges for their violent rapes and murders. Denying citizens democracy within the United States then asking those same citizens to enter a draft that would inevitably force them to fight in a war to "make the world safe for democracy" was the height of hypocrisy, one that the NAACP continually exposed in the hopes that the federal government would take notice and change tactics to correct the imbalance.

In the aftermath of the first thirteen executions, newspapers across the country reacted in vastly different ways to the results of the first courts martial and subsequent mass trial, and *The Crisis* constantly published these varying responses. *The Crisis* even noted that at times the press throughout the United States remained quite silent on the matter, but a few publications continued to discuss the results of the Houston riot, including the *Little Rock Daily News*. The newspaper, based in Arkansas, asserted its astonishment that any of the men tried in the first round of courts martial received anything other than a death sentence. The *Little Rock Daily News* argued, "The southern white man is the only man who understands the Negro, and he alone can control him. The Negro must be ruled with a rod of iron and never once be allowed to lose sight of his proper place. . . . It is a truth of history that the Negro was a more valuable and a more loyal citizen in the old antebellum condition of involuntary servitude."[336] According to this local Little Rock, Arkansas paper, without some level of white Southern control like Jim Crow, African Americans would resist their assigned identity in American society, bringing Southern white elite fears to life by asserting their masculinity, rights as citizens, and independence. Instead, slavery remained the preferred condition, and should have been retained as it exerted the most accurate and efficient control over African Americans.

[336] "The Houston Horror," *The Crisis* 15, no. 4 (Feb. 1918): 187.

Not all publications applied the same tone as the *Little Rock Daily News*, as some considered the secrecy and swiftness of the executions suspicious. *The Crisis* noted that the *New York Evening Post* empathized with the African American community's shock over the quick executions. More specifically, the publication stated that the convictions and executions occurred so rapidly and covertly that the men convicted had no opportunity to appeal the decision or petition for clemency to forestall their executions. The *New York Evening Post* even acknowledged that clemency should be considered, since "the provocation suffered by the Negro criminals was great; the white police of Houston had maltreated the women of the Negro portion of the city, the men themselves had been brutally handled, their officers had been insulted."[337] Some newspapers, including the *Buffalo Express* of New York, went even farther, sarcastically addressing the hypocrisy inherent in Jim Crow segregation existing in a country that promoted democracy for all: "Being soldiers, the dead men should have learned to keep their tempers. Being Negroes in a Southern State, they should have learned this, anyway, for their own personal safety. Then they might have saved their lives, though they lost their self-respect."[338] The *Buffalo Express* then asserted that the War Department must begin treating African American soldiers with respect and equality accorded to white American soldiers, claiming that if the military could not adequately protect black soldiers from white violence in the South, then it should not assign them to such dangerous positions to begin with.[339]

Both the *New York Evening Post* and the *Buffalo Express* expressed sentiments continually articulated by the NAACP and *The Crisis* for the entirety of World War I. The public perception of the swift trials, convictions, and executions or life imprisonment of members of the Twenty-fourth reflected the continual miscarriage of justice experienced by African American

[337] Ibid, 188.
[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.

civilians and military personnel. Journalists with the *New York Evening Post*, the *Buffalo Express*, and *The Crisis*, among other publications, considered the quick manner in which the military tried and convicted these men, despite little evidence to conclusively prove that they participated in the riot, unjust and deplorable. At the same time, failing to acknowledge that racism and Jim Crow lay at the heart of the riot meant that only African American soldiers faced trial, many of whom most likely did not participate willingly in the incident to begin with. The basis of Jim Crow remained control over minds, bodies, and souls, intent on retaining a society with white supremacy at its center. Any challenge to that supposed supremacy and white privilege represented a threat to traditional values and a way of life that had existed since the antebellum era. Maintaining this society insinuated that African Americans must remain subjugated and complacent after they "learned to keep their tempers" when experiencing segregation and degradation. In a society that revered and praised white soldiers for their sacrifices and loyalty to their country, any black man in uniform only experienced disrespect, discrimination, subjugation, violence, and insults because he dared assert his masculinity, citizenship, and equality through his service and sacrifice for his country.

As the war continued through 1918, the NAACP continued its activism and support for African American soldiers and their rights, insisting that their citizenship not be denied by the War Department or their commanding officers. Insults aimed at African American soldiers continued, though, and in some cases became far more prevalent in 1918 than ever before. W. E. B. Du Bois even asserted, "As Negroes, we propose to fight for the right, no matter what our treatment may be; but we submit to the public that intentional injustice toward colored soldiers is the poorest investment that this nation can make just now."[340] The continued injustices included the forced retirement of Colonel Charles Young, the lack of artillery training for black officers

[340] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Editorial: The Negro and the War Department," *The Crisis* 16, no. 1 (May 1918): 7.

despite their clear advantage as educated men, the refusal by some white officers to protect the rights of black soldiers under their command, and the insistence that only white doctors examine white men selected in the draft. The forced retirement of Colonel Young was acutely troublesome to Du Bois, as the War Department's Examining Board recommended that Young remain on active service, a recommendation initially approved by the Secretary of War, who then assigned Young to active duty. Active service and active duty described two different military designations, and the Adjutant General, "knowing the difference between 'active service' and 'active duty' immediately retired Colonel Young from active *service* and placed him on active *duty* with nothing to do."[341] Young's retirement, forced upon him for unknown reasons, appeared highly suspicious to Du Bois. The forced retirement also seemed in line with previous War Department policies, though, especially in regard to the possibility that an African American soldier might obtain a high enough rank to be assigned command of white soldiers, a situation Jim Crow attempted to prevent in society, and the military sought to emulate.

Forcing a man into retirement created tense conditions between the War Department and the NAACP, similar to the tension that arose over the War Department's oversight in securing the 92nd Division "necessary persons of technical training" for various assignments. By 1918, few African American soldiers received training on artillery despite the necessity of artillery regiments in combat throughout Europe. Military divisions typically included at least a few regiments devoted entirely to artillery, yet the 92nd Division included no artillery regiments. The division's highly educated and skilled officers were not trained in artillery, while "Farmers from the South, largely illiterate and without mechanical skill or education, were assigned to the artillery in the first draft."[342] Du Bois argued a simple solution existed: transfer trained and

[341] Ibid.
[342] Ibid.

educated black men to new divisions. The War Department denied these transfers, though, leaving the 92nd Division in a precarious position that might lead to complete and utter failure.[343] Without presenting the 92nd Division with the proper training for all possible positions to ensure a successful division, Du Bois ultimately concluded that the War Department attempted to ensure the 92nd's failure due to racial tensions in the United States during the war years.

Simultaneously, African American soldiers under the command of General Charles C. Ballou experienced restrictions upon their movements when stationed in certain areas due to Jim Crow, discrimination, and subjugation. These restrictions suggested soldiers "refrain from going where their presence will be resented" after a black soldier "entered a theatre, as he undoubtedly had a legal right to do, and precipitated trouble by making it possible to allege race discrimination in the seat he was given."[344] General Ballou accepted that the theatre restricted his soldier's legal rights, yet stated, "the sergeant is guilty of the greater wrong in doing *anything* no matter how *legally* correct that will provoke race animosity."[345] Ballou's intentions were clear: prevent another Houston riot at all costs and maintain order among the troops, even if that meant restricting the rights of his own soldiers. Du Bois disagreed, and declared, "We are aware how careful colored men have to be everywhere in the United States in 'stirring up' race antagonism, but the greatest danger is not that they will carelessly bring on race antagonism, but rather that they will invite it by submitting to intolerable insult."[346] The language in Ballou's order to restrict the movement of African American soldiers under his command allocated blame solely upon the soldier choosing to enter a theatre that practiced discrimination in its seating arrangements rather than upon the theatre and its owners. Instead of sympathizing with the

[343] Ibid, 7-8.
[344] Ibid, 8.
[345] Ibid.
[346] Ibid.

victim of discrimination, Ballou asserted that the incident "should never have occurred and would not have occurred had the sergeant placed the general good above his personal pleasure and convenience."[347] Blatantly referring to the soldier's motivations as selfish created an atmosphere of tension, frustration, and a reinforcement of Jim Crow segregation. Black soldiers understood that complicit acceptance of Jim Crow and discrimination only ensured further degradation at the hands of white Americans, leading to worsening tensions and more incidents like the recent one in Houston.

Just as commanding officers did everything in their power to defer to racism and Jim Crow laws and customs at bases throughout the United States, the War Department itself changed policies and reassigned personnel to comply with complaints concerning the ethnicity of doctors examining recent draftees. At an office in Detroit, Michigan, roughly twenty-three African American doctors, "graduates of some of the foremost medical schools of the country and that they have long practised [sic] among both colored and white people," performed examinations on white draftees. The local Exemption Board, appointed to examine potential soldiers in the region by the War Department, received a letter from the Adjutant General's Office, ordering the practice of African American doctors conducting the physical examinations of white draftees to end immediately.[348] Regardless of their education or experience, the Adjutant General refused to allow African American doctors to perform examinations on white draftees, even if most of the draftees had not complained about the experience. The removal of African American doctors from their positions represented yet another method in which the United States military attempted to reinforce Jim Crow segregation, discrimination, and white supremacy. No matter how experienced or educated an African American doctor was, he was

[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid.

still deemed incapable of accurately examining drafted white men, whose education usually paled in comparison.

As the war came to a close, the NAACP and *The Crisis* modified their interactions with and coverage of African American soldiers. Instead of concentrating solely on a journalistic interpretation of the black military experience during World War I by publishing articles in *The Crisis*, the organization's main chapter shifted to advocate more thoroughly on behalf of African American soldiers. The NAACP's main headquarters in New York began creating files in their extensive record collection labeled "Military" that contained any and all documents related to African American soldiers. That documentation included letters arriving directly from African American soldiers, stationed overseas and at various bases in the United States. Depending upon the content of the letters, the NAACP either filed them without taking further action, sent copies to local branches where the events or soldiers were from, or forwarded the information to various military personnel, including the War Department. Even without direct documentation in all cases, the NAACP clearly frequently advocated on behalf of African American soldiers, encouraging not only their enlistment in the United States military, but also their activism through the organization's publications, petitions, and archival records. Instead of documenting the information solely in *The Crisis*, the NAACP began asserting their influence with the War Department and in other various political circles to assist African American soldiers in their struggle to end Jim Crow, discrimination, subjugation, and racial violence in the United States military.

By the end of World War I, various letters arrived from soldiers and their family members at NAACP headquarters in New York, New York concerning the treatment of African American soldiers. In one case, Joseph C. Andrews penned a letter to W. E. B. Du Bois

concerning Andrews' brother, Arthur I. Andrews, and the potential discriminatory practices at an officer training school in Taylor, Kentucky. Joseph Andrews requested that the NAACP investigate that particular camp since, "Out of a total number of 86 men who started 33 I believe have been commissioned. My information is that a larger number should have been graduated according to the records they made."[349] Andrews stated that, according to information obtained from his brother, the commander "virtually admitted that pressure was brought to bear upon him not to graduate any more."[350] Instead, the commander, whom Andrews identified as Captain Carl M. Fauto, noted that his military commanders encouraged him to prevent as many commissions among African American soldiers as possible. Andrews asked Du Bois to send a representative of the NAACP to investigate the incident, offering a $50 donation in exchange. His interest in the possible discrimination at the Kentucky camp arose because his brother, Arthur, failed to obtain a commission despite his high marks that qualified him for one. Finally, Andrews requested that Du Bois "treat this letter as <u>confidential</u> as its publication would cause trouble for my brother who is subject to all the rules and regulations of the Army."[351]

The NAACP filed follow-up paperwork with this letter, so it is unclear whether Du Bois and the NAACP sent an investigator, but based upon their past actions, publications, and other documentation concerning discrimination in the military, it seems likely that the organization did investigate the situation. In any case, the accusations included in Andrews's letter provided a glimpse into the conditions experienced in officer training camps and military policy concerning increasing the quantity of African American officers. If Captain Fauto received pressure to limit the number of commissions rather than graduate every cadet that earned qualifying marks, the

[349] Joseph C. Andrews, Hyde Park, MA to W. E. B. Du Bois, New York, NY, 23 Sept., 1918, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 1, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[350] Ibid.
[351] Ibid.

repercussions of such actions would be felt for years within segregated regiments in the United States military as well as African American communities. When the NAACP encouraged communities to send their young, educated black men to these officer training camps before the War Department limited them to only enlisted military personnel, the support implied that these young black men, if they earned the position, would become officers in the United States military and earn commands over African American soldiers. Andrews's letter instead insinuated that the United States military still dreaded the possibility of too many black officers who might, one day, command white soldiers. The alleged incident at the Taylor, Kentucky training camp was quite reminiscent of the forced retirement of Colonel Charles Young. Rather than commissioning all men qualified, as would most likely occur in white officer training camps, some men, though highly capable, experienced discrimination and subjugation to ensure white supremacy reigned in the United States military chain of command.

After the war ended in November 1918, African American soldiers frequently sought aid from the NAACP in addressing grievances rather than pursuing redress through official military channels, indicating their trust in the NAACP and the organization's growing influence in the United States. Less than a month after the armistice ended combat in Europe, an unidentified black soldier stationed at Camp Grant in Rockford, Illinois wrote to the NAACP concerning experiences with racism, degradation, and subjugation at the camp. The soldier claimed that he and his fellow soldiers were "treated like dogs. It is a shame that after our boys have gone to France and gave their all for democracy's triumph that the survivals [sic] are treated the way they are treating us in the organization. We are under southern officers which have no feelings for

colored men whatsoever."[352] The unidentified soldier then asserted that he and his fellow soldiers at Camp Grant experienced verbal abuse and threats of violence, among "other humiliating things we have to swallow with no one to appeal to."[353] The unnamed soldier's final point concerned leave and discharges from the military. He reported that in some instances, his fellow servicemen remained in the military despite their families needing them at home, and there seemed to be no end in sight or any information about when their regiment might be mustered out. He also stated that, "They won't even grant you a short furlough to go home if you receive a telegram from home that your wife or mother is dying or sick."[354]

The unidentified soldier's complaints concerning treatment at Camp Grant appeared quite similar to other instances throughout the United States during the World War I era. His disdain for Southern officers was reminiscent of other complaints issued by many soldiers for years. The common misconception in both the military and society that only white Southern men knew how to properly command African American soldiers created far more tension than it solved. Most white Southern officers reinforced segregation and subjugation within their regiments, and the South's proclivity to fear educated and trained African American veterans encouraged Southern white officers to do so. The chance that these veterans might challenge Jim Crow, subjugation, and the society elite white Southerners worked to build was too much for some officers, leading them to verbally abuse and physically threaten African American soldiers under their command. If violence and the threat of violence worked throughout the South as a way to maintain control over the African American population, white officers from the South reasoned it could also be used to keep black soldiers in their assigned societal identity, as designated by Jim Crow. The

[352] A Colored Soldier of Camp Grant, Ill, Rockford, IL to W. E. B. Du Bois, New York, NY, 9 Dec., 1918, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 1, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Ibid.

unnamed soldier's last complaints implied he misunderstood the process of demobilization after World War I. In all reality, it would take much longer than a month to demobilize a military consisting of over four million personnel, so to expect a discharge within a month of the armistice was unreasonable.

Reports from various camps continually arrived at NAACP headquarters throughout the rest of the year, detailing various grievances with circumstances at military bases throughout the United States, and the organization continued to advocate for improved conditions for African American soldiers. In December 1918, the NAACP was notified of deplorable conditions at Camp Alexander in Newport News, Virginia, including the lack of sufficient shelter from the weather, discrimination in assignments and treatment by white officers, and few promotions afforded to those qualified for them. Sgt. Bernard O. Henderson, stationed at Camp Alexander, requested that the NAACP send an investigator to their post because it "is composed of men in the Stevedore and Labor organizations, and they feel as if they are the most neglected soldiers of color."[355] Sergeant Henderson's initial complaint with Camp Alexander's conditions consisted of the inadequate shelter provided for members of his regiment, claiming numerous deaths occurred the previous winter due to exposure. Henderson reported that men in his regiment "were forced to sleep in tents on the bare ground with a little straw for bedding, and with one blanket for covering. It was a common occurance [sic] to go around in the morning and drag men out frozen to death."[356] While Henderson and his fellow soldiers undoubtedly expected some harsh conditions during their enlistment, enduring the constant threat of exposure due to inadequate shelter was entirely unacceptable. Multiple deaths could have been prevented had the

[355] Bernard O. Henderson, Newport News, VA to W. E. B. Du Bois, New York, NY, 18 Dec., 1918, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 1, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[356] Ibid.

commanding officer insisted the military provide adequate shelter and supplies to keep soldiers alive during a harsh winter.

The military eventually arrested and discharged the commanding officer who allowed these conditions to continue, but when his successor took over, not much improved for black soldiers at Camp Alexander. Many soldiers stationed there believed President Wilson's ideal of democracy to be a "farce," according to Sergeant Henderson, possibly due to the fact that the camp included a number of skilled laborers and highly educated men working as stevedores. Henderson noted that the labor battalions encamped alongside these stevedores were mostly illiterate and "were sent here for overseas, but were found unfit for overseas service, and in some cases are unfit for any branch of the service, but are kept here and forced to work. No provisions are made here for night schools as in some camps, and if there was, after the men toil from morn till night they would have no desire to attend."[357] Sergeant Henderson's description of the men stationed at Camp Alexander implied drastic variances among the soldiers themselves due to educational opportunities available to them prior to enlistment. Simultaneously, Henderson indirectly asserted that these uneducated black soldiers, "unfit for overseas service," remained in the military as little more than slave labor. Henderson's description of the limited educational opportunities for illiterate black soldiers at Camp Alexander was also quite telling. Uneducated black soldiers had no chance to obtain an education of sorts at Camp Alexander, which guaranteed that these men would remain uneducated when they finally received honorable discharges from the military, contributing to the continued subjugation of African Americans within Jim Crow. An uneducated populace meant fewer voters, especially in the South, and secured the continuation of a minority of elite white Southerners in political and economic power. The NAACP's interest in the events at Camp Alexander stemmed from these inequities,

[357] Ibid.

as the organization continuously encouraged educational opportunities for African Americans. The limitations on educational opportunities at Camp Alexander through what appeared to be deplorable conditions ensured the NAACP would take action to remedy these conditions.

Despite the increase in black commissioned officers within the United States military during World War I, Sergeant Henderson reported that all officers at Camp Alexander were white, as well as the majority of the non-commissioned officers, safeguarding a power structure with white men maintaining control over black soldiers in all aspects of their lives. According to Henderson, the non-commissioned officers at Camp Alexander "have no interest whatever in the men. They only seek to get as much work as they can from the men to promote their advancement which is easy for a white face in the camp. The men are cursed, kicked and often beaten. They are reported, but the matter is soon squashed."[358] When white commissioned officers cursed at black soldiers and black non-commissioned officers stepped in to reprimand the former for their inappropriate language, the latter "was arrested and charged with trying to incite mutiny among the men."[359] The incidents Henderson described came as no surprise to the NAACP, particularly since the organization had insisted since the start of the war that the United States military appoint African American officers to command African American soldiers. Had the United States military done so to begin with, many instances like those that Henderson detailed would not have occurred. Henderson's statements implied that white commissioned and non-commissioned officers still viewed command over black soldiers as a punishment, and they continually targeted black soldiers due to their resentment over their command.

Henderson's letter to the NAACP was not complete without mention of Jim Crow segregation and discrimination in regard to rank advancement among African American soldiers

[358] Ibid.
[359] Ibid.

stationed at Camp Alexander, something one almost came to expect when examining the United States military during the World War I era. Sergeant Henderson reported that highly educated members of his regiment remained at the rank of sergeant and could go no higher, because "he has been told that his color prevents him from being promoted."[360] Jim Crow made its way into Camp Alexander in other ways as well, with signs designating different areas for white soldiers and black soldiers. Henderson declared, "On the cars that run into the camp, are daily disturbances on account of Jim Crowism. Serious results are sure to come to this section for the men are growing desperate. Guards are placed on the cars to see that we are Jim Crowed."[361] No matter what African American soldiers accomplished in uniform, the United States military structure continually reminded them that those accomplishments meant very little. Instead, white supremacy and Jim Crow endured to guarantee that white soldiers and officers felt some sort of superiority over African American soldiers and officers. African American soldiers could never fully escape the constant humiliation and frustration experienced with Jim Crow, especially when the United States military insisted upon reinforcing those notions within the command structure and on military bases.

While the First World War came to a close, the struggle for equal rights, integration, and democracy in the United States continued, both in the military and American society as a whole. The NAACP's activism and advocacy on behalf of African American soldiers in *The Crisis* and in interactions with the War Department was significant, repeatedly asserting African American soldiers' rights to democracy and equality within the service. Men fighting in the First World War continued to express many of the same concerns and trepidations as those who fought in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, concerned with the lack of black

[360] Ibid.
[361] Ibid.

officers as well as the use of Jim Crow within the United States military rather than ensuring equality, democracy, and assertions of masculinity among men serving the country in a time of war. Their frustrations and desire for change sometimes led these men to write to the NAACP for aid, as they believed that the organization's clout within Washington, D. C. and their continued advocacy of soldiers' rights could help them in their time of need since sometimes going up the normal chain of command failed to affect change. In the end, though, the NAACP continued to aid African American soldiers in every way the organization possibly could, and that would become crucial in the first few years after World War I due to white violence when black veterans returned home in the South and as imprisoned members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment sought pardons for their convictions.

CHAPTER 5: 'I FOUGHT FOR YOU IN FRANCE':

DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE, AND THE LAW IN POST-WAR AMERICA

In late November 1919, Joe Johnson, a white Southerner, assaulted African American veteran Rev. George A. Thomas in Dadeville, Alabama. In December 1919, Reverend Thomas informed the NAACP of the assault, which occurred on Nov. 25, 1919, "for no other reason than that I wore Uncle Sam's uniform."[362] Reverend Thomas claimed that witnesses to his assault observed Johnson assault at least two other African American veterans while in uniform. After the assault, Thomas wrote to the Inspector General in Washington, D.C., but received no response by the time he penned his letter to the NAACP. Thomas then requested advice from the NAACP on how to address the situation.[363] The reverend's letter, initially addressed to Moorfield Storey, eventually reached Assistant Secretary Walter White's desk, eliciting an immediate response from White. Due to the small size of the town where the assault occurred, White advised Thomas to write to the Inspector General in Washington, D.C. once more, "stating the facts in your case again, reminding him that you had already written to him about the matter and asking for action in your case."[364] White also asked Thomas to write to the secretary of the NAACP branch in Montgomery, Alabama due to his proximity to and knowledge of the area near Dadeville.[365]

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[362] Rev. George A. Thomas, Montgomery, AL to Moorfield Storey, New York, NY, 26 Dec., 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 7, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[363] Ibid.
[364] Walter White, New York, NY to Rev. George A. Thomas, Union City, TN, 31 Dec., 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 7, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[365] Ibid.

It is telling that Reverend Thomas's first attempt to obtain some sort of justice was through the Inspector General and then through the NAACP. While not documented in the few letters still in existence about the incident, Thomas did not appear to initially approach law enforcement officials in Dadeville. His attempts to gain redress first from the General Inspector and then from the NAACP implied a mistrust of law enforcement and the belief that he would not receive justice if he went through the local legal system. The NAACP remained the only recourse available to Thomas for possible legal protection or justice for instances of white violence in the South. Reverend Thomas most likely assumed that local authorities would ignore the case or ensure further humiliation and degradation after the incident rather than properly conduct an investigation. The incident challenged Thomas's right to self-defense, masculinity, and citizenship since he most likely feared retribution for physically defending himself, but also because a minute possibility of legal recourse existed at the local level. Based on the limited information available, it can be inferred that Thomas did not physically defend himself. If he had, the situation could easily have resulted in Thomas's lynching. Instead, he stood on his right to defend himself when attempting to take legal recourse against his attacker.

Other African American veterans experienced far more violent encounters than Reverend Thomas, typically resulting in lynchings throughout the South after the war ended. Black veterans were targeted for a variety of reasons. Their military training meant they could physically defend themselves, and teach other African American civilians to do the same. Many black veterans viewed their uniform itself as providing them a modicum of respect among their fellow citizens, both white and black, for their service to the country. White Americans also feared African American veterans' desire for equality, especially from veterans returning from France, where most black soldiers experienced improved racial relations with the French

population as compared to what awaited them at home. Lynchings, then, became the primary way whites reasserted their perceived authority and superiority over African American veterans considered "uppity" for their claim to basic rights as citizens.

Reverend Thomas's assault and avoidance of local law enforcement for justice represented one of the least violent encounters between African American soldiers and veterans with white violence and a problematic legal system. After World War I ended, most African American soldiers needed to decide either to leave the service or reenlist. A few men desired reenlistment and the chance to become an officer in the United States military, while most returned to private sector employment as a vehicle for social and economic mobility. The veterans returning to their civilian lives experienced tensions upon arriving home, especially in the South. White Southerners sought to reinforce the social, economic, and political structure of the region when African American veterans resumed their civilian lives. In numerous cases, the reinforcement of Jim Crow, discrimination, and subjugation resulted in violence and lynchings. A small contingent of veterans, like the men arrested after the Houston riot in 1917, sought release from life sentences after what they believed to be unjust convictions.

Before World War I, African Americans who sought redress for grievances had no viable organization to turn to for legal aid in hostile situations that led to lynchings or wrongful imprisonment. After the war, African Americans, both military and civilian, searching for help turned to the NAACP as a way to obtain answers, gain legal assistance, or to petition for a pardon. Prior to the creation of the NAACP, African Americans typically did not have enough political clout to influence the rulings of the military courts or the United States military. Once created, the NAACP provided a reliable means of protest and petition for African American soldiers and veterans. The organization also gave veterans a way to challenge the decisions of the

United States military and military courts, and investigated violence against veterans, including lynching, thoroughly. The NAACP also continually investigated multiple incidents involving African American military personnel after World War I, sending chapter members to various locations to document these incidents and what resulted from their aftermath. Citizenship and military service remained inextricably linked, and their exemplary service made African American veterans viable test cases to challenge the military legal system. War Department officials and white officers stifled African American citizenship and masculinity, and African American veterans became targets for white violence in the aftermath of World War I due to their military training, intelligence, and service. African American veterans continually experienced discrimination and limitations on citizenship outside the military after World War I in their encounters within and outside the legal system. Their manhood, citizenship, and right to self-defense were challenged on a daily basis by white violence, whether through the act of lynching or excessive punishments for alleged participation in race riots, experiencing little to no legal protection against violence and recriminations.

After World War I, some cases of discrimination and challenges to citizenship brought to the NAACP's attention included multiple lynchings of African American veterans. Most, if not all, cases reflected the failure of the legal system to protect African American veterans or to persecute their attackers. One of the earliest cases investigated by the NAACP included when veteran Bud Johnson faced a lynch mob near Milton, Florida on March 14, 1919 for supposedly attacking a white woman in the adjoining town of Pace.[366] Newspapers reported that Johnson attacked a white woman, resulting in a white mob removing him from the sheriff's custody. The mob took Johnson "back to the scene of his crime and [was] identified by his victim before being

[366] "Negro is Burned By Florida Mob: Accused of Attacking a White Woman, Bud Johnson is Tied to Stake and Cremated Near the Scene of Crime," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 15 Mar. 1919. And "9 Ex-Soldiers Lynched in 1919," *The Chicago Defender*, 3 Jan. 1920.

burned to death."[367] In response to Johnson's lynching, the NAACP's John R. Shillady sent Florida Gov. Sidney J. Catts a telegram requesting justice for Johnson's untimely death.[368] Governor Catts responded, stating that local law enforcement took actions to protect Johnson, but the mob overtook the local sheriff and it resulted in Johnson's death. The governor argued that Shillady's request for justice in this case was impossible, "for when a negro brute, or a white man, ravishes a white woman in the State of Florida, there is no use having the people, who see that this man meets death, brought to trial, even if you could find who they are; the citizenship will not stand for it."[369] Finally, Governor Catts chastised Shillady and the NAACP for saying lynchings disgraced the United States as a whole. The governor maintained that if Shillady and the NAACP devoted as much time teaching African Americans to avoid violently attacking white women and police officers as they did decrying lynchings, fewer lynchings would occur. The Florida governor also implied that racial tensions would also decrease if the NAACP shifted their attention to preventing black men from raping white women. Governor Catts asserted, "I have tried to be fair to your people at all times but I do not believe in such maudlin sentiment as this. If any man, white or black, should dishonor one of my family, he would meet my pistol square from the shoulder, and every white man in this South, who is a red-blooded American, feels the same as I do."[370]

The Florida governor's scathing response to Shillady's demand for justice displayed a lack of empathy for lynching victims, the circumstances of their deaths, and the rejection of arresting whites involved in this form of violence. It also showed a lack of self-awareness and

[367] "Negro is Burned By Florida Mob: Accused of Attacking a White Woman, Bud Johnson is Tied to Stake and Cremated Near the Scene of Crime," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 15 Mar. 1919.
[368] "Two Letters: One From Gov. Catts (Fla.) Relative to the Lynching of Bud Johnson and Joe Walker; the Other From John R. Shillady, Sec'y N. A. A. C. P.," *The Chicago Defender*, 19 Apr. 1919.
[369] Sidney J. Catts, Tallahassee, FL to John R. Shillady, New York, NY, 18 Mar. 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-351 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[370] Ibid.

knowledge of the incident itself. His reference to "you people" meant he believed Shillady was an African American, yet Shillady was one of the numerous white officials in the NAACP. Governor Catts's ignorance of actual facts in the case showed a blatant disregard for the truth, ensuring that rumors and stereotypes would direct any investigation into Johnson's lynching. Governor Catts's discussion of self-defense only extended to his white constituents, as he implied that justice for Johnson, and black soldiers in general, equated to threatening white masculinity. Instead, the governor clearly encouraged a mob mentality to ensure white masculinity remained intact. Catts's assertions simultaneously suggested that citizenship did not extend to his African American constituents, therefore any legal protection or redress for crimes including murder would not extend to African Americans.

Governor Catts's response to Shillady did not end the NAACP's interest in justice for Johnson, and correspondence between the two men continued beyond Catts's furious reply. Shillady answered Governor Catts's letter, reiterating the call for justice for Bud Johnson and calling attention to the lack of law enforcement to stop mob violence from occurring initially. Shillady argued that Johnson should have been protected, if Sheriff Harvell truly understood "the mind of the citizenship of whom you speak… and would have been prepared… to protect any prisoner at the hands of the mob, no matter how infuriated."[371] If Sheriff Harvell knew that citizens would act in this manner, as Governor Catts asserted they would in such a case, the sheriff should have anticipated the possibility of violence and assigned extra security for the transportation of Johnson. Instead, Sheriff Harvell allowed the mob to take custody of Johnson, thereby sentencing the man to death. In Shillady's estimation, the sheriff failed in his duty and oath as an officer instead of protecting the prisoner.

[371] John R. Shillady, New York, NY to Sidney J. Catts, Tallahassee, FL, 28 Mar. 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-351 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Shillady then commented on Governor Catts's belief that white Floridians would refuse Johnson a fair trial instead of a violent death, calling it "a serious commentary on our laws."[372] With this assertion, Shillady implied that Governor Catts, and others like him, thought white violence was above the law, and that the law and justice system in Florida did not consider African Americans citizens. If African Americans were not considered citizens, then no reason existed for the state to hunt down their killers. White violence, like that which took Johnson's life, implied that the livelihood and expression of masculinity for the white men involved far outweighed the bad press or criticism that arose from denying a black man the assertion of his own masculinity and a fair trial. Shillady also took the Florida governor to task for essentially justifying Johnson's lynching and his assertion that Shillady commended Johnson's supposed crime when he called Governor Catts's attention to the incident.[373] Shillady argued that no legal justification existed for lynching Johnson because he was accused of shooting a watchman, something easily within the purview of Florida's legal system. "Laws are made to deal with such and the question is whether in this crucial time of the world's history American states shall flaunt their disregard of law in the face of President Wilson at Paris while he is endeavoring to promote the peace of the world."[374] In essence, Shillady implied that numerous American states where lynch law superseded the legal process challenged wartime propaganda calling to make the world safe for democracy during World War I. Wilson's assertion that a war African Americans fought and died in meant to spread democracy abroad ensured a hollow victory for African Americans. When democracy was denied to them at home, why should African American men fight for it abroad?

[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.
[374] Ibid.

The clash between Florida Governor Catts and John R. Shillady did not end the controversy over Bud Johnson's lynching, as the NAACP continued to investigate and add more information to their files on the incident. In July 1919, Rev. H. A. Bryan's witness statement to the state of Florida, filed in the NAACP's archival records, provided a vastly different reason for Johnson's lynching and the possible source of the conflict between Johnson and white men in Pace. When Bud Johnson's father died, he inherited his father's land. Upon Johnson's return from Europe via military furlough, he went to the mill where his father used to work. A few poor whites from the area met Johnson on the edge of the family property, saying that his father's funeral expenses went unpaid and that the land Johnson inherited would cover the costs.[375] Tensions increased when Johnson asked for the monetary value of the debt and the white men refused to give him one, stating that the best way to repay the debt was to leave his father's land. Johnson then tried to make arrangements to settle the debt monetarily, and towards dusk, he reentered the mill. One watchman remained, who warned Johnson to not go through the mill and enter his family's land. The watchman then shot at Johnson, raised an alarm claiming Johnson shot at him, and a large mob of about two hundred and fifty men formed to go after Johnson. Rev. Bryan reported that some in the mob shouted, "'get ropes, get coal oil and gasoline and let us burn this Negro up. He is bigoty. He is saucy. He thinks he is a soldier.'"[376]

Once the mob captured Johnson, they tied a rope around his neck, raised him off the ground, choking and beating him, and then tied him to a limb while some went to obtain buckets of kerosene.[377] Johnson, still dressed in his military uniform, was doused in kerosene and gasoline, and set aflame. A member of the mob asked what justification would be used for the

[375] Deposition of H. A. Bryan, 31 July 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-351 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1.
[376] Ibid, 1-2.
[377] Ibid, 2.

lynching since Johnson had not been discharged from the United States Army yet. Another mob member responded, "'We will say 'rape' and make some woman say 'yes.'"'[378] According to Rev. Bryan, Johnson said just before he died, "'Would that I had died in Germany rather than come back here and die by the hand of the people I was protecting.'"'[379] Someone in the mob responded, "'That is what we sent you over there for.'"[380] Rev. Bryan concluded his deposition by stating that a committee formed to investigate the lynching, which resulted in eleven men supposedly being sentenced to life in prison at Leavenworth.[381] With two separate accounts of Johnson's lynching, which one was more accurate?

In the end, the result remained the same: a soldier lynched due to exaggerated charges. The NAACP both investigated and wrote to prominent politicians in Florida about Johnson's violent death, actively attempting to achieve some form of legal redress or recognition of problems associated with white violence. The NAACP's interest in Johnson's lynching stemmed from the organization's anti-lynching campaign, but also from their increased advocacy for African American soldiers during World War I. Instead of just reporting on the information via *The Crisis*, the NAACP advocated legal repercussions for white violence against African American soldiers and attempted to aid black veterans and their continued struggle against Jim Crow, discrimination, and subjugation. After Shillady sent a telegraph to Governor Catts asking for justice in Johnson's case, the governor responded with vehement opposition to any sort of legal ramifications for the mob's actions. Governor Catts argued that Johnson's terrible crime, attacking a white woman, vindicated white violence against the soldier and justified his inaction in seeking the identities of Johnson's attackers. The governor also attacked Shillady for even

[378] Ibid, 2-3.
[379] Ibid, 4.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid, 4-5.

asking for justice, not only accusing him of sympathy for a criminal but also for not reigning in "wanton, reckless negroes . . . who wander from City to City, County to County and State to State, doing all the devilment that they can."[382]

For the Florida governor, the only solution to the conflict had already occurred: Johnson's death by lynch mob, since that was all the justice Johnson deserved. Johnson's mob even asserted similar sentiments when one member stated, "He thinks he is a soldier."[383] This language implied at least a small recognition of Johnson's continued status as a soldier and the expectation of citizenship rights among soldiers and veterans. Johnson, on furlough while in Florida, was still a member of the United States military at the time of his lynching. Governor Catts also asserted that no citizens would support apprehending any members of the lynch mob, implying that at least the white citizens of Florida not only condoned white violence against African Americans, but would also participate in it wholeheartedly. When Governor Catts asserted that no citizens opposed the lynch mob, he did not take into account African American citizens in the area. This implied the governor did not believe African Americans truly qualified as citizens and therefore would not receive the same protection from the legal system as white citizens. The NAACP, then, continually fought an uphill battle against politicians like the Florida governor, who remained determined to deny African American military personnel and civilians citizenship and equal legal protection.

Of the multiple lynchings that occurred in the aftermath of World War I, one of the most brutal occurred in Sylvester, Georgia in early April 1919. Daniel Mack, a recently discharged

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[382] Sidney J. Catts, Tallahassee, FL to John R. Shillady, New York, NY, 18 Mar. 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-351 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[383] Deposition of H. A. Bryan, 31 July 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-351 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1-2.

soldier who just returned home from overseas, walked down the busy streets of Sylvester on April 5, 1919 and happened to brush against a white man. A fight ensued, resulting in local police arresting only Mack, not the white man he fought with. Two days later, Mack was tried and sentenced to thirty days on a chain gang with no alternative such as a monetary fine.[384] During the trial, Mack defended himself, arguing that the white man he fought with initiated the incident. He stated, "I fought for you in France to make the world safe for democracy. I don't think you treated me right in putting me in jail and keeping me there, because I've got as much right as anybody else to walk on a sidewalk."[385] The judge in the case responded, "…this is a white man's country and you don't want to forget it."[386] The exchange between Mack and the judge in charge of his case candidly exhibited the conflict between whites and African Americans over citizenship, manhood, and self-defense. Mack undoubtedly acted in self-defense, and as a result, he was tried and jailed because the judge believed that Mack's assertions of citizenship and manhood challenged the prevailing white social order meant to limit African American men's freedom and liberties.

After Mack's sentencing, news spread throughout Sylvester's African American community about the miscarriage of justice. One of the local leaders organized a petition for Mack's release. A backlash from the local white community followed, with threats of violence aimed at African American leaders. Tensions increased, and on April 14, 1919, a mob fell on the detention center where Mack was held. The mob captured Mack easily and beat him with sticks, clubs, and the butts of revolvers. Unable to defend himself, he was beaten until the mob believed

[384] "Sylvester, Georgia," 1 Aug. 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-374 Folder 6, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Ibid.

him to be dead.[387] Somehow Mack survived the savage beating and crawled to safety. He then went to Atlanta for medical aid, and soon after the NAACP learned of his lynching and launched an investigation. As of July 1919, not a single member of the mob had been taken into custody, but the white population began directing their rage at African American leaders in the Sylvester community who initially petitioned for Mack's release.[388]

The events in Sylvester, Georgia underscored the clash over freedoms concerning citizenship and manhood, exemplifying white violence with no ramifications for the attackers. The fight began over the contested public space of a sidewalk, and over who had the right to walk on the sidewalk. Mack, through his actions as a soldier and defender of the United States, believed he had just as much right to walk on the sidewalk as anyone else. White citizens of Sylvester disagreed, claiming Mack had no right to accidentally brush against any white person despite the large crowds and limited space in which to navigate. Denying Mack's right to public space denied his masculinity and citizenship, as the designation public space represented a facet of Jim Crow and its limitations upon bodies. Mack also experienced a biased civilian judicial system, despite his basic rights as a citizen. The NAACP's interest in this case stemmed not only from the violence against a citizen, but also from the blatant disregard for a veteran's citizenship and masculinity. The NAACP investigated cases like Mack's to the fullest extent, leading the organization to contact as many politicians and influential people as possible to gain some sort of redress for these blatant wrongs. In Mack's case, though, the NAACP avoided seeking immediate legal redress or publishing information concerning Mack's lynching in *The Crisis* because his attackers believed him to be dead. Not openly acting on the information protected Mack and his family from further violence or limitations on citizenship.

[387] Ibid, 2.
[388] Ibid, 3.

Mack's and Johnson's situations were by no means exceptional in the two years following World War I, when the NAACP reported that at least eighteen other lynchings of veterans, all successful, transpired between December 1918 and July 1920. Mack's case, though, was one of the few that made it into a civilian court, while most other incidents remained outside the legal system's purview. Less than a month after Mack's lynching, an El Dorado, Arkansas mob lynched Frank Livingston, a veteran discharged from Camp Pike in early May 1919, when locals accused Livingston of murdering his employer Robinson Clay and Clay's wife.[389] According to a report in the *Atlanta Constitution*, Livingston killed the Clays after a quarrel in late May 1919, and then burned their bodies and their home. "A mob of about 150 men, including negroes," tied Livingston to a tree and burned him to death.[390] The newspaper failed to mention what started the quarrel, but did state that Livingston confessed and that no arrests had been made after the lynching.[391] What was significant to the journalist writing the article, though, was the fact that African Americans participated in the lynch mob. The journalist's assertion implied that lynch mob mentality was not relegated to only whites and that, at least in this case, white violence was not the sole cause Livingston's demise. In this particular incident, some Southern journalists attempted to assuage guilt over lynching Livingston through the ambiguousness of the mob's racial composition.

While the *Atlanta Constitution* documented a fairly tame version of Livingston's lynching, the *Chicago Defender* reported far more graphic and violent death for the veteran. The *Defender* reported that Livingston, taken from his home and tied to a tree, experienced torture before he was set afire, with members of the mob slashing at him "with butcher knives and glass

[389] "Five Public Murders in Dixie Go Unpunished," *The Chicago Defender*, 12 Jul. 1919.
[390] "Negro Cremated by Arkansas Mob: Alleged That He Killed His Employer and Latter's Wife – Negroes Aided in Burning the Victim," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 22 May 1919.
[391] Ibid.

bottles."[392] The conflict between the Clays and Livingston, who was recently hired as their farm hand, began over the distribution of chickens. Clay "fired on Livingston and the latter obtained an ax and felled the white man. Mrs. Clay ran to her husband's assistance, wrested the gun from his hand and turned it on Livingston."[393] Livingston's encounter was a clear case of self-defense, and his punishment was far more severe than necessary. He tried to protect himself, fearing death at the hands of his employer, and in his assertion of masculinity, killed his employer and his employer's wife, who also tried to attack him. Livingston used what was on hand, namely an axe, to protect himself against a violent aggressor, and his decision cost him his life.

The *Defender* also reported that the sheriff arrived in time to save Livingston, but did not intervene with the mob of "unmasked white men."[394] This information contradicted that of the *Atlanta Constitution* when discussing the composition of the mob, at least in the initial report. A later article in the *Defender* stated that it was "a mob claimed to have been composed of whites and blacks."[395] The language suggested that the reporter for the *Defender* did not entirely believe reports claiming African Americans participated in Livingston's lynching, implying that the reports were skewed and attempted to implicate innocent people in the mob's actions. The *Defender* was the only newspaper to report the lynch mob as solely comprised of white men, as the *Chicago Plaindealer* and the *New York Sun* reported an interracial mob just as the *Atlanta Constitution* had.

As with the cases of both Daniel Mack and Bud Johnson, the NAACP took an interest in Livingston's lynching, writing to Charles Brough, the governor of Arkansas, about the incident. The NAACP also published a pamphlet in June 1919 entitled, *Burning at Stake in the United*

[392] "Arkansas Mob Burns Soldier at Stake," *The Chicago Defender*, 31 May 1919.
[393] Ibid.
[394] Ibid.
[395] "Five Public Murders in Dixie Go Unpunished," *The Chicago Defender*, 12 Jul. 1919.

States, which chronicled six lynchings involving burning men to death during the first six months of that year, including Livingston's. The pamphlet included both the letter from NAACP Secretary John R. Shillady to Governor Brough, but also a section of a news article from the *New York Evening Post*. Contrary to a report published in the *Chicago Defender*, the *Post* article published in the NAACP pamphlet stated that, "Sheriff Craig and a posse, who attempted to prevent the lynching, arrived just a few minutes too late."[396] The *Post* journalist also noted an interracial mob killed Livingston, and Livingston confessed to killing the Clays before his death, which concurred with most reports of the lynching.[397] Shillady immediately requested "…information concerning steps being taken or proposed by Arkansas authorities…" to find Livingston's lynchers. Shillady told Governor Brough, "This is the second lynching to occur in your state within thirty days, in both of which cases the crime charged was murder for which the laws of Arkansas provide ample punishment."[398] He then urged the governor, a liberal leader who supported resolutions against lynching, "…to proceed energetically in defense of the laws of your state and in condemnation of the barbarity which is increasingly disgracing America."[399]

As of the publication of *Burning at Stake in the United States*, Shillady and the NAACP had received no response from Governor Brough. Despite Brough's apparent personal views on lynching, he took no action and failed to respond to requests for action against the lynch mob who killed Livingston. The NAACP viewed Governor Brough's inaction as inexcusable due to Livingston's status as a veteran, but Brough's response was reminiscent of other politicians' reactions to lynching. By not seeing Livingston, or others like him, as a victim or as a man, the

[396] National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *Burning at Stake in the United States: A record of the public burning by mobs of six men, during the first six months of 1919, in the states of Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, June 1919), 15.
[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid, 15-16.
[399] Ibid, 16.

governor and other politicians found it far easier to justify a lynching based solely on the supposed crime that occurred to cause mob violence initially. Just like the cases of Mack and Johnson, the NAACP investigated Livingston's lynching, the result of white violence. The organization's continued investigations and advocacy on Livingston's behalf and on the behalf of other veterans lynched in the United States only strengthened the NAACP's efforts to guarantee citizenship rights for African American soldiers, as well as discovering avenues for them to assert their masculinity without the constraints of Jim Crow.

While the NAACP investigated the roughly eighteen lynchings of African American soldiers and veterans in the immediate aftermath of World War I, the organization also turned its attention toward the former soldiers imprisoned after the Houston riot in August 1917. Historian Adriane Lentz-Smith offers a complex and thorough description of the Houston riot in her manuscript *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I*,[400] but ends her analysis with the sentencing of members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment who were supposedly involved in the incident. Former members of the Twenty-fourth imprisoned for alleged participation in the riot continually proclaimed their innocence for years, many insisting that they acted in self-defense. These men took it upon themselves to petition the NAACP for aid in the appeals process, asserting their right as citizens to legal protection and to exercise the right to self-defense. The NAACP supported the veterans' appeals for clemency, asserting the organization's influential position politically and within the legal system to aid these veterans to the fullest extent. The organization used its influence to petition the War Department on behalf of the soldiers, making their struggle to receive clemency or a pardon one of the NAACP's top priorities.

[400] Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

As the previous chapter documented extensively, the incident that garnered the NAACP's attention and subsequent legal aid began in August of 1917, when violence broke out in Houston, Texas. Soldiers of the Third Battalion, Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment clashed with local law enforcement in a region known for some of the greatest threats of violence against African Americans. Two white police officers had arrested an African American woman after illegally searching her home, and refused to allow her to dress properly before her arrest. When a mobile patrol from the Twenty-fourth came upon the scene, the soldiers attempted to intervene and the situation escalated. One of the two white policemen struck Private Alonzo Edwards and subsequently arrested him. Not long after this, the same white officer struck a corporal in the head who questioned him concerning Private Edwards's arrest. Racial tensions between the Twenty-fourth and white Houstonians had been building since July of that year and memories of the Brownsville Affair of 1906 resonated with white Houstonians,[401] increasing the fear of a possibly violent event. The Twenty-fourth's presence brought forth those memories, leading to increased tensions.

Racial tensions erupted after the beatings and arrests of two black soldiers. Misinformation spread quickly, both on the base and in the streets of Houston, resulting in a mutiny on the base. Members of the Twenty-fourth then marched on Houston. In the aftermath, sixty-three soldiers were charged with mutiny and put on trial in November 1917. The military maintained jurisdiction, despite the desire of white Houstonians to have these men tried in civilian courts. The Army comforted white Houstonians, though, by asserting their ability to "mete out 'justice'" faster than civilian courts. White Houstonians did not have to wait long, as the Army's "justice" was as swift as promised. In December of 1917, thirteen soldiers were

[401] See Ann J. Lane, *The Brownsville Affair: National Crisis and Black Reaction* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1971) and John D. Weaver, *The Senator and the Sharecropper's Son: Exoneration of the Brownsville Soldiers* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1997).

sentenced to death, with the Army secretly executing them three days after their sentencing. Forty-one received life in prison and nine received shorter sentences, typically fifty years in prison. The military issued two more courts martial in late 1917 and early 1918, which led to the trials of another ninety-three men.[402] The soldiers eventually convicted of treason were imprisoned in Leavenworth, Kansas.

Lentz-Smith's discussion of the Houston riot ends here, but the story itself continued for many years. For the imprisoned soldiers, a strong link existed between military service and citizenship, as well as the desire for personal security. These sentiments combined to situate African American soldiers at the forefront of civil rights agitation. Due to this belief, these veterans wrote to anyone who might aid in the appeals process, but most importantly to the NAACP. Imprisoned members of the Twenty-Fourth began writing to the NAACP in 1919, but due to the large number of race riots and lynchings that occurred that same year, the organization could not put much effort toward their situation.[403] Despite the extensive lynchings and race riots, NAACP leaders including Walter White, James Weldon Johnson, Mary White Ovington, John R. Shillady, and W.E.B. Du Bois remained interested in aiding the imprisoned soldiers.

When soldiers like James R. Hawkins, a member of the Twenty-Fourth, took it upon himself to write to Johnson on behalf of his fellow inmates, requesting aid to obtain new trials, the NAACP listened. Hawkins asserted that, "Our camp was attacked and we fired in self defence [sic]. I have bullets of three different kind that were fired into the camp, even witnesses

[402] Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 45-50, 63-67, and 71-73.
[403] Walter F. White, New York, NY to James R. Hawkins, Leavenworth, KS, 8 Jan., 1920, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

that testified for the prosecution, that saw shots fired into the camp."[404] He argued that, based on the evidence presented in the trial transcripts and information he obtained from fellow inmates, the War Department should have shown more interest in the denial of freedoms and lack of a fair trial.[405] When Hawkins described the actions of the Twenty-fourth as self-defense, he insinuated that these men had the right to defend themselves against any aggressors. According to Hawkins and his fellow soldiers, the right to defend themselves was a freedom available to all Americans. That right should never be denied to them based on the color of their skin. The military courts ignored this evidence, and instead convicted these soldiers rather than taking the entire situation into account.

Hawkins's assessment of the situation directly contradicted Jim Crow, discrimination, and subjugation, all portions of American life intended to restrict African Americans in society, politics, and the economy. African Americans were treated as second-class citizens, and some white Americans supported their imposed subordination via methods like Jim Crow. African American soldiers and veterans were regularly denied the right to self-defense, most particularly in the South. The NAACP continually received multiple letters from inmates including Hawkins, detailing their involvement, or lack thereof, in the Houston riot. Sometimes letters reached the NAACP indirectly. John Haynes Holmes received one such letter from Isaac A. Deyo, a soldier who first enlisted in 1899. Holmes forwarded the letter to James Weldon Johnson, bringing attention to the soldier's story.

Deyo's portrayal of the War Department and white Texans angered over the Houston riot exemplified conflicting ideas concerning manhood and citizenship. Deyo claimed his innocence,

[404] James R. Hawkins, Leavenworth, KS to James Weldon Johnson, New York, NY, 31 Dec., 1919, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[405] Ibid.

that he had not received a fair trial, and that Texans involved in the riot should have also faced a trial. His case showed that the burden of proof should have rested with his attackers rather than upon soldiers allegedly involved. Deyo believed that,

> Of course, it was a heinous crime for members of our regiment to fight for their lives. They had not the right to do that! They were colored troops. Therefore, they ought to have stood there and permitted themselves to be quietly murdered just because the Texans did not want any colored soldiers within their borders.[406]

He also asserted that if the Texans involved were tried for their crimes and "strongly prosecuted – then our liberty will be regained."[407] Deyo's words dripped with both sarcasm and frustration over the being denied the right to fight for his own life. The typical reports regarding deaths and injuries for the Houston riot encompassed only white victims, but not the black Houstonians or soldiers whose injuries or deaths resulted from the riot as well. In Deyo's mind, then, not only did guilty men remain free, but also innocent men, including him, remained imprisoned for life.

Deyo revealed his frustration and experiences with the limitations on his freedom before imprisonment, and to have that freedom revoked almost entirely during and after the trial. He believed that, as a citizen, he had the right to defend himself, violently if necessary, from any aggressor. Deyo's assertion of self-defense also implied that both the military courts and Texans involved in the riot denied his personhood. Self-defense and masculinity were inextricably intertwined, and the denial of one meant the limitation of the other. Deyo almost certainly believed that all men, white or black, involved in the riot should have been arrested and tried, not just members of the Twenty-fourth. In many ways, the Houston riot and its participants exemplified the struggle African Americans encountered daily with second-class citizenship in the United States and a biased legal system. African Americans sympathized and identified with

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[406] Isaac A. Deyo, Leavenworth, KS to John Haynes Holmes, New York, NY, 29 Sept., 1920, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[407] Ibid.

these soldiers. Their cases symbolized daily injustices that African Americans faced throughout the United States, and led the NAACP to lend their influence toward the cause.

While Deyo displayed blatant frustration over the imprisonment of not only himself but of other soldiers of the Twenty-fourth, other veterans including William W. Burnett expressed their frustrations in a far more tactful manner. Burnett wrote to James Weldon Johnson asking about information concerning a petition sent to President Warren G. Harding. Burnett asked Johnson to inform him as soon as possible about Harding's decision. He also asked about any other actions taken on behalf of the imprisoned men. Burnett mentioned that the War Department denied clemency in the past despite what Burnett claimed were cleaner records than any other in the army.[408] Burnett added that, "…we are awful tired. I gave my all for this country. I have been paid in awful poor gratitude."[409] Despite a more subtle tone, Burnett and Deyo both expressed their frustrations with the United States military and the War Department over their treatment in regards to the incident in Houston. Their military service should have not only meant respect, but equality to other soldiers in accordance with the uniform they donned to protect the United States. Instead, Burnett's years of exemplary service left him with the impression that the military mistreated him and other members of the Twenty-fourth, denying their citizenship and right to a fair trial.

Throughout the next few years, the NAACP continued to receive letters from inmates at Leavenworth, taking a great interest in the outcome of these cases. On their behalf, the organization maintained contact with Emmett J. Scott, the Special Assistant to the Secretary of War, and John W. Weeks, who succeeded Newton Baker as Secretary of War in 1921. The

[408] William W. Burnett, Leavenworth, KS to James Weldon Johnson, New York, NY, 16 Feb., 1922, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 10, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[409] Ibid.

NAACP petitioned these men at the War Department for retrials and also requested presidential pardons, repeatedly writing to Woodrow Wilson, Warren G. Harding, and Calvin Coolidge on behalf of the incarcerated soldiers. The NAACP remained interested in the outcome since the cases became a civil rights cause célèbre, challenging discrimination in the military legal system. The petitions were unsuccessful until 1922, when the NAACP learned that the Attorney General's Office and the War Department would consider the cases individually, not as a whole. Individual review meant that some men would receive clemency, but others would not.[410] The policy change almost certainly meant the War Department wished to avoid negative publicity, criticism, and the appearance of sympathy for convicted mutineers.

The War Department also stressed that an attorney representing some of the incarcerated men created problems because of the unwanted publicity he drew to the cases. Due to the attention, the War Department claimed that Southerners protested any "favorable consideration" for members of the Twenty-fourth, and political moves would only impede the situation further.[411] Texans in particular protested any possible leniency for these soldiers, since both the Brownsville Riot in 1906 and the Houston riot remained at the forefront of Texan collective memory. Both incidents created rumors and exaggerations to exacerbate the punishments for suspected involvement. White Southerners' determination to deny compassion or reduction in sentences was reminiscent of white attitudes toward African American men. If a black man committed a crime, or was just suspected of doing so, many whites argued the punishment meted out must be harsh to prevent another person from committing the same crime in the future. Some Americans believed this attitude explained an emphasis on law and order, but in reality it

[410] James A. Cobb, Washington, D.C. to Walter White, New York, NY, 27 July, 1922, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 10, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[411] Ibid.

exemplified attempts to control black bodies and minds through excessive punishment. While the petitions gained some headway, however minimal, the War Department's attempts to avoid any publicity in regards to the Twenty-fourth's cases implied that the War Department, dominated by white military elites, had no interest in openly admitting to reviewing the cases or possibly granting clemency. They feared a backlash from white Texans, and white Southerners in general, for reinvestigating the cases and possibly altering sentences. Even so, the War Department began reviewing the cases, and a few of the imprisoned men received reduced sentences, making some of them eligible for parole.[412]

After a few veterans received reduced sentences, more letters continued to arrive from Leavenworth. John Geter, a former corporal with the Twenty-fourth, exemplified this resurgence of correspondence between the NAACP and imprisoned soldiers. Geter proclaimed his innocence and unjust imprisonment five years after conviction, and also commented on insults concerning the intelligence of soldiers in the Twenty-fourth. Those insults included questioning the literacy of soldiers, asserting that the lack of intelligence explained the riot. Geter asserted that "We have a few college men in the branch, and again, the Texas papers frankly stated that we did not begin the altercation."[413] When Geter stood trial in the first round of courts martial, his testimony as well as those of "reputable witnesses" resulted in an innocent verdict. He then returned to his company.[414] Two months later, though, Geter faced trial again on evidence "from self-confessed participants who, received immunity, and who perjured at will."[415] Geter's wrongful imprisonment was all the more troublesome when he failed to receive a reduced

[412] Walter White, New York, NY to Gerald Dixon, Leavenworth, KS, 4 Aug., 1922, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 10, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[413] John Geter, Leavenworth, KS to Walter White, New York, NY, 20 Nov., 1922, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-378 Folder 10, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid.

sentence or a pardon in 1922. He argued that "the War Department has allowed adverse sentiment to filter into the investigation."[416] If the War Department failed to remain impartial, Geter believed that he and his fellow inmates would remain imprisoned without the possibility of a reduced sentence or a pardon. Geter also watched as soldiers who had committed worse offenses than his, including rape, receive parole, while he remained wrongfully imprisoned, his freedoms denied based on the perjury of a fellow soldier.[417]

Geter's tactful plea resembled that of William Burnett's as opposed to Isaac Deyo's, but his frustrations with the legal system and discrimination in the military remained. Geter expressed subtle disappointment at the insults aimed at the Twenty-fourth and the men's intelligence levels, especially due to the education levels that some men achieved prior to their military service. College educated men enlisted in the military prior to World War I, and consisted of the small number of black commissioned officers in existence by the end of the war; therefore insulting the intelligence of an entire regiment was unwarranted. The accusations associated with lack of intelligence allowed white Americans to evoke negative stereotypes to describe the actions of African American soldiers in the Houston riot. Geter's experience with the military justice system exemplified the problems that all African Americans, both civilian and military, encountered on a daily basis. He faced trial twice for the same crime, was acquitted in the first trial, and subsequently sentenced to life in prison. Despite all of the evidence exonerating him, Geter's claims to his most basic legal and constitutional rights amounted to nothing for the military court. His rights to both a fair trial and to defend himself in court were denied. His conviction even challenged his masculinity, in that he was found guilty for a treasonous act he never committed. Instead, the court used Geter and others like him as an

[416] Ibid.
[417] Ibid.

example to deny African American men their rights within the military and suppress their masculinity and citizenship.

By 1924, the NAACP gained a few more partial victories. No men received pardons, but many obtained commuted sentences. In April of that year, the board of officers investigating the cases of imprisoned military veterans concluded that veteran Ben McDaniel should have his sentence "reduced from life to nineteen years and three months."[418] Due to the sentence reduction, McDaniel became eligible for parole in May of 1924.[419] Most veterans imprisoned for their alleged roles in the Houston riot eventually experienced this same reduction in sentence, rather than a pardon. These veterans were effectively trapped in a biased military justice system, with their fates tied to an unjust, discriminatory process. On May 13, 1924, the NAACP learned the fate of another fifty-four of the imprisoned soldiers. All fifty-four veterans received sentence reductions to varying degrees, resulting in eligibility for parole within the next few years.[420] In spite of what appeared to be a victory, Walter White expressed his disappointment over the War Department's attitude toward the Twenty-fourth's cases.

> The War Department, it seems to me, is obviously trying to do as little as possible in these cases. The remark was made to me a number of times that much more sentiment against clemency had been exhibited than we had mustered up in favor of pardon. I told them quite sharply that it seemed to me the War Department should consider these cases on their merit instead of allowing itself to be further intimidated by hostile and prejudiced southern sentiment.[421]

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[418] John W. Weeks, Washington, D.C. to Walter White, New York, NY, 5 Apr., 1924, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-379 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[419] Ben McDaniel, Leavenworth, KS to Walter White, New York, NY, 14 Apr., 1924, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-379 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[420] John W. Weeks, Washington, D.C. to Walter White, New York, NY, 13 May, 1924, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-379 Folder 9, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[421] Walter White, New York, NY to Robert L. Vann, Pittsburgh, PA, 24 Apr., 1924, *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People records, 1842-1999*, Part I Box C-379 Folder 8, Manuscript Reading Room, Madison Building, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

In essence, White argued that the War Department showed its hand: they had little regard for the imprisoned members of the Twenty-fourth. The men in charge of the investigations would rather allow outside influence in the form of racism, discrimination, and white supremacy to dictate the results of their investigations than investigate the incidents impartially.

The disinterest of War Department investigators reflected the racial polarization of American culture after World War I. Based on White's observations and interactions with investigators, racism ran deep in the War Department. Investigators cared little for African American soldiers, particularly those involved in an incident where white citizens perished. For the War Department, the imprisoned members of the Twenty-fourth remained second-class citizens due to their skin color, despite their years of loyal service to the United States. War Department investigators spent little time worrying about whether they examined these veterans' cases properly because they did not see these men as citizens to begin with. Investigators remained complicit in denying these men the right to a fair trial that all citizens received under the law, but also denied their right to self-defense both physically and legally. If investigators showed no interest in discovering what really happened in Houston, their minds were already made up and they believed the veterans supposedly involved must remain imprisoned. The imprisoned soldiers' right to a proper legal defense was irrelevant: their guilt was certain because they lost their presumption of innocence upon defending themselves violently against white Southerners.

After members of the Twenty-fourth secured commuted sentences and were released on parole from Leavenworth, these veterans experienced constant reminders of their time in prison. Since none of the men received pardons, only sentence reductions, their records still reflected their convictions. These accusations and their association with the Houston riot marred their

lives, even if they did not participate in the conflict. For some, employment might have been impossible to find if business owners examined their criminal records and discovered their conviction for mutiny and treason. The stigma associated with involvement in the Houston riot followed these men endlessly, a reminder of second-class citizenship and white attempts to limit African American masculinity and right to self-defense. Amid this struggle, though, these veterans took part in furthering civil rights agitation in the 1920s. Their cases provided ideal conditions to challenge the American legal system and its lack of representation for African Americans. Their letters to the NAACP oozed with frustration over the military denying them their basic rights as citizens, but also asserted their desire to continue fighting this unjust and discriminatory system. The victory may have appeared hollow at the time, but it was a victory that nonetheless ensured the struggle for civil rights in America would continue.

For African American veterans, the American legal system remained a constant challenge to their citizenship, masculinity, and self-defense after World War I, typically resulting in imprisonment, white violence, and death. These men served their country bravely and honorably, but received only discrimination and scorn in return. Men allegedly involved in the Houston riot never escaped the stigma associated with that event, and retained that blemish on their criminal record for decades even if they were not involved in the violence. Their continued insistence of innocence and self-defense went unheeded by many white Americans and officials in the War Department. Even the investigators charged with discovering the truth about the Houston riot believed them guilty no matter what evidence was set in front of them. Their citizenship, manhood, and right to self-defense remained contested both while imprisoned and then after parole. African American veterans, though, faced far more troublesome events not long after the war, with some resulting in assaults and lynchings. These extralegal events challenged

citizenship, masculinity, and the right to self-defense in a different manner than those imprisoned for the Houston riot, but the results remain the same. White Americans did what they could to limit African American freedom and their desires for full citizenship, personhood, the masculine prerogative of self-protection, and legal protections against violence. These events spurred action within the NAACP as a means to push for equality, freedom, and integration both in the military and in American society as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this examination of African American soldiers from 1898 to 1924, race, identity, and violence remained central to their military experience. While American culture typically revered military service, showing soldiers and veterans the utmost respect and admiration for their strength, honor, sacrifice, and fulfillment of duty as American citizens, African American soldiers suffered disrespect, contempt, and derision. The constant reminders of white supremacy, Jim Crow segregation, and violence accompanied African American soldiers from the United States to Cuba, the Philippines, and even into Europe. By the First World War, though, an expanding national organization, the NAACP, enlisted their political and social influence to support African American soldiers and their struggles against white supremacy, Jim Crow, and white violence within the United States military structure. The NAACP's support created a catalyst for soldier activism, where soldiers' resistance to discrimination, Jim Crow, white violence, and degradation became stronger and more successful.

At the start of the Spanish-American War, the United States had already experienced the end of Reconstruction in 1877, which gave rise to Jim Crow segregation, the disfranchisement of African American voters, and nearly unrestricted white violence targeting African Americans. The African American community remained split over whether to support the country's imperialist ventures and encourage young black males to enlist in the military. That divide occurred along the two of the main schools of thought within African American society: Booker T. Washington, who encouraged military enlistment and the overthrow of Spain, and W. E. B. Du Bois, who encouraged academic enrichment rather than military enlistment. Eventually, some

African American soldiers came to view war with Spain as liberation for the Cuban people, thus cementing their support.

Throughout the era of the Spanish-American War, African American soldiers encountered challenges associated with race, identity, and white violence continually. As this study shows, African American soldiers faced numerous forces of discrimination and intimidation. Some encountered violence from local white Americans near military bases. Some had to deal with white Americans resistant to African American officers recruiting local blacks for military service. Many heard and responded to discussions of whether or not African American soldiers were capable of leadership positions within the military. Rather than allowing these slights and white violence to go unchecked, African American soldiers during the Spanish-American War consistently challenged racism, violence, discrimination, and degradation. These men attempted to integrate streetcars and trains throughout the South, encouraged businesses to integrate their clientele rather than continue segregation, and defended themselves against white violence. Simultaneously, these soldiers encouraged other young, educated African American males to join the military, hoping to create another avenue toward becoming race leaders. Their efforts for the freedom struggle would have been more effective, however, if a national organization existed to influence the federal government and the military hierarchy.

When the Philippine-American War began, African American soldiers faced many of the same experiences as soldiers in the Spanish-American War, yet also found the situation far more complicated than what they left behind in Cuba. African American soldiers encountered white violence, Jim Crow, and discrimination daily while stationed in the Philippines, either through interactions with white soldiers also stationed there or when receiving news from home about lynchings and white violence targeting African Americans. Just as in the Spanish-American War,

African American soldiers in the Philippine-American War resisted discrimination, insults, and white violence in any way they could. For some, including Capt. Theophilius G. Steward, these challenges encompassed reminding white soldiers of proper military protocol like saluting a superior officer regardless of his race. The Filipino insurgents tempted some African American soldiers to desert because white American soldiers treated the Filipino people in the same manner white Americans treated African Americans back in the United States. Other black soldiers even encountered some of the most gruesome events, where white American soldiers assaulted Filipinos and treated them with contempt. Throughout the war, African American soldiers resisted Jim Crow in many ways. Their efforts, like those during the Spanish-American War, were commendable and necessary, yet without a strong national organization to provide some modicum of support, the United States military and the federal government paid very little attention to their concerns and protests.

By the start of World War I in Europe, a national organization came to fruition. Even in its infancy, the NAACP, along with condemning white violence, segregation, discrimination, and subjugation within the United States, expressed concern about the growing conflict in Europe and what it would mean for non-white peoples throughout the world. The organization's interest in racial uplift, equality, citizenship, and opposition to white violence eventually coincided with African American military service prior to World War I. The NAACP investigated lynchings, race riots, and issues concerning commissions for African American soldiers before the Wilson administration declared war, intertwining the organization's quest for equality, citizenship, and protection under the law with military service. Simultaneously, the NAACP criticized the Wilson administration's claims that participation in World War I meant ensuring the safety of democracy abroad yet failed to ensure democracy within its own borders. White violence, Jim

Crow, and white supremacy reigned throughout the United States, and even while African American soldiers fought Francisco "Pancho" Villa in Mexico, African American citizens faced lynch mobs just across the border in Texas. African American soldiers hoped that their service and activism might eventually lead not only the military, but American society at large, to alter their treatment of African American soldiers and civilians, resulting in the equality and citizenship that the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed.

Of course, other voices and perspectives existed in the African American community at the start of World War I that did not choose the same strategies and use the same language as the NAACP. The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), led by Marcus Garvey, encouraged black separatism rather than integration, "Negro nationalism," complete economic independence from whites, and a Back to Africa movement intended to resettle African Americans in Africa as a "civilizing" force for the native population. Garvey's grassroots activism in the United States led the NAACP to adopt these same grassroots tactics to appeal to a larger audience and increase membership and activism.[422] Some religious figures, like Charles H. Mason of the new Church of God in Christ, called for peace and urged African Americans to avoid military service for a country that did not treat them with respect.[423] Other African American organizations had other points of emphasis. Still, the rise of the NAACP was significant for its activism associated with African American military personnel, choosing to encourage support for World War I when it began while simultaneously criticizing the Wilson administration's devotion to spreading democracy abroad while ignoring the denial of democracy domestically.

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[422] See Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). Rolinson provides an extensive and complex study of the rise of Garveyism and its importance to the immediate post-war era.

[423] See Calvin White, Jr., *The Rise of Respectability: Race, Religion, and the Church of God in Christ* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2012).

When the Wilson administration declared war in April 1917, the NAACP's interest in supporting African American soldiers intensified. White violence, discrimination, and segregation continued unabated in the United States, yet African American soldiers discovered various means to resist, and in many cases experienced support for their actions from the NAACP. The organization persistently investigated race riots like the one in East St. Louis, various lynchings throughout the United States, and, due to its increasing interest and support of African American military personnel, the Houston riot. Their investigation demonstrated how race, identity, and white violence remained central to African American military service. From the moment the Houston riot began to the imprisonment of alleged participants in Leavenworth, African American soldiers challenged Jim Crow and white supremacy. When violence ensued after the initial incident, implemented by both white Houstonians and African American soldiers, panic spread and resulted in multiple deaths. The Houston riot created tension within the military hierarchy, and eventually white commanders attempted to prevent African American soldiers from challenging white supremacy and Jim Crow if at all possible. African American soldiers, though, continued to resist and received support and positive press from the NAACP's *The Crisis*.

By the end of World War I, the sustained activism and resistance by African American soldiers and the NAACP became highly effective. More African American soldiers achieved promotions and became officers. The NAACP received information from African American soldiers about conditions in camps, discrimination, and subjugation. The organization, in turn, took that information to the War Department and the United States military, encouraging them to alter their treatment of African American soldiers. The end of the war even led to African American soldiers imprisoned at Leavenworth for participation in the Houston riot to write to the

NAACP for help. As this study shows, these men argued that they remained innocent, and sought the NAACP's aid in requesting a pardon, or at the very least clemency, from the War Department and the presidential administration. At the same time, African American soldiers returned home with a renewed vigor to fight discrimination, Jim Crow, white supremacy, and white violence. Their self-determination and frustration with the lack of democracy and citizenship in the United States sometimes led to violent confrontations, and in some cases ultimately resulted in lynchings. The NAACP remained involved in soldiers' affairs, and investigated lynchings and other concerns African American soldiers expressed in the intervening years. A shift in upper class African American perceptions of soldiers and their inherent potential as race leaders occurred, and the NAACP remained at the forefront of activism on behalf of African American soldiers.

As this study proves, an inextricable connection exists between African American military service in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I, with the NAACP serving as a catalyst for change in black soldier activism in this time period. The NAACP's influence, despite being such a new organization, aided soldiers in important ways, including encouraging self-defense, resistance to segregation and degradation, and legal aid. Scholars and a broad public have recognized the importance of World War II as a turning point in the Civil Rights movement. As this dissertation demonstrates, it is important to see the development of African American activism in response to earlier wars as a continued trend, not a new phenomenon of the twentieth century.

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Other committee members: Drs. Susan R. Grayzel, Charles Ross, and Kirk Johnson

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID
Master of Arts in History, August 2008
Thesis Title: "America's Biggest Secret": A History of the Lionel Hampton International Jazz Festival
Director: Dr. Adam Sowards
Other committee members: Drs. Kathleen Hilliard and Mary DuPree

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, History, Honors, minor in Classics, May 2006
Honors Thesis Title: The 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment (Colored) and the Tuskegee Airmen: A Comparative Study
Director of Thesis: Dr. Ty M. Reese
Director of Honors Program: Dr. Jeanne Andereggs

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
Graduate Instructor: Spring 2011 to present
Classes Taught: United States since 1877. Duties include serving as instructor of record for history survey sections of seventy students. The survey history curriculum includes a writing component intended to develop analytical abilities, primary and secondary source utilization, formulation of argumentative statements, and essay organization and grammar. Classroom instruction includes the use of textbook and media tools like Blackboard and Power Point as well, intended to incorporate multiple learning styles for modern undergraduates.

Teaching Assistantship: August 2008 to present
Courses Taught/Assisted: History of Europe to 1648, United States to 1877, United States since

1877. Duties included teaching discussion sections of thirty students from a larger lecture section, taking attendance, and grading exams and essays. Additional duties included teaching the fundamentals of source utilization and historical writing, as well as critical thinking when examining primary sources.

Research Assistant: Center for Civil War Research, Spring 2009
Director: Dr. John R. Neff
Duties included research, organizing files and documents, copying, and creating electronic files. I also utilized numerous software programs to compile lists, documents, and files of research done for the center.

Tutor, Office of Student-Athlete Academic Support, Summer 2011 to present
Duties include tutoring student athletes in a number of subject areas within my abilities, providing additional support and instruction for class materials, essays, and exam preparation.

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID
Teaching Assistantship: Fall 2007 to Spring 2008
Courses Assisted: United States since 1877 and 20th Century Europe. Duties included taking attendance, grading quizzes, essays, and exams, and meeting with students during office hours for additional assistance.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS:

"'I fought for you in France': Navigating Discrimination, White Violence, and the Legal System after World War I," Presentation for the History Department Colloquium Series at the University of Mississippi, 2013
"'You must remember that you are *black*': Manhood and Self-Defense in the Spanish-American War and the Filipino Insurrection," Presentation for the Isom Center Student Gender Conference on Mind/Body/Spirit at the University of Mississippi, 2013
"'Freeman and yet a slave': African American Soldiers, Discrimination, and the Spanish-American War," Presentation for the Graduate Student Association Conference on Power and Struggle at the University of Alabama, 2013
"'He thinks he is a soldier': Understanding White Violence and Lynching After World War I," Presentation for the Annual Conference in African American History for the Graduate Association of African American History at the University of Memphis, 2012
"'I fought for you in France': African American Veterans and White Violence After World War I," Presentation for the Association for the Study of African American Life and History Conference, 2012
"Democracy and War: The First World War, African American Soldiers, and the NAACP," Presentation for the Triangle African American History Colloquium, University of North Carolina Chapel-Hill, 2012
"The First African American Regiment: The 1st Rhode Island Regiment in the American Revolution," Presentation for the Consortium on the Revolutionary Era, 2008

ACADEMIC HONORS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS:

University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
Department of History Summer Fellowship, Summer 2012
Graduate School Fellowship, Spring 2012
Full Academic Scholarship, 2008-Present

University of Idaho, Moscow, ID
Lionel Hampton International Jazz Festival Oral History Grant, 2007-2008
Winkler Memorial History Scholarship, 2006-2008

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Athletic Department Athletic Scholarship, 2004-2006
Athletic Department Academic Excellence Award, 2003-2006
NCAA Division II All-Conference Honors, 2003-2004
George and Margaret Starcher Outstanding Sophomore Honors Portfolio Award Finalist, Honors Program, 2004