

Appendix B: America Becomes a World Power
Journal Entry # 2
Analyzing a Political Cartoon

Introduction:

Political cartoons have been around for centuries. They were first designed to carry messages to those who could not read. They first appeared in the United States in colonial newspapers or as separate prints distributed by booksellers. Today, political cartoons contain much more humor than they used to. Political cartoons back then were more serious and very critical of political and religious events and leaders. Cartoonists usually use symbols to portray messages in their cartoons. For example, the United States is often represented as Uncle Sam, an eagle, the Statue of Liberty, etc. Today, there are over two hundred political cartoonists that produce work on a daily basis for more than 1,700 newspapers across the country.

Reading a Political Cartoon

Editorial cartoons, or political cartoons, are editorials in picture form. They express the opinion of the artist on a controversial issue, using both fact and opinion. The artist designs them to get the reader's attention, often by humor, and then to cause a reaction. Cartoonists use many techniques when drawing a political cartoon. These techniques include:

- Caricature - distorting a person's features, but still keeping that person recognizable.
Example: giving Bill Clinton a big nose, Ross Perot big ears, etc.
- Stereotyping - showing all persons of one group as looking or acting the same.
Example: Teachers are often shown as wearing glasses down on the nose and having a bun held together by a pencil.
- Symbols - using a sign or object to stand for something else.
Example: Uncle Sam for the U.S., a bear for Russia, etc.
- Satire - pointing out something wrong and ridiculing it.
- Exaggeration - overemphasizing a situation or portraying it as "bigger than life."
Example: show a problem as a bottomless pit.
- Labels - using written words to identify figures in a cartoon.

Analyzing a Political Cartoon:

Answer these questions when viewing a political cartoon:

1. What facts are given or implied?
2. Are any symbols used to add meaning to the cartoon?
3. If YES, list each symbol and explain its meaning.
4. Who, or what, do the characters in the cartoon represent?
5. Has the cartoonist used caricature or exaggeration in depicting any characters? Explain.
6. Does the cartoon have a caption? If YES, What meaning does the caption give to the cartoon?
7. With what issue is this cartoon concerned?
8. What seems to be the cartoonist's point of view on this issue?
9. What other points of view can you suggest on this issue?

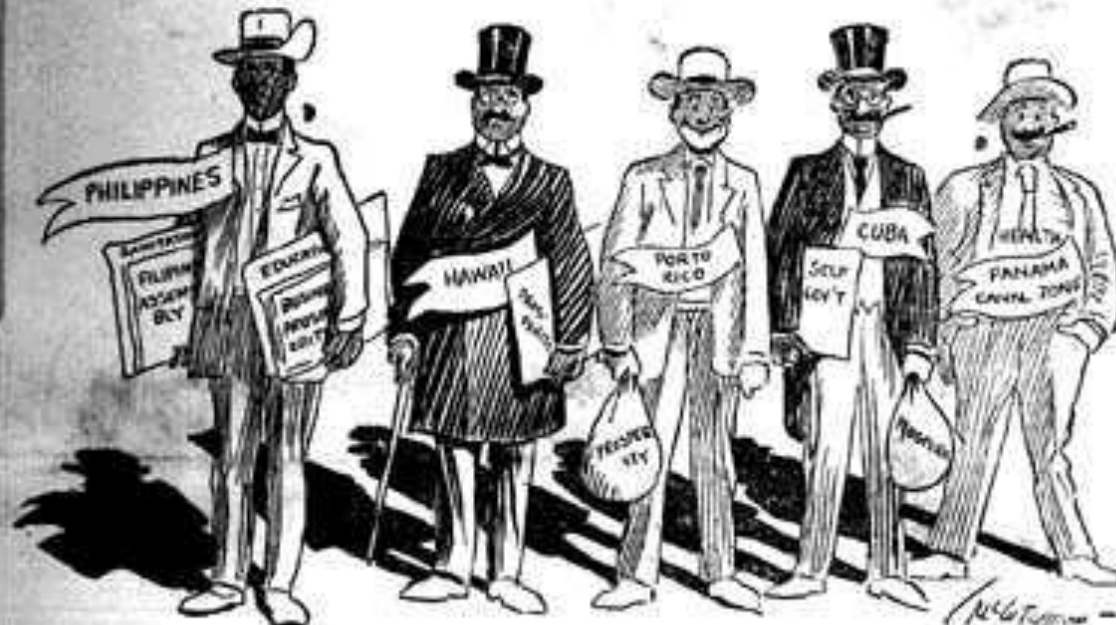


WHAT THE UNITED STATES HAS FOUGHT FOR

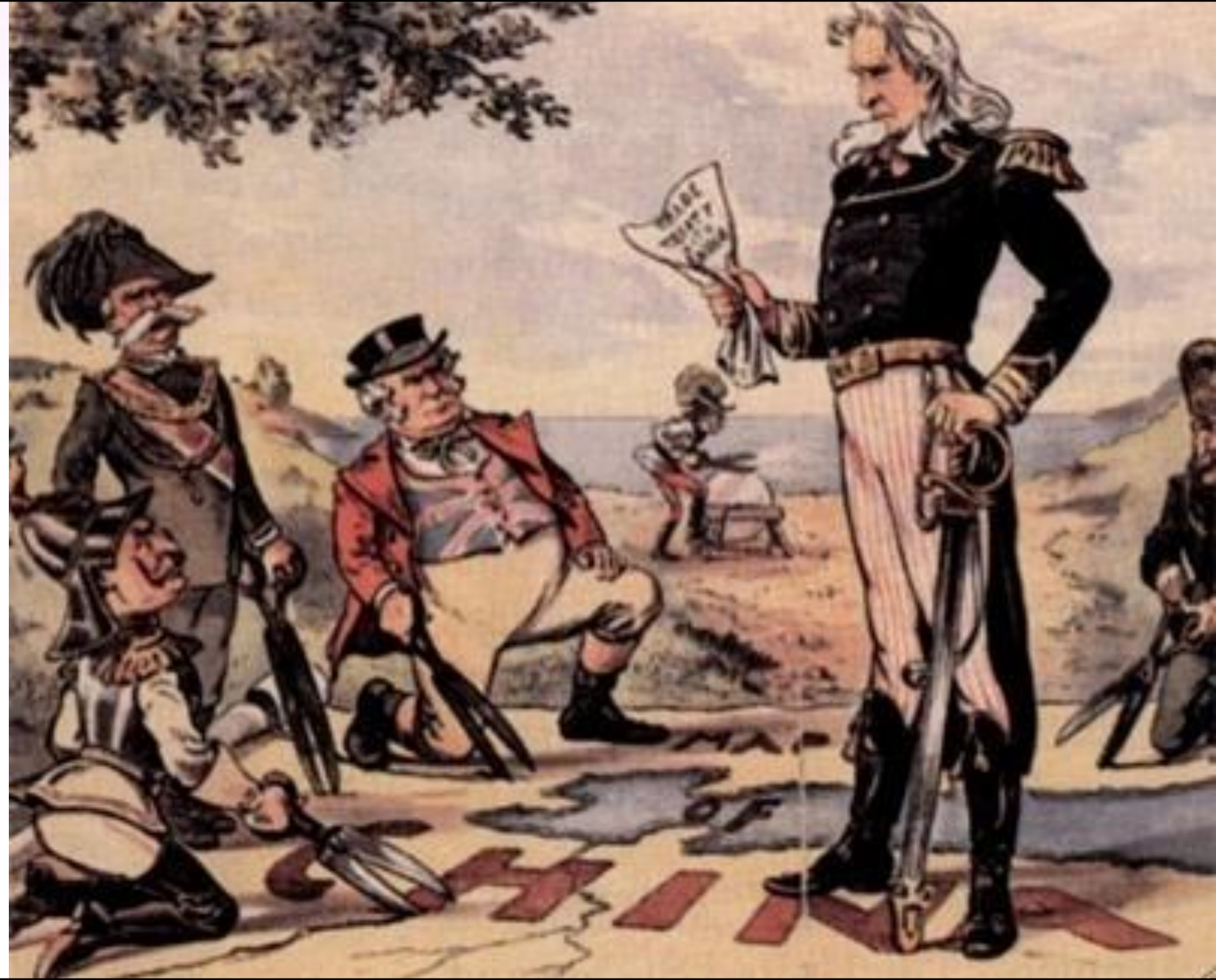
(Copyright 1914, By John W. McCutcheon.)



Before the United States intervened in behalf of these oppressed people.



After the United States had rescued them from their oppression.







Political Cartoon Assignment



- **Goal:** To create political cartoons to illustrate the imperialism that led up to WWI.

Assignment: Create three political cartoons to illustrate imperialism used throughout the world. Choose from three of the following six topics:

1. Annexation of Hawaii
 2. Forced modernization of Japan
 3. Annexation of the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam after the Spanish American War
- 4. Making Cuba a protectorate after the Spanish American war
 - 5. Taking the Panama Canal
 - 6. The Open Door Policy

Your cartoon must include:

1. Imperialism
2. Social Darwinism

Create a full-page political cartoon summarizing the topics you chose above. Each cartoon should have an all encompassing visual to summarize the main concepts of the chosen section. Each cartoon should have a written summary of the overall message conveyed by the cartoon and the topics you have chosen to analyze (5-8 sentences).

- For further information on your topics, start with this website: <http://www.smplanet.com/imperialism/toc.html>