

## The Making of the *National Geographic*: Science, Culture, and Expansionism

Susan Schulten

. . . if Cuba and Puerto Rico, Alaska and Hawaii, and Luzon and her neighbors do not make America the foremost naval and shipping nation of the earth within a quarter-century, then experience stands for naught, history is a delusion, civilization a failure, and enlightenment a farce.

W.J. McGee, Vice-President of the  
National Geographic Society, 1899<sup>1</sup>

Five days before Christmas, in 1905, the National Geographic Society held an elaborate dinner in Washington, D.C. With over 200 guests—including explorers, diplomats, senators and congressmen—the Society was celebrating a membership that had grown from 3,400 to 11,000 in that year alone. The Society’s President, Willis Moore, attributed this success to the character of its members, “the thinking, intellectual people of this city, of the nation, and somewhat from all nations—those who wish to keep abreast with the thought and activities of the world at large.” For Moore, the public’s interest in geography—as defined by the Society—fed the intellectual wealth of American civilization, which had since 1898 broken beyond its continental confines and “leaped forward from this island to that, [until] today we find the free institutions of this country planted at the very doors of the Orient.” In turn, the nation’s new role abroad intensified the need for the Society to translate the meaning of these changes, to illuminate “the world and all that is in it.” The evening’s guest of honor, Secretary of War William Howard

Taft, affirmed Moore's convictions by exalting the nation's great territorial and commercial gains, which sought "only to produce peace and prosperity the world around."<sup>2</sup>

By 1905 the survival of the National Geographic Society was assured. It produced an influential monthly magazine with a circulation that would reach 170,000 by 1913, and one million by 1926.<sup>3</sup> The April 1905 issue,—featuring an article on the culture, politics, and resource wealth of the Philippines that was illustrated by thirty-two pages of photographs—was so popular that it had to be returned to press to meet the demand. By this time the *National Geographic* was on its way to becoming one of the most ubiquitous sources of information and images about the world in American culture.

However, the monthly magazine that became so enormously popular and influential in the twentieth century bore little resemblance to its early form. Founded in 1888, the *Geographic* was created by the community of scientists associated with the geographical work of the federal government, a category that included surveyors, topographers, statisticians, hydrographers, geologists, and explorers. The evolution of their formal, narrow journal of research into a broadly appealing, heavily illustrated monthly magazine has been explained through the arrival of savvy editors at the turn of the century, yet this transformation involved more than just charismatic leadership.

What we find in the late-nineteenth-century *National Geographic* are men working for the government who directly witnessed—and aided—the nation's political and economic expansion. This experience encouraged them to discuss the nation's role in the world in new ways. The war between the United States and Spain in particular gave the *Geographic* the exhilarating opportunity to cover international events and defend the nation's goals abroad, while at the same time bringing the exotic and potentially enriching reaches of the new American orbit home to its readers. By taking advantage of this opportunity, the magazine's scope was effectively enlarged to include not just geographical research, but also political and commercial issues that related to the nation's new international posture. The extensive use of photography, so central to the magazine's twentieth-century success, was also born in the war. Taken together, these changes make the late-nineteenth century a critical moment for the modern *Geographic*, and this article argues that many of the magazine's signature features were born in the ferment brought by the Spanish-American War. Though Walter LaFeber has convincingly argued that 1898 represents a culmination of, rather than a break with, prior aims of American foreign policy, that year nonetheless brought the Society new opportunities to translate the government's work into material for public consumption.<sup>4</sup>

The magazine's early history has a larger significance as well, which underlies the second purpose of this article. During and after the war, the community of scientists and government workers at the Society seamlessly united their professional identities—whether as surveyors, hydrographers, stat-

isticians, or diplomats—with the national interest. There is no evidence that the conflicts at the Society in these years reflected dissent over the nation's controversial mission abroad, and in fact the *Geographic* immediately became a place where these goals could be safely articulated. In this respect the Society acted simultaneously as an organ of science and politics at the turn of the century, which suggests that the scientific enterprise of geography was itself bound up with national concerns.

### A Society for the Increase and Diffusion of Knowledge

The National Geographic Society was born in the intellectual ferment that permeated Washington in the years after the Civil War, one of a number of local organizations that—before the rise of American universities—served the community of scientists working for the federal government.<sup>5</sup> Its founder and first President, Gardiner Greene Hubbard, was a wealthy attorney who had sponsored a number of scientific endeavors that included the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell, his future son-in-law. Hubbard was firmly embedded in the late-nineteenth-century scientific culture of the capital, three times voted president of the joint commission of the scientific societies of Washington, later organized as the Washington Academy of Sciences. Thus he had no trouble recruiting other local scientists who shared his desire for a forum to organize and disseminate the extensive geographic research undertaken by the federal government. All five of the original founders and most of the early members would at some point work for one or more of the federal scientific bureaucracies.<sup>6</sup> With its clearly defined but limited constituency the Society grew modestly in the first ten years, cultivating a membership that remained largely local, and granting only these “active” members a vote in the organization. By its own account the Society wanted a membership that was selective and influential rather than broad and national. Yet President Hubbard hoped it would be open to nonspecialists, particularly the more influential political, military, and scientific leaders of the capital. In fact, by 1895 the Society's lectures were drawing up to 1,000 members, including students, armchair travelers, and other geographic enthusiasts.<sup>7</sup>

But in practice the *Geographic* remained a technical journal that published the lectures and other transactions of the organization. W.J. McGee, an ethnologist who would later serve as the Society's vice president and president, considered the magazine and Society as clearinghouses for geographic research and exploration, especially that conducted by the federal government. Speaking to the Board of Managers in 1896, McGee described the Society's lectures, many of which were eventually published in the *Geographic*, as research and educational tools, and stressed the importance of maintaining geography's reputation as science rather than stories of adventure. In the lecture series for the educated public, the speakers would be “actual explorers or original investigators who are known to treat geography as a branch of science.” And in a remark that suggests something of the contemporary perception of geography, McGee reminded

speakers that “excessive use of picture and anecdote is discouraged.” A separate lecture series, designed only for those directly involved in geographical science, had an even more self-conscious agenda. In this forum McGee suggested that only a “recognized authority” be invited to address the Society’s scientific members, and felt it necessary to add “that superficial description and pictorial illustration shall be subordinate to the exposition of relations and principles.”<sup>8</sup> McGee argued to the board and other members that the little journal would “be a medium of communication between geographers within and without the Society,” with an aim strictly to “convey new information and at the same time to reflect current opinion on geographic matters.”<sup>9</sup>

The *Geographic* appeared erratically for the first few years until settling into a monthly schedule of publication by 1896. The magazine was priced at twenty-five cents, while membership dues (which included Society privileges as well as a subscription to the *Geographic*) remained at five dollars per year until 1900, when they were reduced to two dollars. Upon opening the terra-cotta brown covers, the Society member found discussions of new work in physical geography—such as studies of erosion, landform classification, weather patterns, coastal and land surveys, and exploration—illustrated by an occasional diagram, map, or photograph. Little attempt was made in these years to gain new readers for the magazine, and the active members seemed content to maintain theirs as a local Society for working professionals. Thus although Hubbard had hoped for an open society for amateurs as well as professionals, in fact the *Geographic* was geared towards the latter. When Hubbard died in December of 1897, membership was hovering at about one thousand, and the organization itself was two thousand dollars in debt. Into this breach stepped Hubbard’s son-in-law, Alexander Graham Bell, who was initially reluctant to involve himself in the Society but felt an obligation to maintain the legacy of his wife’s family.

### The Struggle for Control

Nearly every account of the Society’s history tells the story of a dull, technical geographical journal limping along for the first decade, transformed by the vision of Bell and the energy of young Gilbert Grosvenor, who was hired as assistant editor in the spring of 1899 and promoted to general editor in 1903.<sup>10</sup> According to these interpretations, Grosvenor’s leadership was the force behind the *Geographic*’s maturation to its modern, familiar form—one full of illustrations and appealing to the educated general reader—and its evolution into one of the largest and most influential magazines of the twentieth century. As Grosvenor himself wrote:

The magazine’s evolution from obscurity to phenomenal prominence makes a fascinating and often dramatic story. I hadn’t been employed a year before I became involved in a fight for control of the magazine. A determined

minority group wanted to publish it in New York City, sell it on newsstands, and omit all references to the Society. If these proposals had been accepted, the magazine inevitably would have become a commercial venture. But the *National Geographic* remains today the official journal of a nonprofit educational and scientific organization. . . . Once the fight for control had been won, I faced the task of evolving a magazine unlike any other in the world. It required an entirely new approach to the subject matter of geography.<sup>11</sup>

There is no doubt Grosvenor's leadership was daring and consequential—he survived an attempt within the organization to have him removed and the magazine published elsewhere—but the critical changes at the *Geographic* were in place well before Grosvenor's arrival, and involved much more than an individual's influence. In his brief overview of the Society's early history, Philip Pauly stresses the role of Bell and Grosvenor and the struggle for control. In an increasingly specialized scientific culture, Pauly argues, the Society's popularity grew after 1900 because it ran contrary to this trend, appealing to an amateur tradition that was under assault in the American university. Bell and Grosvenor aimed the Society at nonspecialists, and broadened geography to include natural history precisely when the subject was being parceled up by other disciplines such as geology and anthropology.<sup>12</sup> While geographers struggled to secure even a small niche in the new American universities, the National Geographic Society and its magazine managed to grow by leaps and bounds in the early twentieth-century, defining geography not as a subfield of geology, but rather as “the world itself and all it holds.”<sup>13</sup> In fact, the Society's odd success at the turn of the century is something of a paradox. Many geographers—concerned about creating and defining their discipline within the university—were self-consciously academic in their approach to the subject; by contrast, the *Geographic* adopted a more general interest approach, with wildly successful results. As the Society declined as a predominantly local and scientific organization, it became ever more popular with the American public.

Pauly is right to stress the academic context of the Society's early growth; the university science of geography was on weak ground in these years, and many faulted the “popularization” of geography, or more generally the tendency to associate geography with adventure and exploration rather than scholarly investigation. Harvard's William Morris Davis, one of the first American geographers to receive an academic post and a leader in the professionalization of geography, vocally criticized the geographical and exploration societies of the nineteenth century for diminishing the discipline's academic reputation. Davis believed that popular groups such as the Geographical Society of Philadelphia and the Appalachian Mountain Club only limited geography's scientific potential by

reinforcing the perception in both the public and scientific communities that geography was either the tool of explorers, the pastime of armchair travelers, or simply a collection of unrelated facts. Davis felt so strongly that in 1901 he declined a place on the editorial committee of the *Geographic* because he found the magazine had become excessively popular and had lost its original scholarly vision. Three years later Davis founded the Association of American Geographers (AAG), created exclusively for professional geographers and self-consciously styled against the National Geographic Society. By January of 1905 he made the separation complete by resigning from the Society's Board of Managers.<sup>14</sup>

Much has been made of Davis' actions, perhaps too much. By resigning, Davis was faulting the Society for geography's institutional weakness, but the troubles facing university geography could not be attributed to a magazine or to curious Americans who gathered in local or national geographical societies to discuss travel and exploration. This "schism" between professional and amateur geographers has been used to explain the success of the Society as well as the unusual development of American geography, particularly because both Davis and Grosvenor—the leading figures on each side of the supposed divide—have told essentially the same story through both deeds and words. As Grosvenor recalled:

. . . the so-called professional geographers . . . to them the *Geographic*—it prints too much about flowers and animals and so on. They say that isn't geography. They're very foolish. . . . When I started in, I said we must interest the schools. We must print things they'd be interested in. We got a man named William M. Davis who was the leading geographer of the period to come on the Board. Davis was a very fascinating talker, and he got a strangle hold on the geographers of the country. Which I didn't learn until afterwards. Well, he didn't like the way I was running the *Geographic*, and after being on the Board for about two years, he retired and started another Society which is called now the Association of American Geographers.<sup>15</sup>

The division between amateur and professional is also an explanation that fits well with the historiography of social science. Thomas Haskell, investigating the late-century transition from amateur to professional social science, identifies this as a period when "the professional defines himself largely by the practices he rejects."<sup>16</sup> While this schism existed—some geographers were anxious to dissociate themselves from the National Geographic Society—it does not explain why so many of the original members of the AAG continued their association with the

Society. (One-half of the forty-eight founders of the AAG were members of the Society.) Nor does it account for the fact that in 1905 seven of the sixteen editors of the *Geographic* were also members of the AAG. Thus the magazine's transition at the turn of the century involved more than a conflict—which certainly existed—between amateurs and professionals.<sup>17</sup>

### The Crucible of War

More important was the tacit assumption by both professionals and amateurs at the Society that geographical knowledge was linked to the health of the nation itself, a precondition for vigorous nationalism. Early in January 1896, newly appointed editor John Hyde—a statistician for the Department of Agriculture—celebrated the close relationship between the government and the Society. Introducing readers to the new monthly series of the *Geographic*, Hyde promised it would embody the national experience not just by reporting on the work of the scientific bureaucracy but also on areas of the western hemisphere in which Americans had “an exceedingly keen and friendly interest.” For Hyde, this particular role would make the new *Geographic* “American rather than cosmopolitan, and in an especial degree . . . National.” Though certainly not the popularizer that Grosvenor would be, Hyde—like his successor—believed that the *Geographic* was responsible to the public and the national interest. In defending its new mission, Hyde exalted the magazine's goal as a national goal:

To possess a knowledge of the conditions and possibilities of one's own country is surely no small part of an enlightened patriotism, and to the patriotic impulses of the American people no appeal was ever made in vain.<sup>18</sup>

This suggests that the events of 1898 offered an opportunity to put into practice what had already become a principle at the magazine—that geographical knowledge was a tool of nationalism. The Spanish-American War encouraged the men at the magazine to broaden geography to include newsworthy and controversial problems such as race, commerce, and colonialism.

The willingness to cover the war as a meeting ground of national and scientific interest was further fueled by geography's contemporary intellectual context. Toward the end of the century Frederick Jackson Turner and Halford Mackinder argued that ideas about space and geography were undergoing a critical transformation. To Mackinder, the turn of the century marked the end of a long era of exploration and conquest; with most of the world discovered and claimed, the future would be concerned primarily with defense and control of existing divisions. Coinciding with Turner's pronouncements about the end of the frontier, Mackinder's theory resonated with American geographers, who were then struggling to create a place for themselves in the emerging universities. Together, the timing of these ideas indicated that geography was moving from a

tool of exploration, data gathering, and mapping to something very different. To be relevant and useful to both the natural and human sciences, geographers widened their charge to include not just the physical landscape but also assessments of human progress in that landscape.<sup>19</sup>

For those at the *Geographic*, many of whom had long worked for the government, this framework was quickly accepted, manifest in the magazine's dramatic yet unopposed transition from a journal of physical science to one that extended to political and economic concerns. W.J. McGee, who would later become an editor at the *Geographic*, had in 1896 defined geography as "the causes and conditions by which human progress is shaped."<sup>20</sup> To McGee, this discovery of causal principles widened geography from an inventory of the physical landscape to a dynamic science of human response to the environment. As he explained,

. . . the geography of the future will be devoted primarily to research concerning the forces of the earth, including those affecting peoples and institutions as well as those shaping land-forms and molding faunas and floras, and that industries, arts, commerce, laws, governments, religions, even civilization itself, will eventually fall within the domain of geography. The prediction is easy and safe because the geography of the present is already on the higher plane with respect to the inorganic part of its object matter, is well advanced toward this plane with respect to the evolution of organisms, and looks up to the same plane with respect to the courses and causes of human organization; the fulfillment of the prediction will be simply the consummation of present progress.<sup>21</sup>

Derisively termed "environmental determinism" by later generations, this explanatory framework was eagerly endorsed by the Society in the late-nineteenth century. The 1897-1898 lecture series adopted the theme, "The Effect of Geographic Environment on the Civilization and Progress of our own Country." For President Hubbard, this theme explained why progress had come to certain areas but left others unimproved. Until the discovery of the New World, he wrote, "natural causes" had been the primary influence over human civilization; thereafter, more advanced civilizations had come to subdue their environment and thereby liberate themselves from this influence strictly understood. The Spanish-American War encouraged those at the *Geographic* to think about historical development in light of this relationship between natural environment and human behavior. This formulation enabled the *Geographic* to legitimate the nation's work abroad, which would aid those less able to master their own environment.<sup>22</sup>

Consider the magazine's changing content. Before 1898 the *Geographic* rarely addressed issues that were not directly related to the physical landscape.<sup>23</sup>



However, when, on April 11, President McKinley asked Congress to declare war against Spain, the magazine had already been immersed in this political conflict, and devoted the May and June issues to Cuba and the Philippines, respectively. Between 1898 and 1905, the *Geographic* printed ten articles related to the situation in Cuba, six of them accompanied by a map. This is particularly striking given that the island had never been mentioned in the magazine before the war, despite the long-standing problems between Spain and Cuba and the proximity of the latter to the United States. Even more striking is the attention paid in the magazine to the Philippines, also never discussed in the *Geographic* before 1898. Thirty articles, four of them including a map, were devoted to the Philippines between the outbreak of war and 1905. The increase in attention extended to Puerto Rico as well, the subject of twelve articles from 1898 to 1905, and to the tiny island of Samoa, covered four times from 1898 to 1900. In fact, the *Geographic* paid more attention to these islands at the turn of the century than to any other part of the world, with the exception of Alaska and the arctic. Though tales of exploration quickly became a trademark at the *Geographic* and a favored subject among readers, this tradition has obscured the degree to which the magazine also vocally participated in the conversation over American expansionism.

The impact of the Spanish-American War on the magazine was heightened by the *Geographic*'s historically close relationship with federal bureaucracies. In 1899 the magazine's board of fourteen members included only three who worked outside the government; the remaining eleven were drawn from the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Hydrographic Office, the State Department, the Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Treasury, the Bureau of Ethnology, and the leadership of the armed forces. These were the most frequent contributors to the *Geographic*, and they in turn welcomed the opportunity to publish commentaries by illustrious political officials such as Secretaries of War Elihu Root and William Howard Taft, Secretary of State John Watson Foster, Assistant Secretary of State David Hill, and a number of diplomatic representatives.

Furthermore, because the *Geographic* could not support correspondents in distant locales such as the Philippines, it relied heavily on existing sources of information—maps, census figures, and surveys—that came from federal agencies. O.P. Austin, a frequent contributor to the *Geographic* and Chief of the Bureau of Statistics in 1898, remarked on the rush of inquiries the government received during and after the war for the latest information on America's new territories. Here the close relationships between the magazine and the government worked to the former's advantage. For instance, A.W. Greely had fought in the Civil War and explored the north pole before heading the Army Signal Corps at the turn of the century. Thus, when the *Geographic* found need for a map of Cuba, Greely simply asked the Corps to supply one. A few years later, the Society developed its own map of the Philippines, modeled—as many of its maps were—on those drawn by the War Department and the Army Corps of Engineers.<sup>24</sup>

## Geography in Service to the State

The authors for the *Geographic* were also influenced by their work for the state as military officers, surveyors, ethnologists, statisticians, and in other capacities. As Chief Signal Officer of the Army between 1898 and 1902, Greely brought the far-flung colonies closer to America by overseeing the installation of telegraph lines in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Alaska, and China. After the United States took administrative control of the Philippines, Taft and other members of the McKinley's Philippine Commission sent back regular reports for publication in the *Geographic*. Similarly, the extensive censuses taken in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines involved a number of representatives from government agencies or the military who were also members of the Society and authors for the magazine. In general, the men behind the *Geographic* were eager to employ their skills in service to the state. Given their backgrounds, it is not surprising that they saw the goals of the nation as coincident with their expertise. In their view, a strong American presence internationally would strengthen their fields, just as a firmly grounded science might enhance the nation's position abroad. As state servants, they easily redefined geography as consistent with commercial and political expansion, just as before the war the government's work in geography had been defined through different state goals such as topographic surveys of the west or meteorological studies. Insofar as the Society was "national" in 1898 it was not in scope or membership but rather in identity: at times the Society and *Geographic* functioned very much like an arm of the government. While the magazine could have systematically opposed the acquisition of new territories, this was unlikely given the historically close relationship between these men and the federal government.

This is clearly manifest in the *Geographic's* explicit and consistent defense of the American mission at century's end. This posture was symbolically struck in the "Cuba" issue of May 1898, which opened with a full-page portrait of Captain Charles Sigsbee, the commander of the battleship *Maine* that had exploded in Havana harbor and fueled the American public's desire for war. In glowing prose the magazine cited not just his military bravery, but also his contributions to hydrography through the coastal survey and deep sea exploration. The Society held Sigsbee up as a man who embodied its ideals of scientific objectivity and national honor, as disinterested in his pursuit of science as he was committed to protecting the nation's interests abroad. Sigsbee was just the sort of man the National Geographic Society could honor with an elaborate ceremony in the nation's capital. Just after receiving this honor, Sigsbee engaged and defeated a Spanish destroyer off the coast of San Juan, Puerto Rico, an act that must have impressed his fellow scientists at the Society.<sup>25</sup>

In the coming years the magazine continued to champion the government's work in the territories, and those who formed the Anti-Imperialist League in 1899 found little sympathy in the pages of the *Geographic*. The single exception to this rule was Henry Gannett's cautionary comment in December of 1897 against the

“Annexation Fever” sweeping through the “civilized world.” The United States, Gannett advised, should resist this instinct, for any addition “to its numbers will reduce the average civilization, and consequently the strength and industrial capacity of its people.” Gannett lamented the costs brought by Alaska and warned that Hawaiian annexation might bring similar disappointments, but this article stands out as the exception, one repudiated in subsequent months by his work as assistant director of the Philippine Census in 1903 and his general celebration of American commitments in both the Caribbean and Asia.<sup>26</sup>

The *Geographic's* defense of American expansionism at the turn of the century drew on the twin goals of internationalism: expanding trade and native uplift, both of which were fortified by the oft-repeated claims that Spain had failed to properly administer its possessions. Spanish incompetence fueled the “liberation movements” in both Cuba and the Philippines that were compared to America’s own revolutionary tradition in their resistance to oppressive taxation and tyrannical rule. Given this characterization, the time was ripe for American intervention, and at no time after the war began did the *Geographic* waver in its unconditional support for these goals. In May of 1898, Robert Hill of the United States Geological Survey introduced Americans to the situation in Cuba by profiling not just its physical dimensions but also the island’s history, people, commerce, and customs. After chiding Spain for shortsighted and cruel colonial policies, Hill held out the hope of American rule in Cuba:

In all history no other country has presented such an unfortunate exhibition of misgovernment. Perhaps ere this article reaches the reader the great government which stands for the highest type of humanity and whose every interest—commercial, hygienic, and strategic—calls for a cessation of Spanish misrule, will have made its influence felt and established a permanent peace upon the island.<sup>27</sup>

In the following issue, the *Geographic* introduced readers to the Philippines through the eyes of Colonel F.F. Hilder, a soldier, geographer, and ethnologist well suited to the work of the Society. Born in Britain in 1836, Hilder served in the British army in India and Africa until an injury ended his military career. He then immigrated to the United States to seek fortune in Latin American markets as a representative for Remington Arms. This business interest—which took him to the Philippines for extended periods—, together with his ethnological research, gave Hilder the kind of authority desired by the Society for its wartime profile of the Philippines.<sup>28</sup> Hilder began by describing the agriculture, topography, and climate of the islands as well as manufactures, city life, and history, a breadth that indicates the expanding scope of the magazine. Hilder, echoing the sentiment of writers for the Cuba issue, sympathized with the discontent of the Filipinos under

Spanish rule by pointing to the “more civilized natives and particularly the half-breeds, who are sufficiently educated to crave for greater freedom.”<sup>29</sup>

The *Geographic* did not simply frame American commitments as an act of altruism, and nearly every article related to the territories cited the resources and markets that would follow. Editor Hyde frankly discussed the goals of American intervention in Cuba in the May issue, rhetorically asking whether it was “any wonder that, entirely aside from the humanitarian considerations . . . some justification for such intervention should have been found in the well-nigh total paralysis of our commercial relations with that once extensive and profitable market?”<sup>30</sup> Hyde was equally convinced of the economic importance of America’s role in the Philippines, justifying a transfer of control of the islands as a way to redress the trade imbalance with the United States. His position was made all the more powerful for its placement alongside an editorial reprinted from the *Financial Review* that almost forcibly endorsed the nation’s need to control new colonies.

What claim can any power advance, or by what right can they demand that our government evacuate these islands? None! . . . this war will result in untold advantages to the United States. Our aim was to banish Spain from the Western continent and free an oppressed people. Our reward is the unexpected acquirement of territory and control of the trade of the Antilles, and a foothold in the development of the Orient.<sup>31</sup>

Dean Worcester, a zoologist who would later serve on the Philippine Commission and as Secretary of the Interior of the Philippines, framed similar sentiments with only slightly more detachment during the war:

Should the Philippine islands become a permanent possession of the United States or of any other civilized nation, the problem of giving them good government and of developing their enormous latent resources will be by no means a simple one, although it will, in my judgment, be one that will richly repay successful solution. Spain has never seriously attempted to solve it. From the time of its discovery until now the archipelago has been one vast plundering ground for her hungry officials. She has conquered so far as greed of gain made conquest desirable or safety demanded it, but there she has stopped.<sup>32</sup>

As another writer put it, “the total returns are nothing like what they should be” among these “fertile . . . and most neglected colonies.” From the Bureau of

Statistics, Austin reported the “present consuming power is, in round terms, one hundred million dollars.” (Taft reported in 1907 that annual exports to the territories reached approximately sixty-six million dollars.)<sup>33</sup> There was even some hope that the manufacturing wealth of the Philippines might soon surpass that of Japan. The Society gratefully welcomed confirmation of this hope from an authentic representative of the European imperials themselves, Major A. Falkner von Sonnenburg, of the Imperial German Army and the Late Military Attache at Manila. In the *Geographic* this insider reassured Americans that the Spanish had long been weak in the Philippines, but that a “stronger, more energetic, and more gifted race, with unlimited financial resources, may do in the future all that the former masters failed to do in three centuries.”<sup>34</sup>

The *Geographic* prepared its audience well for American stewardship of these territories. But this expansion of responsibility came with a recognition that they were inhabited by people that were utterly different and possibly less advanced than Americans. To allay these fears the *Geographic* repeatedly invoked the second goal of American internationalism, progressive uplift. John Barrett, the former American Minister to Siam, assured Americans that attention to the Philippines would not be wasted:

Of the people who inhabit the Philippines Islands I can say, after extended acquaintance with them, that their good qualities far outweigh their bad qualities. When they are not misled or misguided by ambitious leaders in regard to America and the American people, they will become peaceful subjects of our government. When once [sic] order is fully established, there will be little or no spirit of insurrection manifesting itself, except where now and then, as in any land, some headstrong, unscrupulous leader may endeavor to resist the government. The majority of the Filipinos are far above the level of savages or barbarians and possess a considerable degree of civilization. It is the small minority that are wild and untamed in life, habits, and system of government.<sup>35</sup>

### **Progress through Photography**

The descriptions of the natives of these new territories were made even more persuasive by the *Geographic's* increasing reliance on photography. Though photographs had appeared in the magazine before the war, it was the Cuba and Philippine numbers that initiated the heavy use of illustrations, a hallmark of the twentieth-century *Geographic*. Moreover, through these photographs the widened scope of the magazine—now incorporating the human world—was vividly brought home. In the Alaskan Klondike issue of April 1898, for instance, we find a few photographs of explorers alongside shots of the landscape and wildlife of

the region. Just one month later, the Cuba issue opened with a portrait not of a geographer or an officer of the Society but a military hero. The featured article on Cuba that followed included routine topographic maps and diagrams interspersed with village and street scenes.

In the subsequent issue, devoted to the Philippines, village scenes, cityscapes, portraits of farmers and more primitive natives—even bare-breasted females—displaced the natural imagery and content that had traditionally dominated the magazine. Though many of these photographs were taken courtesy of *Leslie's Weekly*, before long the Society would have the reputation and resources to hire its own photographers or to purchase illustrations for its exclusive use (figure 1).

This intensified use of photography that focused on humans marks a turning point for the magazine that has not been recognized. Most commentators trace the *Geographic's* photographic tradition to 1905, when a Russian explorer sent fifty unsolicited photographs of Lhasa to the magazine, offering them at no charge in exchange for acknowledgment of his authorship.<sup>36</sup> Grosvenor recalled insisting that the photographs appear with minimal text, despite the resistance from other editors. While Grosvenor may have been responsible for introducing the photographic essay in 1905, photography had in fact become central to the *Geographic* in 1898. Significantly, among the most heavily photographed subjects in the magazine at the turn of the century were the Philippines, featured in June 1898; May 1903; March, June, and July 1904; April and August 1905.<sup>37</sup>

The photographs of the Philippines—like the narrative text—served to inform, to entertain, and to defend the nation's new interventionist posture. In this regard the photographs functioned like the contemporary exhibits of Filipinos found at the Pan-American Exposition and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Significantly, the two men recruited to organize the Philippine exhibits at these events were both closely connected to the National Geographic Society. F.F. Hilder, former Secretary of the Society and contributor to the *Geographic*, was appointed to gather material from the islands for the United States government's exhibit at Buffalo's Pan-American Exposition in 1901. The organizers of the Buffalo exposition charged Hilder with finding materials that would illustrate the resources, government, and mode of life of the Philippines as well as the character of the people themselves. The resulting exhibit included an eleven-acre "Filipino Village" populated by 100 natives, one of the most popular attractions at the fair.<sup>38</sup> The National Geographic Society heartily endorsed the exhibit for its authentic recreation of "a typical Filipino village inhabited by genuine natives," but it was especially pleased with the exhibit's ability to boost public opinion of the American role on the islands. This was particularly critical given that the United States was no longer waging a "splendid little war" against Spain but rather a bloody and protracted campaign against former allies of the war, Emilio Aguinaldo and the Philippine rebels.<sup>39</sup>

The public's enthusiastic reception of the Philippine display emboldened the organizers of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition three years later to mount a



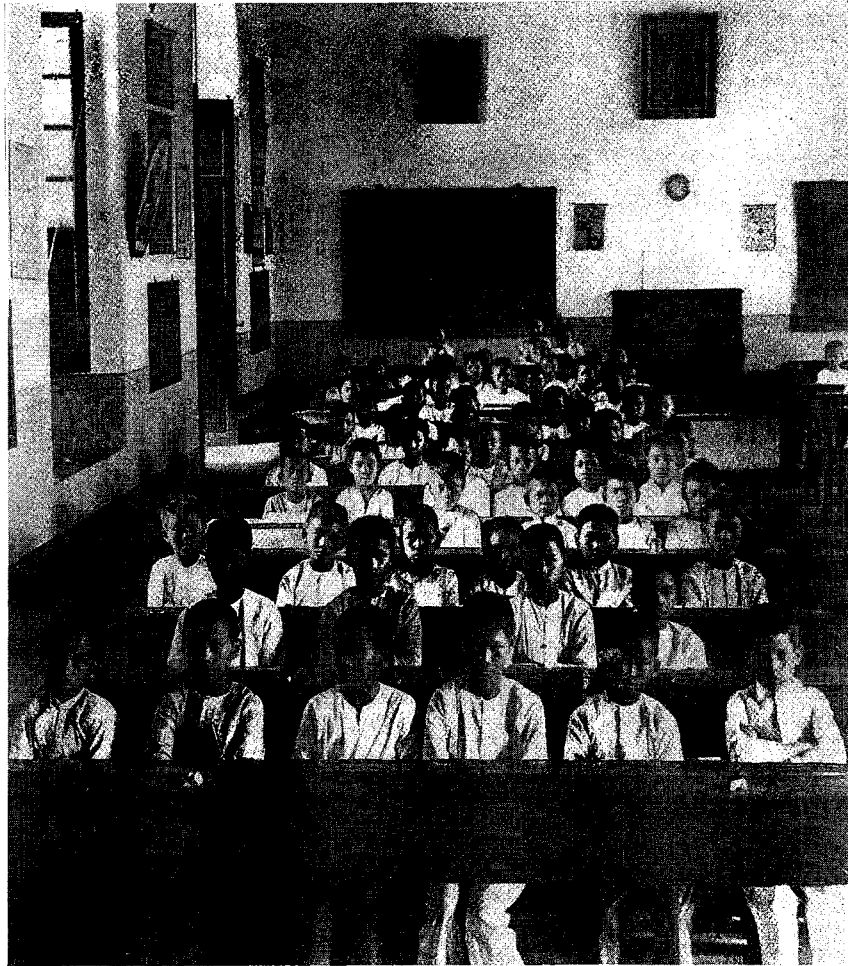
**Figure 1:** From Dean Worcester, “Notes on Some Primitive Philippine Tribes” in *National Geographic Magazine* June 1898, page 297. *Courtesy of National Geographic Image Collection.*

qualitatively larger exhibit of “the barbarous and semi-barbarous peoples of the world, as nearly as possible in their ordinary and native environments.”<sup>40</sup> That they chose W.J. McGee to run the exhibit was significant, for McGee was firmly convinced that America’s recent experience constituted the fulfillment of manifest destiny. An ethnologist who had worked under John Wesley Powell at the United States Geological Survey and the Bureau of American Ethnology, McGee was heavily involved with the National Geographic Society, first as an editor and then as president at the time of his recruitment to St. Louis.<sup>41</sup> At a cost of over one million dollars, McGee’s Anthropological Exhibit included nearly one thousand Filipinos on a “Philippine Reservation,” as well as other different nonwhite “types:” African, Patagonian, Ainu, and Native Americans. The goals of this exhibit again closely paralleled those of the *Geographic*. Furthermore, the Philippine Reservation and the *Geographic* both addressed the commercial potential of the region as well as the moral responsibility brought by annexation. What Robert Rydell has said of the Exposition—that it “gave a utopian dimension to American imperialism”—can be applied to the *Geographic*’s depiction of the Philippines in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. The Society applauded McGee’s Philippine Reservation as an authentic reproduction of life in the islands that would not just entertain the public but would also facilitate mutual understanding between Americans and Filipinos at a critical moment in the relationship.<sup>42</sup>

In a related way, the *Geographic* consistently highlighted the progressive nature of the American presence in the Philippines. This is starkly demonstrated by Grosvenor’s seminal April 1905 feature, “A Revelation of the Filipinos.” Predictably, the issue included photographs of the “native types” that closely paralleled the style and content of photographs from the Philippine Exposition in St. Louis. Yet the magazine opened not with these but with portraits of “civilized” Filipinos who had taken on the dress, posture, and character of western culture. Rydell describes the Philippine Exposition in St. Louis as designed in order to highlight “the attributes of civilization—social and political order, education, and commerce—that the federal government considered essential to the future well-being of the islands.” Similarly, the *Geographic* article presented Americans with an impressive array of achievements in the Philippines that balanced even the exotic and stark portraits of natives (figure 2).<sup>43</sup>

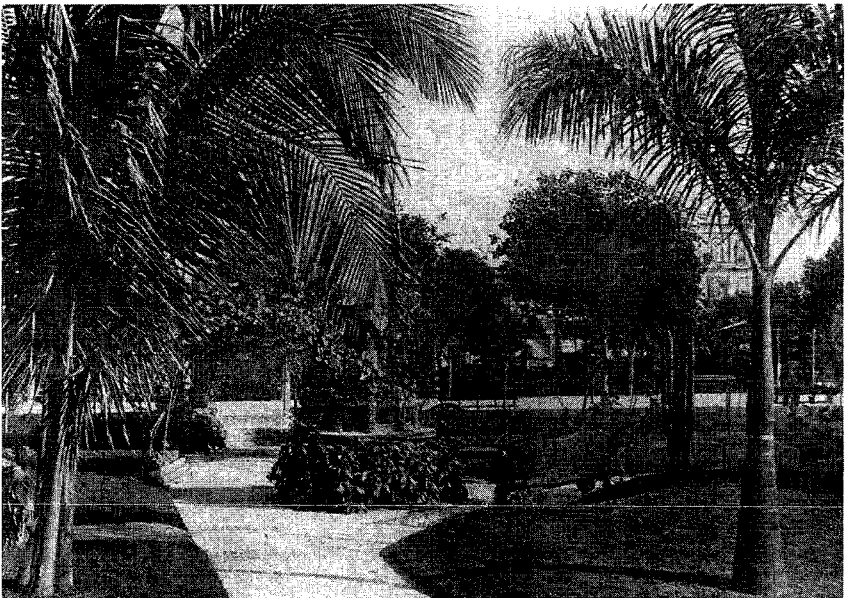
Photography was also used to document the progressive impulse in Cuba, which in turned helped to justify the nation’s presence and commercial gain. The power of American science was brought home vividly to readers through the juxtaposition of images of life in Cuba before and after the improvements of the Army Corps of Engineers, making it difficult to deny the benefits of American occupation (figure 3 and figure 4). The photographs described Cuba and the Philippines as familiar—cleaner, more modern, abundant in resources and more commercially sophisticated—but at the same time situated the territories as sufficiently distant, both geographically and culturally, so as to be nonthreaten-





**Figure 2:** Originally captioned “The Right Road to Filipino Freedom: Boys in the Normal High School, Manila” from William Howard Taft, “The Philippines,” *National Geographic Magazine* August 1905. *Courtesy of Underwood and Underwood, New York.*

ing. In their survey of the recent history of the *Geographic*, Jane Collins and Catherine Lutz identify this tendency to simultaneously present the foreign and the familiar—the dangerous and the tame—as one of the persistent dynamics of the magazine during the Cold War, and this trend can be identified as early as the turn of the century when the magazine first introduced a human and political dimension.<sup>44</sup> This sense of balance enabled the *Geographic* to tap the adventurous spirit of the reader but also to maintain a sense of control. More generally, it is significant that the photographic tradition in the magazine began as a way to demonstrate the power of America’s mission abroad.



**Figures 3 and 4:** Illustrations of Colon Park “before and after the arrival of American Officers” from “American Progress in Habana,” *National Geographic Magazine* March 1902 illustrations of Colon Park. *Courtesy of National Geographic Image Collection.*

This attention to improving the territories continued throughout the first ten years of the twentieth-century *Geographic*, both through the text and the photographs. The role of Henry Gannett, Chief Geographer of the USGS, Treasurer of the Society and later its president, is emblematic here. Though Gannett had been wary of American expansion in 1897, his subsequent involvement in the Philippines and Cuba reveals his support for the nation's work. In the fall of 1899 he supervised a census in Cuba with the War Department, which in the following spring was used in the *Geographic* to illustrate the progress made on the islands. The *Geographic* summarized the findings by indicating that administrative control of the island would remain safely "in the hands of the native white Cuban when the United States withdraws from the island," thereby preventing Cuba from becoming "a second Haiti." A few years later Gannett supervised the Philippine census, assuring *Geographic* readers that the war was over and the people pacified, that they had "the utmost respect for Americans, a respect rapidly ripening into confidence and affection." With this, the potential gains from the islands "under civilization and careful and intelligent cultivation are almost infinite."<sup>45</sup>

The *Geographic* also printed the work of the Philippine Commission, appointed by McKinley in 1899 to oversee the administration of the islands. These articles continuously updated readers on the status of the Philippines in a particular way; like the photographs, the articles both suggested a primitive and foreign place but reassured the reader that this place eagerly awaited improvement. If the Philippine Islands had been disease ridden, they were also demonstrating the power of medical advancements and sanitation measures. If there were dozens of languages spoken on the island, this situation was being corrected with the welcome introduction of English language instruction in villages and towns. If the Filipinos had failed to maximize agricultural possibilities, "fortunes await[ed] American market gardeners in the suburbs of Manila." It was in fact the densely illustrated April 1905 feature on the Philippines—with photographs taken from the War Department and the Philippine Commission—that sparked a remarkable surge in the Society's membership and the *Geographic's* readership. Through examples such as the Philippine Commission, the *Geographic* argued that the territories were modernizing, thereby indicating the benefits of scientific expertise, especially that developed by the surveyors, statisticians, engineers, and others who had been historically active in the work of the National Geographic Society.<sup>46</sup>

### Into the American Century

A cursory survey of contemporary popular literature indicates that the *Geographic's* support for the war was not unique. Throughout 1898 and 1899, magazines, newspapers, atlases, books, and other publications reflect the widespread enthusiasm for the nation's military adventures. But what makes the *Geographic* interesting is its ability to marry the imperatives of science with

popular interest. Addressing the Society in the spring of 1899 on “National Growth and National Character,” W.J. McGee outlined the history of the United States in a way that affirmed the need for further territorial growth, a task for which Americans were well fitted by virtue of racial and cultural superiority. After outlining the progressive history of the United States in terms of expansion, McGee promised that “If Cuba and Puerto Rico, Alaska and Hawaii, and Luzon and her neighbors do not make America the foremost naval and shipping nation of the earth within a quarter-century, then experience stands for naught, history is a delusion, civilization a failure, and enlightenment a farce.”<sup>47</sup>

The experimentalism afforded by the war and its aftermath also encouraged those at the magazine—particularly Bell, Grosvenor, and Hyde—to think about what the magazine might become. John Hyde was more than optimistic about the possibilities for the Society by mid-1899:

It is doubtful if the study of any branch of human knowledge ever before received so sudden and powerful a stimulus as the events of the past year have given to geography. . . . There is not one of the new territorial possessions of the United States the geographic conditions and economic possibilities of which have not already been discussed, under the auspices of the Society, by distinguished men who are thoroughly familiar with them from personal observation and research, and it would be almost impossible to devise a means of more effectually promoting the Society’s objects than by the delivery of these and other entertaining and instructive lectures in all the large centers of population.<sup>48</sup>

Hyde was pleased with the *Geographic’s* demonstrated ability to make available and comprehensible to the public the government’s technical research. To him the Society and its magazine had become “an agency popular and yet authoritative,” a role it began to institutionalize after the war. In 1899 the Society planned a popular lecture series that—at the least—would include the Alaskan and Venezuelan boundary disputes, the conflicts in the Transvaal and Manchuria, the progress in the Philippines, Arctic exploration, and the prospect of a canal in Nicaragua. These new lectures were designed to be “attractive and interesting” and to avoid an overly “technical character.” Lantern slides to illustrate the lectures, which McGee had discouraged in 1896, would now not only be tolerated but encouraged. Yet another course of lectures that had previously discussed American expansion would after the war focus on the growth of “the foremost nations of the world.” By contrast, an entirely separate “technical” course of lectures would respond to the “demands of a large body of scientific men actively engaged in geographic work, and so far as possible will be confined to subject somewhat specialized in character.”<sup>49</sup>

By 1900 President Bell was capitalizing on the *Geographic's* recently enlarged scope and focus by selling the magazine as preeminently one of current affairs. Grosvenor even hoped to place correspondents in the Philippines and China so the magazine might offer firsthand accounts of life and news in the nation's newest possessions. Both Bell and Grosvenor understood the significance of the events of 1898 and considered the coverage of the Philippines a model that would shape future topics, such as the outbreak of war in the Transvaal in 1899 or the Russo-Japanese War in 1902.<sup>50</sup> And the magazine followed suit: throughout the early twentieth-century, articles appeared on the Philippines and Cuba. William Howard Taft, named head of the Philippine Commission in 1899 and Secretary of War in 1904, vigorously defended the nation's role there against critics of colonialism. Also heavily covered were other possible areas of political and economic influence for the United States: the Open Door in China, the boundary dispute and gold discoveries in Alaska and the Yukon, and the construction of the Panama Canal.<sup>51</sup> By 1907, the impending death of Emperor Frances Joseph motivated Bell to urge Grosvenor to collect material relating to Austria in the event that the European powers moved to carve up the empire. The Spanish-American War was a kind of stepping stone, allowing the editors to experiment with a broader definition of geography that included human and political interaction.

There were also other reasons for the magazine and the Society's success after the turn of the century. Bell had shown a constant concern with the character and size of the Society's membership, insisting that it be the only way to obtain copies of the magazine. Ironically, one of the most important changes he made was to market the memberships as more selective than had previously been thought, a change that helped promote the Society by making it appear more discriminating, and by 1900 members outside Washington outnumbered those within. By all accounts, Bell and Grosvenor's role in the *Geographic* was enormous. They were able to capitalize on human curiosity and to channel it into an enterprise that quickly became an American cultural icon. Their keen eye for creating and finding geography in interesting places—using exploration, zoology, aviation, anthropology, entomology, and meteorology—captivated millions. In this regard the *Geographic* is unrivaled, and it owes much to the perseverance and imagination of these two leaders.

But this individual vision for the magazine has been given excessive weight. More important is the shared internationalist sensibility among all these men, and their awareness of the potential brought to the *Geographic* by the nation's activity at century's end.<sup>52</sup> Consider the full title of Grosvenor's stunningly popular article of April 1905: "A Revelation of the Filipinos: The Surprising and Exceedingly Gratifying Condition of Their Education, Intelligence, and Ability Revealed by the First Census of the Philippine Islands, and the Unexpected Magnitude of Their Resources and Possibility for Development." Like dozens that came before, this article framed the Philippines as both new and ethnographically distinct from the United States but also made familiar by both the Filipinos' willingness to adopt

American improvements and the substantial economic benefits to be gained. This pattern of taming the world and making it safe for American popular consumption would persist in the *National Geographic Magazine* throughout the twentieth century.

The circumstances around the Spanish-American War encouraged the Society to experiment with the magazine in ways that resonated deeply with its audience. As the geography of land gave way to the geography of humans, the goals of the *Geographic* shifted decisively. Photography became increasingly important to the magazine, and would become its defining feature in the twentieth century. Less visible, though no less suggestive, was the development of an underlying narrative of American commercial and political expansion. The urgent mission of the war created an opportunity for the men behind the *Geographic*—especially Bell, Taft, Hyde, Grosvenor, Gannett, and McGee—to unite science with national interest, thereby transforming geography into both a tool of expansionism and a medium of middlebrow culture. Thus the *Geographic's* maturation at the turn of the century reflected the nation's military, political, and commercial commitments, and in this regard geography grew up around national imperatives.

## Notes

1. W.J. McGee, address to the National Geographic Society, March 28, 1899, reprinted in *National Geographic Magazine* [hereafter *NGM*] 10, no. 6 (1899): 202.

2. "The Annual Dinner of the National Geographic Society", *NGM* 17, no. 1 (1906): 22-26.

3. Gilbert Grosvenor, "Report of the Editor of the National Geographic Society, Gilbert Grosvenor," (1921) Box 160, Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [hereafter Grosvenor Papers].

4. Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, 1963 [reprint 1998]).

5. The need for a kind of outlet among scientists was first addressed through the Cosmos Club, founded in 1878 by practicing scientists, including two who would later be invited to the first meeting of the NGS—Grove Karl Gilbert and John Wesley Powell. In the wake of the Cosmos Club a number of more narrowly defined organizations sprang up, including the Biological Society in 1880, the Chemical and Entomological Society in 1884, the National Geographic Society in 1888, and the Geological Society of Washington in 1893. Of these, the National Geographic Society showed the greatest rise of membership. See James Kirkpatrick Flack, *Desideratum in Washington: The Intellectual Community in the Capital City, 1870-1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 145.

6. Hubbard and Bell had also worked together on the magazine *Science*, which in 1900 became the organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. On *Science*, see Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines: 1885-1905* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), 306-308. On Hubbard, see Flack, *Desideratum*, and Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority* (Urbana, 1977). The five original founders sought out by Hubbard were Henry Gannett, chief geographer of the United States Geological Survey; A.W. Greely, leader of the Lady Franklin Bay Polar Expedition in 1882 and then for many years Chief Officer of the United States Army Signal Corps; A.H. Thompson, who worked for the United States Geodetic Survey; Henry Mitchell, a hydrographer with the U.S.G.S.; and J.R. Bartlett, a hydrographer for the United States Hydrographic Office. See S.N.D. North, *Henry Gannett: President of the National Geographic Society, 1910-1914* (Washington, 1915), 21.

7. On the "active" versus "corresponding" classes of membership, see the Society's by-laws, in *NGM* 1, no. 2 (1889): 169-171. On lecture attendance, see Gardiner Greene Hubbard, "Synopsis of a course of lectures," in *NGM* 8, no. 1 (1897): 29. Hubbard's broad vision for the society is also reflected by the planned distribution of review copies for the *Geographic*, which were to be sent to literary and scientific journals, geographers, geologists, meteorolo-

## The Making of the *National Geographic* 27

gists, and other foreign geographical societies. Letter of Henry Gannett to A.W. Greely, dated November 7, 1888, in A.W. Greely Papers, Box 18, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [hereafter Greely papers].

8. W.J. McGee, Remarks to the Society's Board of Managers, reprinted in McGee, "The Work of the National Geographic Society," *NGM* 7, no. 8 (1896): 257-258.

9. McGee, "Work of the National Geographic Society", quote 258.

10. See for instance C.D.B. Bryan, *The National Geographic Society: 100 Years of Adventure and Discovery* (New York, 1987) and Howard S. Abramson's *National Geographic: Behind America's Lens on the World* (New York, 1987) both of which attribute the renewal of the *Geographic* largely to Grosvenor's work. Other magazine histories replicate this interpretation, such as John Tebbel and Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *The Magazine in America, 1741-1990* (New York, 1991), 85-86, and Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968 [1939]), 4: 620-632.

11. Quote is from Grosvenor, *National Geographic Index* 1: 111 (1961). Bell also suggested Grosvenor's pivotal role frequently; see for example Bell, "The National Geographic Society", *NGM* 13, no. 3 (1912): 272-285. Grosvenor, who became editor of the *Geographic* in 1903 and President of the Society in 1920, wrote extensively on the history of the organization, thereby entrenching this interpretation and influencing other accounts cited in note 9. See Gilbert H. Grosvenor, "Alexander Graham Bell's Contribution to the National Geographic Society," (1922) in Alexander Graham Bell Papers, Box 79, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [hereafter Bell Papers]; Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor, *The National Geographic Society and Its Magazine* (Washington, DC, 1936, 1957); and Grosvenor, "The Romance of the Geographic," *NGM* 124, no. 10 (1963): 516-585.

12. Philip J. Pauly, "The World and All That Is In It: The National Geographic Society, 1898-1918," *American Quarterly* 31(1979): 517-532, quote 517.

13. Bell to Grosvenor, letter dated April 4, 1904, in Box 99, Grosvenor Papers.

14. *NGM* 16, no. 2 (1905): 87.

15. A.C. Fischer, "Oral History of Gilbert Hovey Grosvenor, 1962" uncatalogued, in Records Library, National Geographic Society, Washington, DC.

16. Haskell, *Emergence of Professional Social Science*, vii. Ironically, John Hyde, editor of the *Geographic* from 1896 to 1901 and leader of the effort to dismiss Grosvenor and publish the magazine elsewhere, never joined the "professional" AAG at all.

17. The most useful overviews of geography's early academic history include David Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Essays in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford, 1992), ch. 6-7; Brian Blouet, *Origins of Academic Geography in the United States* (Hamden, Conn., 1981); and David Stoddart, *On Geography and Its History* (New York, 1986)

18. John Hyde, "Introductory," *NGM* 7, no. 1 (1896): 2.

19. Halford J. Mackinder, "On the Scope and Methods of Geography," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* 9(1887): x-y.

20. W.J. McGee, "The Work of the National Geographic Society," *NGM* 7, no. 8 (1896): 256.

21. McGee, "The Work of the National Geographic Society," 256.

22. "Program for the Regular Course of Lectures of the National Geographic Society," (1897) Pamphlet in Grosvenor Papers, Box 160; Gardiner Greene Hubbard, "Synopsis of a Course of Lectures on the Effects of the Geographic Environment in Development the Civilization of the World," *NGM* 8, no. 1 (1897): 32.

23. For instance, though the *Geographic* profiled Venezuela in 1896, this article was only tangentially related to the boundary crisis between that country and Britain. The important exception to this generalization is the substantial coverage of proposed canal projects in Panama and Nicaragua, which merited seven articles from 1889 to 1898, largely due to the sheer scale of the engineering efforts involved and their location in the western hemisphere.

24. O.P. Austin, "Our New Possessions and the Interest That They Are Exciting," *NGM* 11, no. 1 (1900): 32-33; letter dated February 9, 1895 from First Lieutenant Greene, U.S. Army Signal Corps, to A.W. Greely, in Greely papers, File 28, Library of Congress.

25. "Reception to Captain C.D. Sigsbee, U.S.N.," *NGM* 9, no. 5 (1898): 251-252.

26. Gannett, "Annexation Fever," *NGM* v.8 no.12 (December 1897) p. 355. Gannett reported his census findings in "The Philippines and Their People" *NGM* 15, no. 3 (1904).

27. Robert T. Hill, "Cuba," *NGM* 9, no. 5 (May 1898): 241.

28. On Hilder see Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: visions of empire at American international expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago, 1984), 140-142.

29. After Hilder spoke on May 9, 1898 the Society's members also listened to a lecture describing the land and people of Puerto Rico. Hilder, "The Philippine Islands," *NGM* 9, no. 6 (1898): 282.

30. John Hyde, "Trade of the United States with Cuba," *NGM* 9, no. 5 (1898): 249.

31. John Hyde, "Commerce of the Philippine Islands" *NGM* 9, no. 6 (June 1898): 301-

303; Charles E. Howe, "The Disposition of the Philippines," originally printed in *Financial Review* May 27, 1898. See also F.F. Hilder, "Gold in the Philippines" *NGM* 11, no. 12 (December 1900): 465-470.

32. Dean C. Worcester, "Notes on Some Primitive Philippine Tribes," *NGM* 9, no. 6 (1898): 284.

33. Austin, "Our New Possessions," 32.

34. Max Tornow, "Economic Condition of the Philippines," and Major A. Falkner von Sonnenburg, "Manila and the Philippines," both in *NGM* 10, no. 2 (1899): Sonnenburg quote 72.

35. Significantly, the *Geographic* referred only tacitly to the bloody conflict that erupted between the Philippine rebels under Aguinaldo and the United States military, but never did this lead the magazine to question the legitimacy and urgency of America's presence. Aguinaldo, heralded as the leader of a liberation movement only months earlier, became a wily "opportunist" who had manipulated American goodwill in order to oust the Spanish from the islands. See John Barrett, Late United States Minister to Siam, "The Philippine Islands and Their Environment," *NGM* 11, no. 1 (1900): 10-11.

36. See for example Lutz and Collins, "Becoming America's Lens on the World: *National Geographic* in the Twentieth Century," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 91:1, Winter 1992, 173; Abramson, *Behind*, 61-2.

37. Bell and Grosvenor also point to 1907 as an important year, when illustrations began to eclipse the text as the center of the magazine. Letters of Bell to Grosvenor, dated October 17, 1907 and October 21, 1907 in Box 99, Grosvenor Papers. The first hand colored photographs were printed in William Chapin's "Glimpses of Korea and China," *NGM* 21, no. 11 (1910). Recently, a number of scholars have investigated the relationship between geography and photography; see for example Joan M. Schwartz, "The Geography Lesson: Photographs and the Construction of Imaginative Geographies," in *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (1996), and James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London, 1997 [reprinted under Chicago, 1997]).

38. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 140-142.

39. D.O. Noble Hoffman, "The Philippine Exhibit at the Pan-American Exposition," *NGM* 12, no. 3 (1901): 119-122.

40. Quoted in Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 160.

41. McGee's divided responsibilities between the Society and the Exposition caused no little concern that the former was drifting through 1904. See letter dated November 7, 1904 from Grove Karl Gilbert to W.J. McGee, Box 4, Folder "G" (1900-1905), McGee Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

42. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 183; Colonel Clarence Edwards, "Governing the Philippine Islands," *NGM* 15, no. 7 (1904): 283-284.

43. Rydell, pp. 170-171; See also Eric Breitbart, *A World on Display: Photographs from the St. Louis World's Fair* (Albuquerque, 1997), esp. "The Philippine Reservation."

44. Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins, *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago, 1993).

45. On the census in Cuba see *NGM* 11, no. 5 (1900): 205. The census was made available to *Geographic* readers for private purchase in February 1901, and reports on the progress of containing yellow fever were printed in 1901 and 1902. On the Philippine Census, see Gannett, "The Philippine Islands and Their People," 98, 112.

46. On the *Geographic's* coverage of the general progress in the territories, see "American Development of the Philippines" 14, no. 5 (1903); Colonel Clarence R. Edwards, "Governing the Philippine Islands" v.15 no.7 (July 1904); "Progress in the Philippines" 16, no. 3 (1905); Gilbert Grosvenor, "A Revelation of the Filipinos" 16, no. 4 (1905); Secretary of War William Taft, "The Philippines" 16, no. 8 (1905); Taft, "Some Recent Instances of National Altruism: The Efforts of the United State to Aid the Peoples of Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines" 18, no. 7 (1907); Taft, "Ten Years in the Philippines" 19, no. 2 (1908). Quote is from Gannett, "The Philippine Islands and Their People," 107.

47. Address of McGee to the Society, March 28, 1899, reprinted in *NGM* 10, no. 6 (1899): 202.

48. John Hyde, "The National Geographic Society," *NGM* 10, no. 6 (1899): 222.

49. Hyde, "The National Geographic Society," 221; Preliminary Program of Lecture Course for 1899-1900, Box 160, Grosvenor Papers.

50. Letter of Grosvenor to A.W. Greely, dated July 10, 1900, Box 31, Greely Papers; letters from Bell to Grosvenor, dated July 13, August 15, and August 16, 1899, and from Grosvenor to Bell, May 30 and 31, 1899, all in Box 99, Grosvenor Papers.

51. The Philippines were covered in February, March, June, and July of 1904, and in January, February, March, April, August, and November of 1905. China was given 32 articles and 3 maps from 1900 to 1906; the Panama Canal 25 articles and 1 map from 1889 to 1909 (16 after 1898); and Alaska was covered 74 times—5 times with maps—from 1898 to 1909.



## The Making of the *National Geographic* 29

52. To some extent, Grosvenor's stature has been enhanced by the trials he endured with the editors after the war. In 1900, while Grosvenor was in Europe on honeymoon, John Hyde and the magazine's executive committee took the magazine to New York, where the next two issues were printed by McClure's. Hyde has since been characterized as the symbol of the magazine's early history—staid, technical, and narrow—and an opponent of the magazine's popularization under Grosvenor. But the conflict between these two men was more a difference of personality and style than of substance, and in fact Hyde suspicion of Grosvenor had probably more to do with the latter's lack of experience in science and government. The conflict between Grosvenor and the older members of the Board also had much to do with the relationship between the Society and the magazine. Some board members were eager to see the two separated, and the magazine sold on a subscription basis rather than one that tied readers to membership, while Grosvenor insisted that neither the magazine nor the Society could stand alone. Also a source of conflict between the two factions were stylistic approaches such as the proper spelling of Puerto Rico (versus "Porto Rico") and Beijing (versus "Peking"), which some have made out to be symbolic of the division between amateurs and professionals. While there is some validity to this interpretation, it effectively obscures the degree to which the two groups found agreement on the approach toward America's position abroad generally and the experience in the war specifically. See Grosvenor, "Romance of the Geographic," 32, 55.