



Resistance in Paradise: Rethinking 100 Years of U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and the Pacific

Deborah Wei

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The curriculum materials presented in this guide explore the legacy of the Spanish-American War from a distinct point of view: that of the island nations in the Caribbean and the Pacific, nations whose destiny has been framed for centuries by the tension between foreign domination and the quest for independence. For these peoples, the war lives on, underlying profound questions of culture, society, and language, as well as political and economic issues. Among the vanquished, history is not forgotten.

This guide opens with an introductory chapter, addressed mainly to teachers, that examines the events of 1898 and their aftermath. Student lessons at the end of the chapter explore general themes regarding the role of interpretation in history.

The remainder of the book is dedicated to chapters on each of the countries that came under U.S. rule in this period. Each of the country-specific chapters includes a brief historical overview followed by a series of lessons, including suggested activities and corresponding handouts for students. Both the overviews and the handouts are written to be accessible to students at the secondary level. Terms that may be unfamiliar are signaled in each chapter overview and in each lesson, and are defined in a glossary at the back of the guide.

Student readings include a wealth of primary sources: newspaper articles and political cartoons from the time of the Spanish-American War, historical documents, personal testimonies, and more. Also included are a broad range of contemporary pieces, both fiction and nonfiction. The overall approach is multidisciplinary; many of the materials and activities included here can be used for classes in history, social studies or English, the suggested activities include role plays, debates, writing exercises, classroom discussions, and the creation of stories, poems or cartoons, among others.

Many of the lessons included here engage students in developing their own critical readings, whether of historical narratives, media representations, or policy debates. By listening to the voices that have mainly been left out of the historical record, students can learn to understand how our vision of history and of the world we live in is reshaped according to who is looking and who is being seen.

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